

The rise in drownings of children with autism in Florida

By Jon Burstein
Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County
Jon.Burstein@cscpb.org
561-374-7616



Tahfin Chowdhury, age 10.

Dahud Julicoeur, age 5.

Aleenah Fenelus, age 6.

Three Palm Beach County children. Three children who drowned within five months of each other from September 2022 to January 2023. Three children diagnosed with autism.

The drowning deaths of these three children prompted Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSCPBC) to take a closer look at drownings involving children with autism in Palm Beach County. What began as a local effort grew into a statewide examination of drowning deaths of children who have been diagnosed with autism or were suspected of being autistic.

It is commonly accepted that children with autism are at a greater risk of drowning than other children, but there has been minimal data gathered to support it. Based on CSCPBC's work, we have found that since January 1, 2021, at least **63 children** with autism or suspected of having autism have drowned in Florida. During that time span, the majority of drowning cases in Florida of children at least 5 years old involve a child with autism.

Since January 1, 2012, **109 children** with autism or suspected or having autism¹ have drowned in Florida. Details of those 109 cases can be found in Appendix A of this report. The amount of information CSCPBC obtained for each case varied. CSCPBC believes the number of drownings involving children with autism to be higher than the number documented in this report. Through the years, there has been no consistency in how drownings involving children with autism have been documented in Florida.

This report appears to be the most comprehensive study to date in the United States related to autism and drowning. The methodology section outlines how CSCPBC prepared this report. CSCPBC encourages others to review the data in this report and build on it. This report is not meant to be definitive. Rather, it is meant to encourage a much larger conversation in Palm Beach County, the state of Florida and perhaps, the country.

Key findings of this report:

- **The number of reported drownings in Florida involving children identified as autistic has jumped dramatically in recent years.** From 2012 to 2020, CSCPBC found a cumulative of 46 drowning cases - an average of five cases per year - involving children

¹ Numbers throughout the report reflect children whose caregivers/relatives identified them as having a formal diagnosis of autism or if they were in the evaluation process.

with autism or suspected of having autism. In 2020, there were four drowning cases identified as involving children with autism. That number jumped in 2021 to 23 drowning cases and has continued at a pace of more than one per month. In 2022, at least 17 children with autism drowned in Florida. In 2023, at least 20 children with autism drowned in Florida. For the three-year period of 2021, 2022 and 2023, an average of 19 children drowned per year. At least three children already have drowned in 2024 as of April 15.

- **From January 1, 2012, to April 15, 2024, at least 16 children with autism drowned in Palm Beach County.** That is the highest number documented for a Florida county during that time frame, but not necessarily the highest rate.²
- From January 1, 2021, to Dec. 31, 2023, a total of 53 children- autistic and non-autistic- who were 5 years old or older drowned in Florida. **Thirty-one of those children (58 percent) have been identified as autistic.**
- **The children with autism who have drowned are overwhelmingly male.** Ninety-one of the 109 children (83 percent) were identified as male. That is consistent with the drowning rate of boys in the general population.
- **Wandering away from home preceded drownings in the majority of cases we studied. In the drownings from Jan. 1, 2012, to April 15, 2024, 68 of the 109 cases (62 percent) involved drownings in ponds, canals, lakes or a neighbor's unattended pool.** Only 17 cases (16 percent) involved children drowning in their family pool, which is the most likely body of water where non-autistic children drown.

BACKGROUND

Florida is known for its sunny weather and easy access to the water whether it is the ocean, lakes or swimming pools. The state is home to approximately [8,000 lakes and 1,700 rivers and streams](#) and the South Florida Water Management District alone oversees [2,175 miles of canals](#). It has been estimated that there are [1.59 million residential swimming pools in the state](#)—an average of one pool for every 14 people. In addition, there are [an estimated 76,000 stormwater ponds](#), also known as retention ponds, in the state.

While it may be hard to pin down the exact number of bodies of water in the state, two things are clear. Water is everywhere in Florida and access to many of these bodies of water is unfettered. There are no state laws requiring barriers to prevent access to canals, lakes or retention ponds.

² It should be noted that CSCPBC had more access to documents in Palm Beach County than any other county in the state. It may be that Palm Beach County's numbers are not necessarily higher than the rest of the state, but CSCPBC was able to gather the most complete numbers for Palm Beach County.

So many open bodies of water pose a risk to children with autism, some of whom have a fascination with water. The World Health Organization defines autism spectrum disorders as “a diverse group of conditions. They are characterized by some degree of difficulty with social interaction and communication. Other characteristics are atypical patterns of activities and behaviours, such as difficulty with transition from one activity to another, a focus on details and unusual reactions to sensations.”

Awareness of autism has increased greatly in the last two decades. That has led to greater identification of children with autism. A [2023 report](#) from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that 1 in every 36 children in the United States has an autism spectrum disorder. Within the Palm Beach County School District, 5,069 students identified as on the autism spectrum disorder were enrolled as of March 15, 2024.

Wandering is a major risk for children with autism. The National Autism Association describes wandering “as the tendency for an individual to try to leave the safety of a responsible person’s care or a safe area, which can result in potential harm or injury.” A [2012 study](#) published in *Pediatrics* found that 49 percent of children on the autism spectrum had attempted to elope at least once after the age of 4. This is a number commonly cited when discussing children with autism and wandering.

Wandering may lead to drowning. Some children with autism seek out bodies of the water. Why some people with autism may be fascinated by water is unclear and may never be known. Some have speculated that the attraction to bodies of water may be related to the calming aspect of water and its smoothness. It also could be that there are positive associations with water, such as going to a pool with parents. While there is no clear “why” to what causes the attraction, there is no dispute that for this population it is both appealing and a danger.

A common number cited in media accounts is that children with autism are 160 times more likely to drown than non-autistic children. That number arises from the 2017 study “Injury Morality in Individuals with Autism” published in the *American Journal of Public Health*. The authors examined cause-of-death files in the National Vital Statistics System from 1999 to 2014 and found 74 cases of people with autism - children and adults - who drowned.

Data related to drownings of children with autism is minimal. On a state level, collecting drowning data in general can be challenging because different agencies categorize drownings differently or have different sources of information. One such example is the child drowning data in 2020 in Florida. The Florida Department of Children & Families (DCF) listed 69 drowning cases involving children in the state. The Florida Department of Health reported 88 drowning cases involving children. For the sake of this report, CSCPBC will be using the numbers from DCF.

In the course of researching drownings of children with autism, CSCPBC found only one study that examined specific cases. The study “Characteristics of unintentional drowning deaths in children with autism spectrum disorder” was published in 2017 in *Injury Epidemiology*. The authors used the Lexis-Nexis research database to search for cases involving children with autism reported in newspaper articles from January 2000 through May 2017. The authors searched the database using terms- “autism” or “autistic,” and “drowning” or “drowned” and “boy” or “girl.”

The authors identified 23 fatal unintentional drowning incidents involving children under 15 years of age. The results indicated that fatal unintentional drownings of children with autism typically involved boys aged 7-8 years old who wander from their homes to nearby ponds in the afternoon hours.

The Autism Society of America commented on the 2017 study that “these researchers found it necessary to rely on newspaper accounts for this research because there is no coordinated, standardized effort to maintain data.”

METHODOLOGY

To begin data gathering, CSCPBC started with DCF’s [Child Fatality Prevention website](#) . The website compiles data related to all child deaths in Florida reported to the DCF Hotline. The website “was created to raise public awareness about child fatalities throughout the state and assist communities with identifying where additional resources or efforts are needed to assist struggling families,” according to DCF.

Researchers can use the site to examine statewide numbers related to causes of death (i.e. drowning, sleep related), if the family had prior interaction with DCF in the last year, and by county and year. Once a death is reported, data is entered into a spreadsheet that includes the date of death, county where it happened, age of the child and a brief description of the circumstances related to the death. Here is an example of the thumbnail descriptions entered. This one is related to an October 28, 2023, drowning death in Palm Beach County:

4 1/2-year-old autistic child was pronounced deceased after he was found in a nearby canal when he wandered away from the family's home undetected.

When the death is fully investigated by DCF and the case is closed, DCF creates a Child Fatality Summary- a publicly available document that provides circumstances surrounding the death and a summary of prior DCF involvement with the family. The Child Fatality Summary is usually two to three pages and written by a DCF Child Fatality Prevention Specialist. It can take up to

three years before a link to the Child Fatality Summary is posted on the Child Fatality Prevention website.

CSCPBC first began compiling all cases that it could find that had the word “autistic” or “autism” in the thumbnail descriptions on the website. CSCPBC obtained all of the Child Fatality Summaries of those cases that were available through the website.

CSCPBC then examined autopsy reports from the Palm Beach County Medical Examiner’s Office from January 1, 2012, to August 2023, in which a child drowned and there was a reference to autism. There were three cases found that could not be located in the DCF Child Fatality Prevention database—the June 3, 2021, drowning of an 8-year-old boy, the July 14, 2014, drowning of a 16-year-old boy and the July 21, 2012, drowning of a 3-year-old girl.

After that, CSCPBC replicated the 2017 study that used Lexis-Nexis to search for cases related to drownings of children with autism. Lexis-Nexis can access the databases of about 50 Florida newspapers, including the *Tampa Bay Times*, *Miami Herald*, *Sun Sentinel*, *Palm Beach Post* and *Florida Times-Union*. Searches were done using the terms- “autism” or “autistic,” AND “drowning.” The searches yielded an additional three cases of children with autism that were not on the Child Fatality Prevention website. Those cases were older—the May 2015 death of an 8-year-old boy who wandered away from a farmer’s market in Hillsborough County, the May 2013 death of an 8-year-old boy in the Gulf of Mexico and the September 2012 death of a 15-year-old boy during a class outing.

As CSCPBC continued its research, a concern arose that some of the thumbnail descriptions on the DCF Child Fatality Prevention website may not have included the word “autism” or “autistic” when they could have. That prompted CSCPBC to retrace its steps and review the available Child Fatality Summary reports since Jan. 1, 2012, for all drownings in Florida of any child at least 2 years old.

The next step was doing Google searches to see if there have been news reports or press releases related to drownings of children with autism. This led to CSCPBC identifying recent cases involving children with autism where there is no mention of autism in the thumbnail descriptions on the Child Fatality Prevention website.

In the course of gathering data, CSCPBC also talked with local autism advocates and those who provide services to children with autism. They provided invaluable insight into the process to diagnose a child with autism, what the data collected by CSCPBC could mean and what possibly could be done to address issues surrounding water safety and children with autism. CSCPBC would like to thank the following people for their time and expertise:

- Jack Scott, executive director of FAU CARD (Center for Autism and Related Disabilities)

- Jacquie Wood, clinical manager at FAU CARD
- Stacey Hoaglund, president of Autism Society of Florida
- Katie Wentley, water and wandering program manager of Autism Society of America
- Amanda Wroten, project director at Autism Society of America
- Marlene Sotelo, executive director of Els for Autism
- Erin Brooker Lozott, program director of Els for Autism
- Anna Stewart, manager of the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Palm Beach County
- Debi Johnson, executive director of Connections Education Center
- Jason Portman, director of operations of Connections Education Center
- Natalie Eno, family resource specialist supervisor for Treasure Coast Early Steps
- Christine Renaud-Anderson, clinic supervisor for Treasure Coast Early Steps
- Palm Beach County Sheriff's deputy Scott Poritz
- Kevin McCormick, director of ESE for the Palm Beach County School District
- Cheryl Harris, program planner for autism and emotional behavioral disabilities at the Palm Beach County School District
- Jennifer Abaid, director of ParentChild+
- Randee Gabriel, programs manager for 211

CSCPBC has identified **109 drowning cases** from January 1, 2012, to April 15, 2024, involving children with autism or suspected of having autism. These are the cases that CSCPBC has confirmed as involving children with autism. As of April 15, there are 32 drowning cases in Florida from Jan. 1, 2021, to Dec. 31, 2023, involving children at least two years old where the Child Fatality Summary reports are not publicly available yet due to ongoing investigations.

DATA

With all of the 109 cases, CSC obtained the following datapoints:

- Date of the drowning incident or date of death.
- Age of the child who drowned.
- Identified gender of the child.
- County where the drowning happened.
- The type of body of water where the child drowned (such as pond or neighbor's pool).

Number of drownings per year

Since January 1, 2021, there has been a dramatic jump in Florida of drownings involving children with autism or suspected of having autism.

Drownings of Children with Autism from January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2023

Year	Drownings
2023	20*
2022	17*
2021	23*
2020	4
2019	8
2018	7
2017	6
2016	1
2015	5
2014	6
2013	4
2012	5

Asterisked years are ones where there are still open investigations, which may involve children with autism.

Based on the significant jump in drowning cases in Florida involving children with autism from 2020 to 2021, CSC examined the number of drowning cases in Florida involving all children—both autistic and non-autistic. The number of overall drownings jumped statewide from 69 in 2020 to 100 in 2021.

The increase in drowning cases involving children with autism greatly outpaced the increase in all drownings. In 2020, 5.8 percent of all child drownings in Florida involved children identified as autistic or suspected of being autistic. In 2021, that number jumped to 23 percent.

Drownings of children with autism compared to overall child drownings in Florida

Year	Overall cases	Children with autism	% with autism
2023	99	20	20.2%
2022	93	17	18.20%
2021	100	23	23%
2020	69	4	5.80%
2019	65	8	12.30%
2018	88	7	7.95%
2017	82	6	7.30%
2016	74	1	1.40%
2015	86	5	5.80%
2014	74	6	8.10%
2013	81	4	4.90%
2012	82	5	6.10%
TOTALS	988	106	10.7%

Age of Drowning Victims

The majority of the children with autism or suspected of having autism who drowned (**64 of the 109 children**) were between the ages of 3 and 5. The number of drownings peaks at the age of 3.

Ages of Drowning Victims with Autism from January 1, 2012, to April 15, 2024

Age	Number of drownings
2	9
3	25
4	18
5	21
6	8
7	5
8	7
9	4
10	4
11	0
12	2
13	1
14	0
15	1
16	1
17	3
18	0

CSCPBC compared the ages of children with autism who drowned to the ages of all children whose drownings were recorded on the DCF Child Fatality Prevention website or cases found by CSCPBC that were not recorded by the DCF Child Fatality Prevention website. A total of 988 children drowned in the state of Florida from Jan. 1, 2012, to Dec. 31, 2023. About 60 percent of those cases (589 cases) involved children under the age of 3. Many of those cases involved a toddler drowning in a family pool.

CSCPBC looked at drowning cases involving children at least 3 years old to see what percentage had been identified as autistic or suspected of having autism. The age of 3 was selected because that's commonly when developmental concerns first arise with children with autism, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Since 2012, 24.3 percent of all drowning victims in Florida at least three years old were autistic. From Jan. 1, 2021, to Dec. 31, 2023, 41.9 percent of all child drownings of a child at least three years old involved a child with autism.

Florida drowning cases involving a child 3-18 years old

Year	Overall cases	Children with autism	% with autism
2023	41	18	44%
2022	39	16	41%
2021	49	20	40.8%
2020	18	4	22.2%
2019	30	7	23.3%
2018	36	6	16.7%
2017	34	6	17.6%
2016	31	1	3.2%
2015	32	5	15.63%
2014	32	5	15.63%
2013	33	4	12.1%
2012	26	5	19.23%
TOTALS	400	97	24.3%

A similar breakdown was done for drownings in Florida involving children at least 5 years old. The age of 5 was selected because a CDC study found that the average age of diagnosis for children with autism is about 4 ½ years old.

Florida drowning cases involving a child 5-18 years old

Year	Overall cases	Children with autism	% with autism
2023	17	10	58.8%
2022	20	10	50%
2021	16	11	68.8%
2020	11	2	18.2%
2019	14	2	14.3%
2018	13	3	23.1%
2017	13	3	23.1%
2016	15	1	6.67%
2015	14	5	35.7%
2014	17	5	29.4%
2013	12	1	8.30%
2012	10	3	30%
TOTALS	172	56	32.6%

Of the children at least five years old who have drowned in Florida from Jan. 1, 2021, to March 15, 2024, **58 percent** (31 of 53) were autistic.

Drownings by gender

Ninety-one of the 109 children who drowned were identified as male—83 percent. That percent mirrors data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that nearly 80 percent of [all drowning victims are male](#).

Drownings by bodies of water

For all but one of the cases, CSCPBC was able to identify the type of body of water where the child drowned. More than half of the children (57 of the 109 children) drowned in ponds, lakes, rivers and canals with no indications of physical barriers around them. About 12 percent (13 of the 109 children) drowned after wandering to a neighbor's house and getting in the pool there.

About 16 percent (17 of 109) of the cases involved children drowning in the pool at their own home. This contrasts with drowning cases in general involving children, [where the majority happen in the family pool.](#)

Pond	28
Family's own pool/pond	17
Wandered to neighbor's pool	13
Canal	14
Lake	13
Pool at house where visiting	6
Pool at vacation home/staying	5
Apartment/community pool	5
Hotel/ resort pool	2
River	2
Ocean	1
Horse trough	1
Bathtub	1
No info	1

Drownings by county

At least one child with autism has drowned in 30 Florida counties since Jan. 1, 2012. Palm Beach County has had the most with 16 drownings followed by 10 in Broward County and 9 in both Hillsborough County. Calculating the rate of drownings per county is difficult because of the population growth in Florida from 2012 to present. While Palm Beach County has the highest number of drownings, it may not have a higher rate compared to a county like Seminole County, which has a third of Palm Beach County's population.

Palm Beach- 16

Broward- 10

Hillsborough- 9

Seminole- 8

Duval- 7

Orange- 6

Miami-Dade 5

Polk- 5

Brevard- 4

Lee- 4

Manatee- 3

Osceola- 3

Pinellas- 3

St. Lucie- 3

Volusia- 3

Collier- 3

Lake, Marion, Pasco- 2

Alachua, Charlotte, Citrus, Columbia, Escambia, Hernando, Highlands, Monroe, Putnam, Santa Rosa, Suwanee-1

Palm Beach County Data

Since January 1, 2012, there have been 16 identified drowning cases in Palm Beach County of children with autism. Individual descriptions of each of those cases can be found in Appendix B.

The Palm Beach County data is largely consistent with the statewide data. Of the 16 children, 14 were boys (**88 percent**) and 2 were girls (**12 percent**).

When broken down by age, the majority of the drownings (**9 of the 16**) were between the ages of 3 and 5.

Age	Number of drownings
2	1
3	3
4	1
5	5
6	1
7	1
8	2
9	0
10	1
11	0
12	0
13	0
14	0
15	0
16	1
17	0
18	0

Eleven of the 16 children (**69 percent**) drowned in lakes, canals and ponds—again mirroring the statewide data. Four of the children drowned in their family pools and one drowned after wandering over to a neighbor’s pool.

Using the available records, CSCPBC was able to identify the cities where 13 of the 16 drownings happened. They were throughout the county with no more than two drownings in any city.

The DCF Child Fatality Summary reports do not contain demographic information. Using media reports and Medical Examiner's Office records, CSCPBC was able to obtain limited demographic information on 11 of the cases in Palm Beach County. The breakdown:

Black- 7

Muslim- 2

Hispanic- 1

Asian- 1

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Why the jump in drownings of children with autism from 2020 to 2021?** Two potential reasons have been suggested. First, the general awareness of autism has increased in recent years and that has led to authorities being more likely to identify the child as autistic. The second is that it is a byproduct of COVID. The year 2021 was a period of transition for families because of the COVID epidemic. Some parents were now working from home. Some children still were not receiving in-person services. There are at least four cases where parents were working from home or taking a work call when their child disappeared.
- **Wandering.** The majority of the drownings are the result of a child with autism wandering away from their home or the home they are visiting. Based on the reports, these children are not wandering far to the body of water (such as a neighbor's pool, a pond or canal behind their home). The distances they are traveling could be measured in yards, not miles. There is a need to talk with parents, especially families who have just received a diagnosis, about the risks of wandering and the associated dangers.
- **Knowing the bodies of water near the home and where to go first.** Families should be aware of not only what open bodies of water are around their homes, but which of their neighbors have pools. They need a clear plan of action of what bodies of water to check when a child goes missing.
- **Emphasize calling 911 immediately when a child with autism goes missing.** When a child with autism goes missing, the caregiver needs to call 911 immediately. In reading the Child Fatality Summary reports, there are consistently delays in calling 911. Minutes, even seconds, matter in these cases.
- **Outreach to Creole-speaking communities and other communities in Palm Beach County.** Of the 11 cases in Palm Beach County where limited demographic information was obtained, seven involved Black children. Five of those children had French-sounding surnames.
- **Water safety messaging in elementary school.** Children with autism recently have accounted for the majority of all the drownings of children at least 5 years old in Florida. A greater effort should be made to create awareness in schools about wandering and water safety.
- **Swimming lessons.** There can be a hesitancy of some parents to get swim lessons for children with autism because of the fear of causing a commotion at the pool. Parents need a judgment-free zone, if possible, where their child can learn to swim. Swim curriculum for non-autistic children may not work for children with autism. Swim instruction for children with autism should be highly personalized. Swim instructors also must be able to communicate effectively with parents.

- **Importance of door alarms, window alarms and hard-to-reach locks on doors.** Alarms and locks provide an extra layer of protection.
- **Monitoring devices.** Monitoring bracelets could be used for children with autism, such as Project Lifesaver and AngelSense. With Project Lifesaver, law enforcement has a device to track the radio frequencies emitted by the waterproof monitor on the child.

NEXT STEPS

This study provides what may be the most comprehensive examination of drownings of children with autism in Florida . It is just the first step, though. We must now work to address it. Here are steps that are being taken by CSCPBC and its community partners as well as recommended steps.

Supporting a curriculum for training water safety instructors on teaching children with autism- Through the course of research for this study, CSCPBC met Katie Wentley, the water and wandering program manager with the Autism Society of America. Wentley grew up and lives in Palm Beach County. Prior to joining the Autism Society of America, Wentley worked at Connections Education Center for students with autism from 2017 to 2023, where she developed a unique swim curriculum and took data on each student to track progress and define areas to reassess. Part of the funding for swim lessons for the Connections students has come from the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Palm Beach County, which is itself funded by CSCPBC and the Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners.

Wentley is now creating a national learn-to-swim curriculum for children with autism.

The Autism Society of America has been planning to pilot a program teaching water safety instructors how to interact and teach children with autism about water safety. The Autism Society of America is hoping “to equip participants with evidence-based teaching strategies designed to effectively instruct individuals with autism in swimming.”

CSCPBC expressed interest in having the pilot here in Palm Beach County. CSCPBC connected Autism Society of America with Small Fish Big Fish Swim School in West Palm Beach, a private pool facility. With CSCPBC’s funding, the pilot is scheduled to launch in June at the swim school. Ten water safety instructors will receive hands-on training with children with autism as part of the pilot program.

More funding for swim lessons for children with autism- As mentioned, CSCPBC currently funds swim lessons for children with autism at Connections through the Drowning Prevention Coalition of Palm Beach County. CSCPBC has always demonstrated a willingness to fund swim lessons. The limitations involving swim lessons in Palm Beach County are not due to funding, but the lack of public pools and staff. Before more funding can be invested in swim lessons, fundamental infrastructure issues need to be addressed (for example, would a pool have enough staff during the school year to teach classes midday? How would students get to the pool?)

Following the February 2024 drowning of a 5-year-old boy with autism in Belle Glade, the School District and Palm Beach County Parks & Recreation began discussions about providing swim lessons to students at Gove Elementary School, where the boy went to school. Those lessons are now set to begin April 30 for 175 students, including ESE students from Pre-K to second grade. CSCPBC is providing funding for transportation for the students as well as towels.

Messaging- Working with autism advocates to develop a wandering/water safety campaign specifically targeting families with children with autism. Points of emphasis should include: the potential of wandering, immediately calling 911 when a child goes missing and knowing the bodies of water/pools around your house.

Layers of protection- FAU CARD currently distributes safety boxes to families with children with autism. The distribution of these boxes has been limited due to funding issues. Safe Kids Palm Beach County, which is funded by CSCPBC, has expressed interest in being the producer/distributor of such safety boxes that could be distributed for free to FAU CARD and other organizations that serve children with autism.

Reaching families at the point of diagnosis- When a family receives an autism diagnosis or voices concerns to their pediatricians, there is a need for families to learn about wandering and water safety immediately. The peak age for children with autism drowning is three years old, likely within a year of their diagnosis. Parents need to know about the dangers of wandering as soon as possible. What materials could be created for pediatricians and how could those materials get into pediatric offices?

Reaching Creole and Spanish speakers with the wandering/water safety messaging- CSCPBC should examine how it could supplement FAU CARD's efforts in reaching the Creole-speaking and Spanish-speaking communities.

Ongoing discussion about monitoring devices- CSCPBC needs more data related to the effectiveness of the devices before taking next steps.

FINAL THOUGHTS

This report is meant to be a starting point. Hopefully, local and state partners will take a closer look at the child drowning cases in their communities and how many of those drownings involved children with autism or suspected of having autism.

We now have the data. We must determine how to use that data to save lives.

