

Athletes, Advocates Rally to Prevent Childhood Drowning, Promote Layers of Protection & Swimming as Child's #FirstSport

From life-saving skills learned from swimming lessons to safe-guarding backyard pools, NDPA launches #FirstSport public service social media campaign.

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Amid continuous reports of drowning incidents nationwide during the first

half of 2024, the National Drowning Prevention Alliance (NDPA) is taking action with a new summer-long campaign that teaches parents and caregivers about the Five Layers of Protection, including the importance of water competency, to avoid a tragedy and help save lives.

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Parents have the power to prevent drowning. We invite everyone to help protect kids this summer by watching the #FirstSport video and practicing the Five Layers of Protection.”

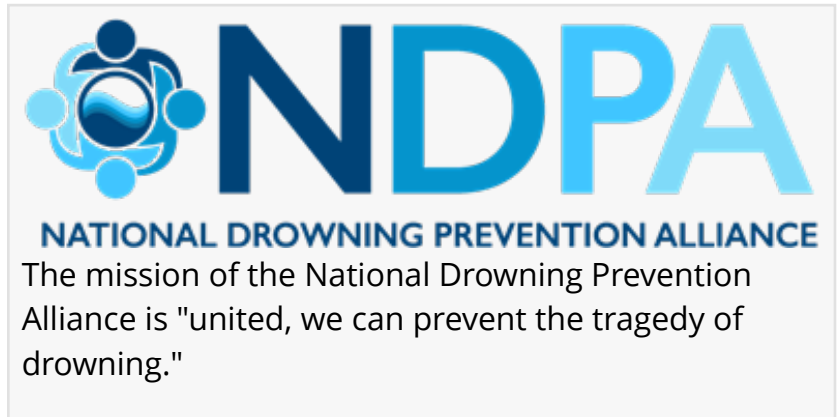
*Adam Katchmarchi, Ph.D.,
CEO, National Drowning
Prevention Alliance*

This summer, NDPA is launching #FirstSport which kicks off on May 1, 2024 with the debut of a public service video on social media. The campaign brings together athletes, advocates, parents, partners, and hundreds more who have pledged their support to help keep kids safe by sharing the video and its message with their fans and followers throughout National Water Safety Month and all summer long.

Among those joining the effort is Miami Dolphins Linebacker, Shaquil Barrett, who founded Arrayah’s Hope following the tragic loss of his two-year-old daughter in

April 2023. In honor of her memory, it is the foundation’s mission to help parents and families learn about water safety - from swimming lessons to the importance of gates and fencing. By joining forces with NDPA on #FirstSport, Barrett hopes to spread the water safety message within the football community and beyond.

Directed by Adam Newacheck (WORKAHOLICS), the [#FirstSport video](#) uses talking babies to



make the conversation about water safety easier to have while teaching parents about [NDPA's Five Layers of Protection](#). The video also encourages parents to make swimming the #FirstSport they teach their child, because it is the only sport that provides kids with life-saving skills.

"Too many of our children are lost to drowning each year, but we need to keep in mind that drowning is accidental and can be prevented," said Adam Katchmarchi, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer, National Drowning Prevention Alliance. "We invite the public at large to join us in protecting kids from drowning by watching and sharing the #FirstSport video and learning about water safety and the Five Layers of Protection. By adopting the Five Layers of Protection when enjoying a backyard pool, at the beach, or when a child is exposed to open water, parents have the power to prevent drowning."

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), drowning is the leading cause of death among children ages 1-4. Data also shows that 69% of drowning incidents involving young children occur during non-swim times when a child is drawn back to the water and there are no barriers or adults present to prevent access.

Developed with input from pediatricians, epidemiologists, and aquatics education professionals, NDPA and its partners in the water safety and drowning prevention community encourage parents and caregivers to practice the Five Layers of Protection whenever a child is near open water to prevent a drowning incident. The Five Layers of Protection, which are intended to work



NDPA's #FirstSport public service video encourages moms and dads to teach their kids to swim and help save lives this summer.



By adopting the Five Layers of Protection when enjoying a backyard pool, at the beach, or when a child is exposed to open water, parents have the power to prevent drowning.

together, include:

1. Barriers and Alarms – to prevent children from gaining access to a pool or open water unsupervised.
2. Supervision – close, constant, and capable adult supervision any time children are in or around water.
3. Water Competency – equipping every child with basic water safety skills to reduce the risk of drowning and aquatic-related injuries.
4. Life Jackets (tested and approved by the U.S. Coast Guard) – to provide protection in and around open water.
5. Emergency Response Preparedness – including CPR training with rescue breaths and having a phone available and ready to call 911.

Added Katchmarchi, “There are many misperceptions about drowning, particularly as it relates to children but perhaps the most important myth to dispel is that one strategy for prevention is enough. This summer, we want to change that by spreading the word about the five layers of protection and reaching more parents via the #FirstSport public service campaign.”

About the National Drowning Prevention Alliance (NDPA) The mission of the National Drowning Prevention Alliance is “United, we can prevent the tragedy of drowning.” Through education, awareness, and advocacy, NDPA seeks to reduce the incidence of drowning and aquatic injuries in the United States and abroad and to address the single leading cause of death among children ages 1 to 4. For more on #FirstSport and the Five Layers of Protection, visit ndpa.org or follow on social (Facebook/Instagram/X @drownalliance).

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