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DOH-Seminole Supports National Water Safety Month

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Sanford, Fla. – The Florida Department of Health in Seminole County (DOH-Seminole) promotes National Water Safety Month, observed each May, to educate the community on drowning prevention and how to safely enjoy the state's many lakes, rivers, beaches, and pools.

Water safety is everyone's responsibility. Whether you are a parent, caregiver, neighbor, or community group member, everyone plays a role in drowning prevention. Data shows that children ages 1-4 are most likely to drown in a home swimming pool. Children ages 5 and older are more likely to drown in natural bodies of water.

DOH-Seminole highlights the importance of following the water safety tips below.

Water Safety Tips

- Always keep your eyes on children in and around water, including bathtubs, pools, and open bodies of water.
- Never leave a child alone around water.
- If your child is missing, check pools and surrounding bodies of water.
- Use barriers to prevent children from entering bodies of water, such as fences, self-closing/self-latching gates, and secure doors with alarms.
- Have a phone nearby in case you need to call 9-1-1 in an emergency.
- Avoid swimming in a body of water with an open cut or wound. If there's bacteria in the water, it can enter the body through a cut or wound.
- If a cut or wound happens when in the water, it should be washed with clean, running water and soap and covered with a clean, dry, bandage.

Beach and Lake Swimming

Swimming in open water is different than swimming in a pool. Even the strongest swimmer can get into trouble swimming in open water. Follow these tips when swimming at the beach or lake:

- **Swim It:** Always swim with a buddy, and when safety flags and signs give it the all-clear to do so.
- **Shore It:** If you have a weakened immune system, a cut on your skin, or don't have a buddy to swim with, stay on dry land.
- **Dodge It:** If you encounter animals that live near or in the water, stay away. Also, do not drink, swim, wade, use personal watercrafts, or come into contact with waters where

there are visible algal blooms like red tide and blue-green algae. For current information on red tide or blue-green algae, please visit Protecting Florida Together or the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Algal Bloom Dashboard.

For more information, contact DOH-Seminole at 407-665-3000.

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