U.S. Swim School Association Encourages Families to Continue Swim Lessons Year-Round

U.S. Swim School Association urges families to keep children in lessons year-round as drowning remains a leading cause of childhood death.



PHOENIX, AZ, UNITED STATES, September 30, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- As children return to school, swim lessons are often one of the first activities families pause. But fall and winter remain critical months for water safety. Drowning doesn't take a break when the weather cools down, and taking a break from lessons can cause children to lose important swimming and water-safety skills.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 4, and the second leading cause of death for children ages 5 to 14.

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> *Lisa Zarda, Executive Director for the U.S. Swim School Association*

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) drowning-prevention guidance, published in May 2026, says that while pediatric drowning fatality rates declined from 1999–2019, they have trended upward since 2020. In the report, the AAP recommends that all children learn to swim, with lessons beginning by their first birthday. Many swim schools even support parent-and-me-type lessons as early as eight weeks old, helping children get acclimated and comfortable in the water.

"Year-round swim lessons are important to keep kids from forgetting what they've learned," said Lisa Zarda, Executive Director for the U.S. Swim School Association. "When children stop

swimming in the fall and winter, they don't just lose their strokes and techniques from the summer, they also lose critical water safety skills. Even a short break can cause skill regression. In fact, every month a child is out of swim lessons, it can take about a week of practice to rebuild those skills."

When kids stop lessons after heading back to school, they can lose some of the muscle memory and confidence they've built in the water. Continued swim lessons throughout fall and winter months can help kids stay strong, confident and prepared in and around water all year long.

Swim lessons offer benefits beyond water safety, too. Research shows that swimming lessons give children the confidence, focus and resilience they need to manage the challenges of school and beyond. Studies show swimming supports skills like thinking, language and math, which can help kids do better in school.





Photo by Stephanie Slezak

Research from Griffith University found that children who swim regularly often reach milestones earlier than other kids. For example, many little swimmers could count to 10 sooner than expected and, on average, young swimmers were 6 to 15 months ahead in areas like problem-solving, counting, language and following directions. Swim lessons encourage this growth through fun water activities, like games that involve counting and listening carefully to instructions.

"Swimming can also positively affect mental health by reducing stress and anxiety in children," Zarda added. "Whether it's the relaxing feeling of floating or splashing around with friends, being in the water can help children feel calm, happier and better able to cope with day-to-day stressors."

Experts encourage families to keep swimming lessons on the calendar and water safety top-of-mind throughout the year.

Visit the U.S. Swim School Association's website at https://usswimschools.org/find-a-school for a comprehensive list of schools that offer swim lessons in your area. The U.S. Swim School Association's network of trusted swimming schools can help children of all ages develop confidence and competence in the water, ensuring they have a fun and safe swimming experience all year long.

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