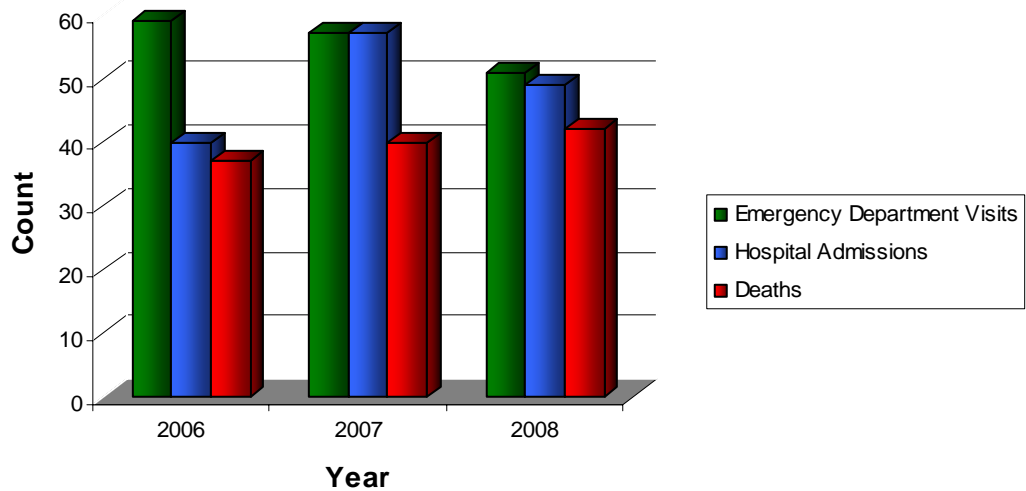


UNINTENTIONAL DROWNINGS AND NEAR-DROWNINGS, ALL AGES MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FL 2006 - 2008



- From 2006 - 2008, 119 Miami-Dade residents unintentionally drowned, averaging 40 deaths per year.
- Although Miami-Dade had the second highest number of drownings among all counties in Florida between 2006 & 2008, the average drowning fatality rate was 20% lower than the entire state.
- More than one in five fatal drowning victims were children aged 14 and younger. For every child who died from drowning, another six were either hospitalized or received emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries.
- Nonfatal drownings can cause brain damage that may result in long-term disabilities including memory problems, learning disabilities, and permanent loss of basic functioning (i.e., permanent vegetative state).

Drownings and Near Drownings - All Ages
Miami-Dade County, 2006 - 2008



Who is at Risk?

Children

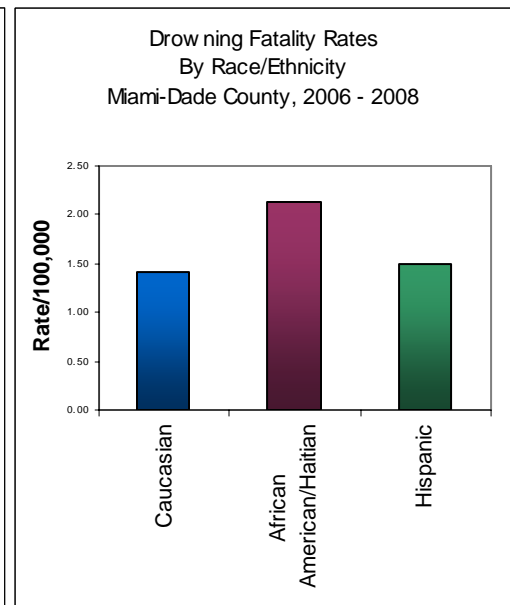
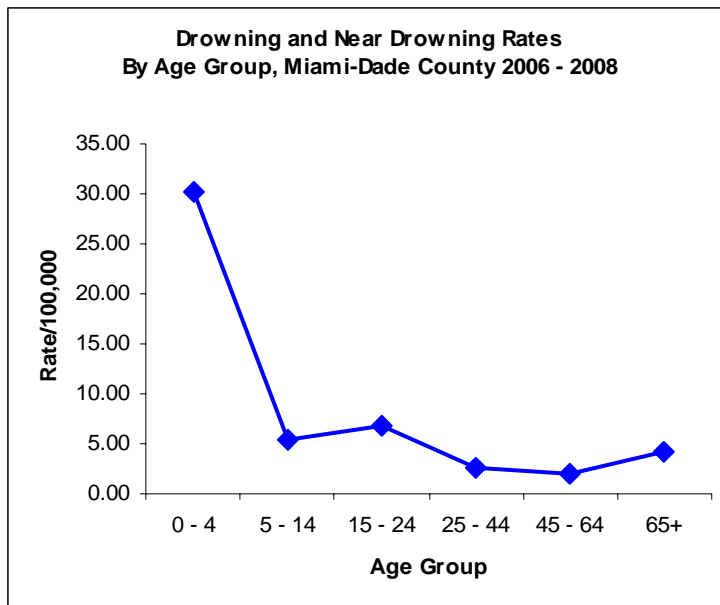
- Children aged 0—4 had drowning and near drowning rates 8 times greater than all other age groups combined and 10 times greater than individuals aged 45+ years.
- In 2008, of all children 1 to 4 years old who died, 24% died from drowning. Fatal drownings are the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children aged 1 to 14 years.

Males

- From 2006 – 2008, males comprised 78% and 76% of all drowning-related fatalities and hospital admissions respectively.

Race/Ethnicity

- In Miami-Dade between 2006 & 2008, the fatal unintentional drowning rate for African Americans was 1.4 times that of Hispanics.
- Rates of fatal drowning are especially higher by race/ethnicity in certain age groups. For example, the fatal drowning rate of Non-Hispanic white children aged 0 to 4 nearly twice that of Hispanic children in the same age range.
- Factors such as the physical environment such as access to swimming pools and a mixture of social and cultural issues such as importance of swimming skills and participating in recreational water-related activities may play a role in drowning rate racial differences.



Risk Factors

Lack of Barriers and Supervision

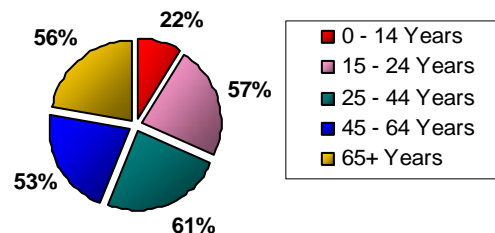
- Children under one year most often drown in bathtubs, buckets, or toilets. Among children ages 1 to 4 years, most drownings occur in residential swimming pools. Most young children who drown in pools are last seen in the home, out of sight for less than five minutes, and are in the care of an adult at the time. Barriers such as pool fencing or alarms can help prevent children from gaining access to the pool area.



Alcohol/Drug Intoxication

- Nearly half (48%) of all drowning victims during 2006—2008 were under the influence of alcohol/drugs at the time of the incident.
- Adults aged 18—64 years comprised 2/3 of intoxicated drowning victims.
- 91% of drowning victims aged 35—44 years were intoxicated at the time of the incident
- 62% of intoxicated victims drowned in either natural bodies of water or canals.
- 55% of female victims were intoxicated at the time of the drowning as compared to 46% of males.

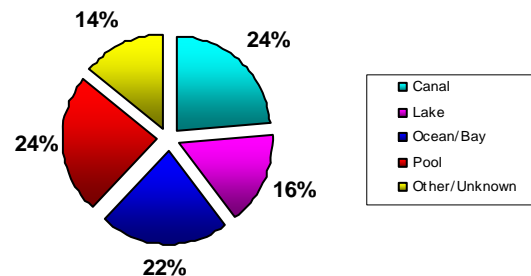
Percentage of Drowning Fatality Victims Under the Influence of Alcohol/Drugs, By Age Group
Miami-Dade County, 2006 - 2008



Seizure Disorders

- During 2006—2008 four individuals with seizure disorders drowned. Three of the drownings occurred in a bathtub. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has stated drowning is the most common cause of unintentional injury death for persons with seizure disorders, with the bathtub as the site of highest drowning risk.

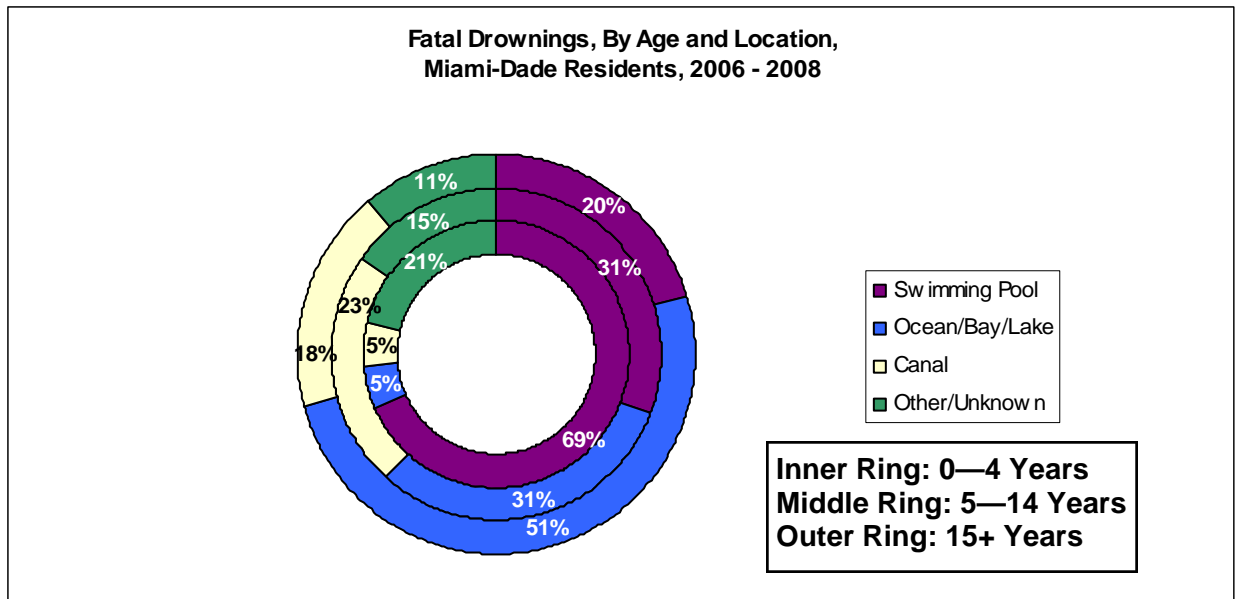
Drowning Locations of Intoxicated Victims
Miami-Dade County, 2006 - 2008



Location of Fatal Drownings

During 2006—2008:

- Half of all drownings among individuals aged 15 years and over occurred in a natural body of water (i.e. lake, ocean, river)
- Over two-thirds of drownings among children under the age of five occurred in a residential swimming pool.
- 44% of drownings among elderly individuals occurred in a residential swimming pool.



Drowning Prevention

- Assign a responsible adult to watch young children while in the bath tub and all children swimming or playing in or around water. Adults should not be involved in any other distracting activity (such as reading, playing cards, talking on the phone, watching television, or mowing the lawn) while supervising children.
- Always swim with a buddy. Select swimming sites that have lifeguards whenever possible.
- Avoid drinking alcohol before or during swimming, boating, or water skiing. Do not drink alcohol while supervising children.
- Learn to swim. Be aware that the American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend swimming classes as the most important way to prevent drownings for children younger than 4. Constant, careful supervision and barriers such as pool fencing are needed even when children have completed swimming classes.
- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). In the time it may take for paramedics to arrive, your CPR skills can make a difference in someone's life. CPR has been shown to improve outcomes in drowning victims.

Swimming Pool Safety:

- Install a four-sided, isolation pool fence that completely separates the house and play area of the yard from the pool area. The fence should be at least 4 feet high. Use self-closing and self-latching gates that open outward with latches children cannot reach. Additionally, consider additional barriers such as automatic door locks or alarms to prevent access or alert you if someone goes into the pool area.
- Remove floats, balls, and other toys from the pool and surrounding area immediately after use. The presence of these toys may encourage children to enter the pool area and possibly fall in.
- Do not use air-filled or foam toys, such as “water wings”, “noodles”, or inner-tubes, in place of life jackets (personal flotation devices). These toys are not made to keep swimmers safe.

If you are in or around natural bodies of water:

- Be aware of the local weather conditions before swimming or boating. Strong winds and thunderstorms with lightning strikes are dangerous.
- Use U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets when boating, regardless of distance to be traveled, size of boat, or swimming ability of boaters.
- Know the meaning and obey warnings of colored beach flags.
- Look out for dangerous waves and signs of rip currents (water that is discolored and choppy, foamy, or filled with debris and moving in a channel away from shore). If you are caught in a rip current, swim parallel to shore. Once free of the current, swim toward shore.

Prevention Resources

Websites

Florida Department of Health Office of Injury Prevention

<http://www.doh.state.fl.us/demo/InjuryPrevention/DrowningPrevention.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Water Related Injuries

<http://www.cdc.gov/HomeandRecreationalSafety/Water-Safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html>

American Academy of Pediatrics, Water Safety

<http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/watersafety.cfm>

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Pool and Spa Safety

<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/chdrown.html>

American Red Cross South Florida

<http://www.miamiredcross.org>

Produced by the Miami-Dade County Health Department (MDCHD)

Data Sources: Death Certificate, Hospital Discharge, and Emergency Department Data

MDCHD Phone: 305-470-5649 Email: Anthony_Llau@doh.state.fl.us

Website: <http://dadehealth.org/injury/INJURYintro.asp>

