

# Unintentional Drowning to Children 0-4 Years Old Miami-Dade County, FL 2000-2009

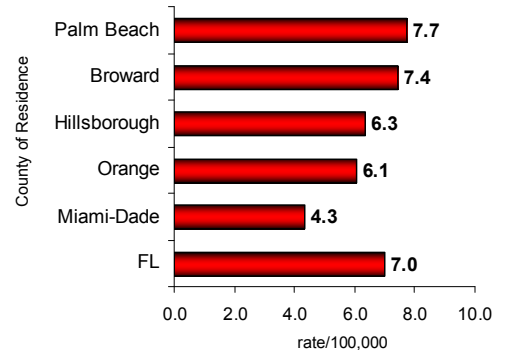
## Miami-Dade County Injury Facts



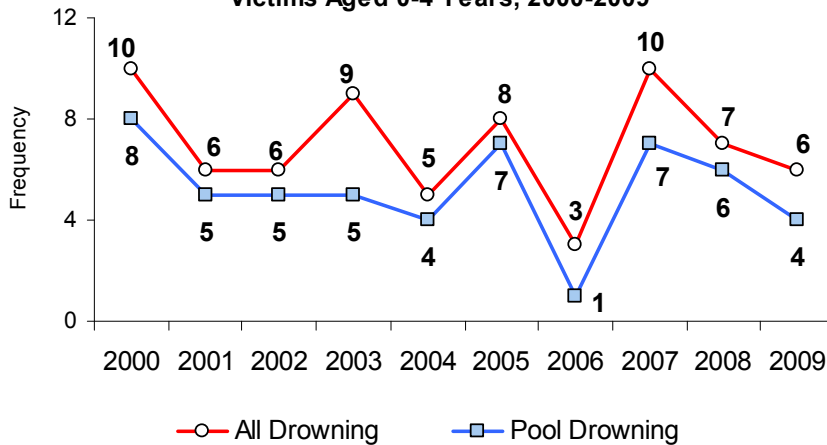
Drowning is the third leading cause of death to Miami-Dade County children aged 0-4 years and the leading cause of death to children aged 1-4 years. The state of Florida has the highest drowning rate in the nation for this age group.

- Miami-Dade County had the 2nd highest number of child drowning deaths (70) among all Florida counties between 2000-2009.
- However, Miami-Dade's cumulative drowning rate for children aged 0-4 years was significantly lower than all other large FL counties and 39% lower than the drowning rate for the entire state.

Age 0-4 Drowning Rates by County  
2000-2009



Miami-Dade Unintentional Drowning Incidents  
Victims Aged 0-4 Years, 2000-2009



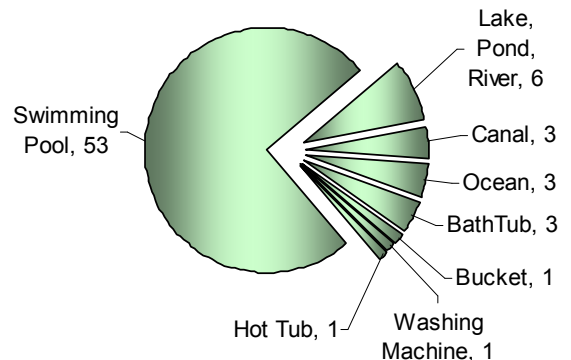
- The incidence of child drowning has fluctuated greatly over this 10-year period.

- Deaths that occurred in swimming pools were responsible for 75% of drowning deaths and closely mirrored the trend for all drowning deaths.

- In 2006, Miami-Dade experienced its lowest child drowning incidence with 3 deaths and only 1 swimming pool-related death.

### Location of Drowning

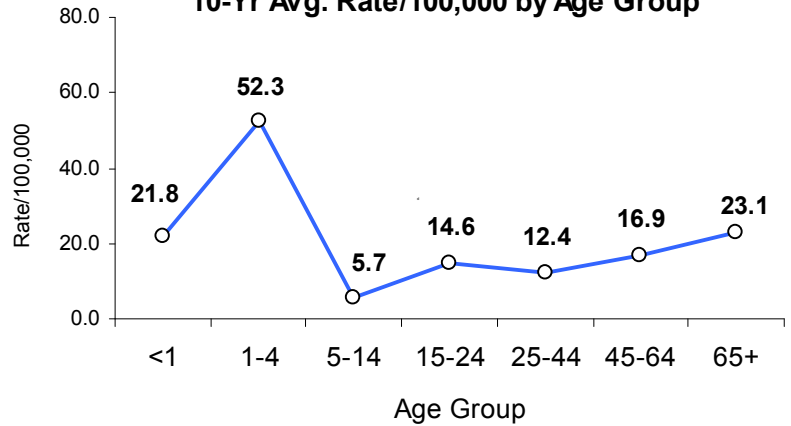
- Fifty-three (75%) of age 0-4 drowning incidents occurred in swimming pools or hot tubs next to swimming pools. The vast majority of these pool deaths occurred in residential in-ground pools. Twelve other deaths occurred in natural or man-made water (ocean, lake, pond, canal) and 5 deaths occurred within the home (bath tub, bucket, washing machine).



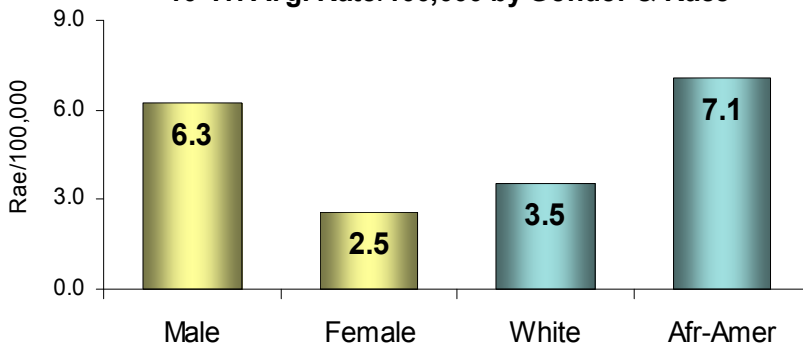
## Who is at Risk

- Over the 10 years 2000-2009, the drowning rate for county children age 1-4 was more than two-times higher than for any other age group.

**Unintentional Drowning, 2000-2009  
10-Yr Avg. Rate/100,000 by Age Group**



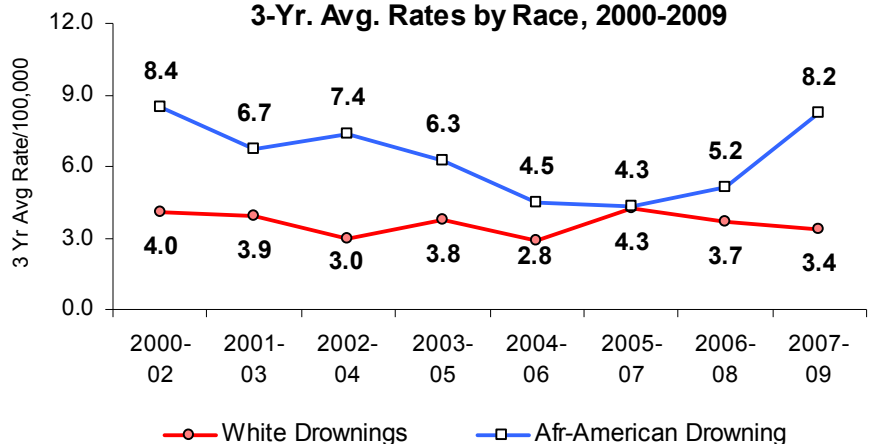
**2000-2009 Unintentional Drowning, Age 0-4  
10-Yr. Avg. Rate/100,000 by Gender & Race**



- Male children aged 0-4 accounted for 70% of all drowning incidents. The male drowning rate was more than twice the rate for females. The drowning rate for black children was more than twice the rate for white children.

- The discrepancy in drowning rates between black and white children gradually narrowed throughout the decade until 2005-07 when the drowning rate was 4.3/100,000 for both groups. Since then the rate for black children has escalated to where the difference between the two groups in 2007-09 was among the highest this decade.

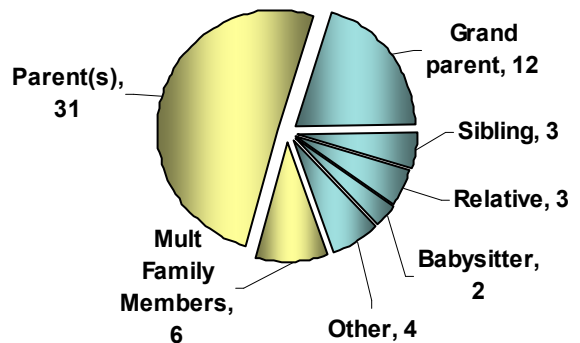
**Miami-Dade Age 0-4 Unintentional Drowning  
3-Yr. Avg. Rates by Race, 2000-2009**



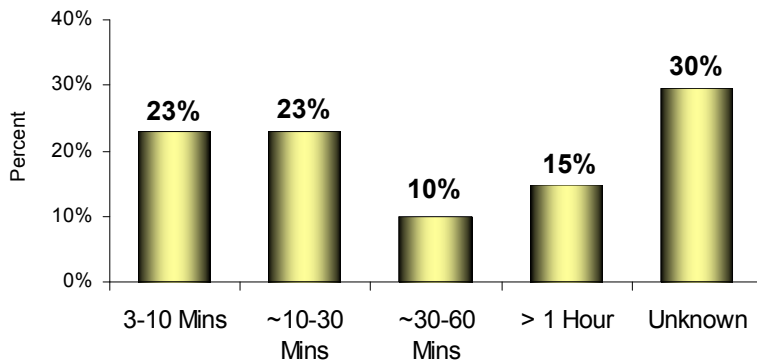
## Child Supervision

- In 61% of the drowning incidents, parents or multiple family members that included a parent were responsible for supervision of the child.
- More than 1/3 of the child victims were supervised by babysitting grandparents (12), other relatives (3), siblings younger than 13 years old (3), and babysitters (2).
- In 23% of the deaths, the child was reported to be out of sight of the supervising individual for <10 minutes. Another 23% lost track of the child between 15-30 minutes. Nine children (15%) were left unsupervised for more than 1 hour.
- CPR was performed by the individuals who discovered the victims in 50% of cases.
- In 30% of incidents, CPR was not administered until an EMS provider or police arrived at the scene.

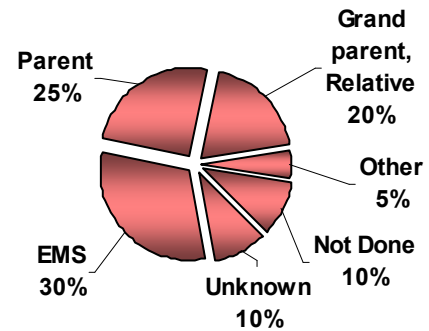
Who was Supervising Child



Elapsed Time When Child was Last Seen Alive



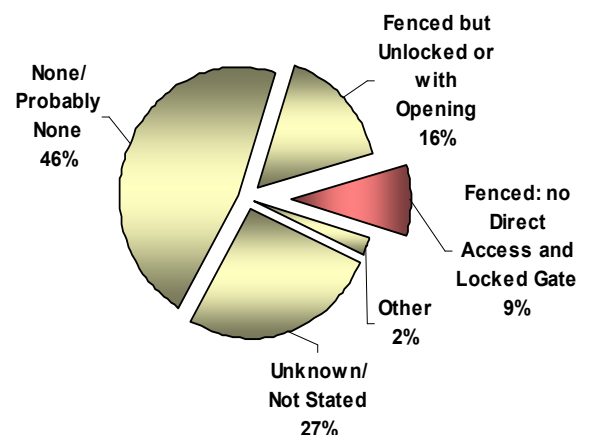
Who Initiated CPR



## Type of Barrier Around Pool

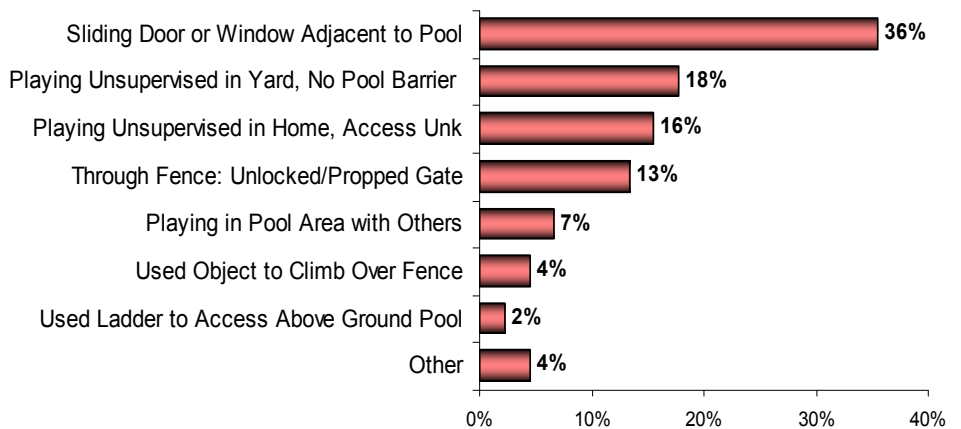
- Regarding deaths that occurred in swimming pools, only 4 cases had documentation that the home had proper locked fencing surrounding the pool to prevent direct child access.
- Nearly 1/2 of the incidents occurred at homes with no fencing around the swimming pools and allowed direct access by the child.
- Sixteen percent of deaths involved pools with fencing that was either unlocked, in disrepair or was propped open to provide an access point.

Type of Barrier Around Swimming Pool



## How Child Accessed Swimming Pool

- The most common way a child accessed the pool area was through an open door or window (usually a sliding glass door adjacent to the pool area).
- A common theme was the report of children being left unsupervised, either within the home (16%) or in the yard (18%), in a swimming pool environment with little to no protective fencing around the pool.



## Drowning Prevention

The Ounce of Prevention Fund of Florida in collaboration with the Florida Department of Health have developed the following drowning prevention recommendations:

- Children can drown in a matter of seconds. If a child is missing, check the water first.
- There is no substitute for adequate supervision. Children need to be watched. Never leave children unattended in or around pools or spas - not even for a second.
- A child can drown in less time than it takes to answer the telephone.
- Children drown in pools, spas, buckets, toilets and bathtubs. A child can drown in as little as a few inches of water.
- Empty buckets immediately after use and store them upside down and out of a child's reach.
- Never allow a young child to be responsible for a younger sibling or playmate.

The key to preventing swimming pool tragedies is to have layers of protection. This includes placing barriers around your pool to prevent access, using door alarms, closely supervising your child and being prepared in case of an emergency.

- Never disable an alarm or prop open the gate to a swimming pool barrier.
- Learn to swim and teach children how to swim.
- Flotation devices and swimming lessons are not a substitute for adult supervision.
- Remove toys from in and around the pool area, especially riding toys.
- Knowing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) can be a lifesaver.



### Produced by the Miami-Dade County Injury Surveillance System

DATA SOURCES: Death Certificates, Office of Vital Statistics, FL Dept. of Health  
Medical Examiner Records, Miami-Dade County Medical Examiner Dept.

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**HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
[www.dadehealth.org](http://www.dadehealth.org)

