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News Release

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Safe Kids Northeast Florida/Wolfson Children's Hospital Educating Public on Hidden Hazards in Pools and Spas

New Research for National Safe Kids Week Shows Parents Not Adequately Aware of the Risk of Drain Entrapment and Entanglement

Jacksonville, Florida, May 12, 2006 – Safe Kids Northeast Florida/Wolfson Children's Hospital shared findings from a national study showing 66 percent of parents are not at all aware or are only somewhat familiar with the risk of a child becoming entrapped or entangled in the drain of a pool or spa. The research, conducted by Safe Kids Worldwide, is being announced during the Safe Pools For Safe Kids Water Safety Fair, a local event marking National Safe Kids Week 2006 (May 6-13).

Jacksonville resident Mary-Leslie Olive lost her son several years ago when he accidentally drowned in a pool in Jacksonville. "My family learned about the dangers of drowning the hard way," said Mrs. Olive. "I want to make sure that other families do not have to go through such pain. It is so important to watch your children at all times and make sure that every pool and spa has the proper safety devices installed."

Art Speight, the father of a local toddler who almost drowned in a retention pond across from their home, knows well the importance of parents being prepared by being trained in pediatric CPR. "I had taken CPR a number of years ago, but when I needed it, the skills came back to me and I was able to bring our son back from nearly drowning in that pond," he said. "Because there are so many pools and spas and many open water sites in our community, all parents and pool owners need to be trained in pediatric CPR."

This year's National Safe Kids Week events are dedicated to preventing drowning, the leading cause of death in Florida's children under five, and the second leading cause of accidental death among children ages one to 14. A specific focus has been put on drain entrapment and entanglement, a particularly horrific way for children to drown. Entrapment occurs when part of a child's body becomes attached to a drain because of the powerful suction of a pool or spa's filtration system. It also can occur when a child's hair or swimsuit gets tangled in the drain or on an underwater object, such as a ladder.

"A child is no match for the powerful suction of a drain," said Cynthia Dennis, RN, Safe Kids Northeast Florida coordinator. "With the right equipment and knowledge, children can

easily be protected from this risk. Parents should warn their children to stay away from drains and install safety devices if they own a pool or spa.”

The new research shows only one third (34 percent) of parents with children aged 14 or under in the household recognize that drowning is one of the top two causes of accidental death among children, and that 66 percent are not at all or only somewhat familiar with the threat of drain entrapment and entanglement. Both of these findings are alarming because research reveals that pool and spa ownership is becoming more popular. One out of two parents (49 percent) report that they have a pool or spa at home.

Through public awareness activities like National Safe Kids Week, Safe Kids Northeast Florida seeks to educate parents and caregivers about potential risks to children, along with adults’ role in preventing injuries.

National Safe Kids Week has been held annually for 13 years and this year’s theme is *Safe Pools for Safe Kids*. To educate parents about how to keep kids safe from drowning, Safe Kids Northeast Florida/Wolfson Children’s Hospital will host a Family Water Safety Fair on Saturday, May 13 from 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. at Kids Kampus, Metropolitan Park. Safe Kids, its lead organization Wolfson Children’s Hospital, and many partners will teach parents and kids water safety through interactive exhibits, games, and demonstrations. Costumed characters including Ronald McDonald, giveaways and fun summer prizes will add to the fun for everyone.

For more information or for a copy of the research report, visit www.usa.safekids.org.

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Baptist Health is a faith-based, mission-driven system comprised of Baptist Medical Center Downtown, Baptist Heart Hospital, Baptist Medical Center Beaches, Baptist Medical Center Nassau; Baptist Medical Center South and Wolfson Children’s Hospital - Jacksonville’s only children’s hospital. Baptist Health also includes cardiology and cardiovascular surgery services, a comprehensive cancer center, orthopaedic institute, women’s resource center, a full range of psychology and psychiatry services, outpatient facilities and a network of primary care physicians’ offices throughout Northeast Florida. Baptist Health is the official healthcare provider for the Jacksonville Jaguars.

For more information, visit www.e-baptisthealth.com

Safe Kids Northeast Florida works to prevent accidental childhood injury, the leading killer of children 14 and under. . Safe Kids Northeast Florida is a local chapter of Safe Kids Florida Coalition, a member of Safe Kids Worldwide, a global network of organizations dedicated to preventing accidental injury. Safe Kids Northeast Florida was founded in 2003 and is led by Wolfson Children’s Hospital.

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