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## **TEXAS ALREADY LOSES 30 CHILDREN TO DROWNINGS THIS YEAR!**

### **Memorial Day Weekend is Here, Help Us Keep Texas Families Safer.**

**Austin, Texas** – (May 26, 2017) – May is Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Awareness Month, and Colin's Hope is reminding the public about critical safety tips that can mean the difference between life and death. Tragically, Texas has already lost 30 children to fatal drownings this year. We **MUST** talk about water safety and prevent these drownings.

"As Memorial Day weekend is here and families start heading to the pools, backyard pool parties, lakes and beaches to beat the summer heat, we would like to remind everyone of the importance of Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Month," said Alissa Magrum, Executive Director of Colin's Hope. "In 2016 there were 107 fatal child drownings in Texas – that's 107 too many and a 43% increase from 2015! NOW is the perfect opportunity to give Central Texans simple reminders as to how they can keep their families safer around water."

Nationwide, drowning is the number 1 cause of unintentional injury related death for children under 5 and the second leading cause for ages 1-14, but drowning is preventable.

Colin's Hope offers the following tips to keep families safer:

- **WATCH kids around water and keep them in arm's reach** - Always appoint an undistracted adult to watch children in the pool, spa and open bodies of water at all times.
- **Teach swimming and lifesaving skills** - Make sure children know how to swim, float, and get in and out of the water safely. Learn CPR and know how to recognize a swimmer in trouble.
- **Wear Life Jackets** - Always Wear US Coast Guard approved life jackets when in or around open water, including on docks and boats.
- **Install barriers** - Backyard pools should be fenced on all sides with four to five-foot-high

fence. Gates should be self-latching and locking. Spas and hot tubs should be covered and locked when not in use.

### **CHALLENGE: BECOME A WATER GUARDIAN**

- o We challenge all Texans to visit [www.colinshope.org](http://www.colinshope.org) to learn more water safety tips and to become Water Guardians by TAKING AND SHARING the Colin's Hope Water Safety Quiz.

### **About Colin's Hope:**

Colin's Hope, a local nonprofit, formed in 2008 after 4 year old Colin Holst tragically drowned in a public pool in South Austin, with lifeguards on duty and family members present. Our mission is to raise water safety awareness to prevent children from drowning. Drowning is the number 1 cause of accidental death for children under 5 and a leading cause for ages 1-14. While no-one is drown proof, drowning IS preventable.

Our major programs/initiatives include:

1. Creation and distribution of 75,000 bilingual Water Safety educational cards annually to families, preschools, pools, water parks, and youth based organizations.
2. Sponsorship, and co-coordination of a preschool swim safety program for at-risk 4 year olds. This program includes swim lessons plus on land water safety education, and is conducted in partnership with the YMCA of Austin and local school districts. This program just received generous support from; The Statesman Retta Kelly Swim Safe Endowment Fund, Austin Community Foundation and Swimability.
3. Global dissemination of water safety information through our online [Water Safety Quiz](#), and our [Water Safety Tips & Layers of Protection](#).
4. We help stock life jacket loaner stations at local area lakes so that visitors can borrow and return a life jacket.
5. We are a preeminent community resource for water safety and drowning prevention information for media, hospitals, parents, schools and community-based organizations. We serve in leadership roles on local, State and National water safety boards.

We are a very passionate organization with a small staff (2), a dedicated [Board of Directors](#) and a committed team of 4000+ community volunteers and strategic partners—sharing a vision of a world where no child drowns.