

Drowning Prevention: Advancing Strategy and Impact

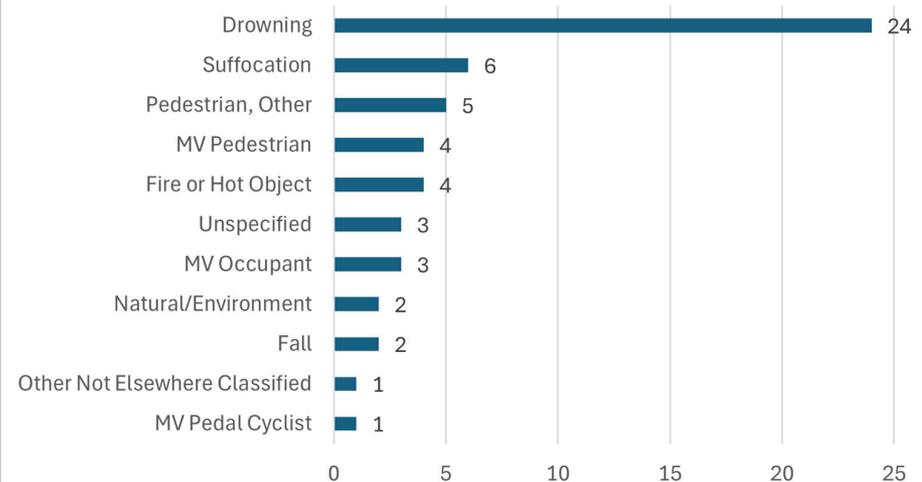
March 11, 2026



Why This Matters

- ▶ Drowning = #1 cause of accidental death for children under 5
- ▶ Fast, silent, preventable
- ▶ Misconceptions about what drowning looks like

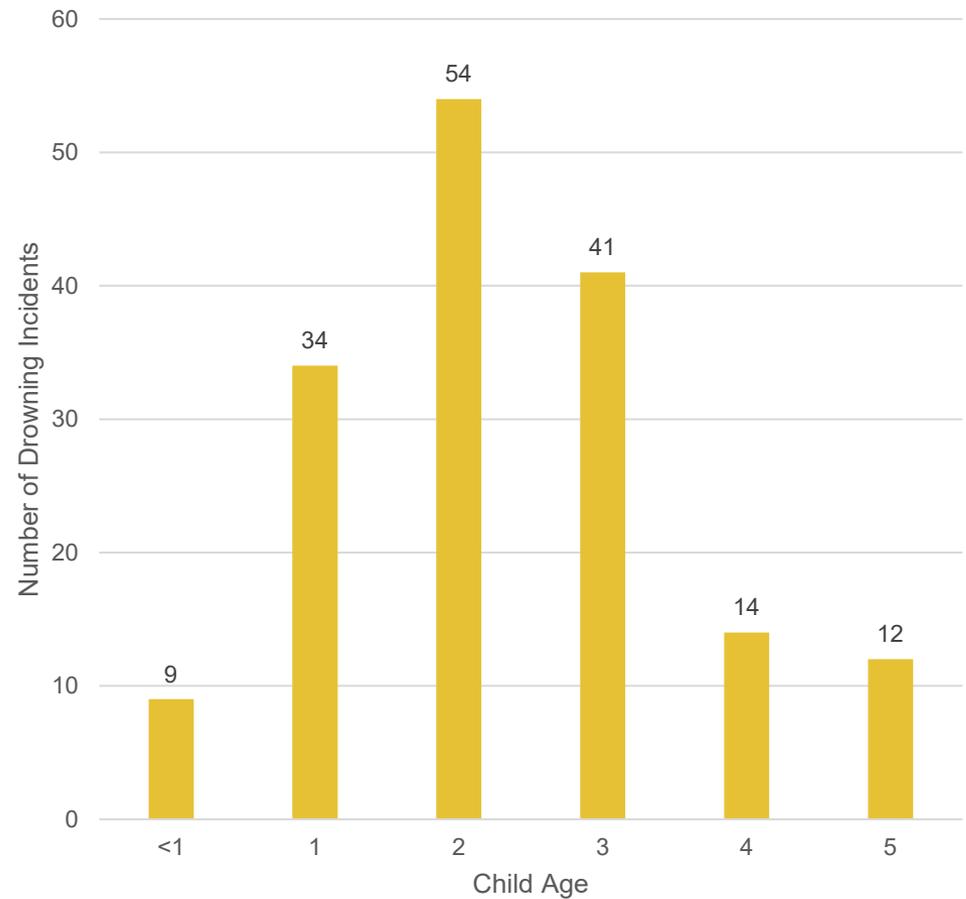
Unintentional Deaths by Category in Riverside County, 0-5 yr olds, 2018-2022



Understanding Risk & Barriers

- ▶ Children under 5: high risk
- ▶ Barriers: cost, transportation, access, caregiver swim skills

911 Calls for Drowning/
Near-Drowning Incidents
in Riverside County by Age (2022-2024)



Evidence-Based Prevention

- ▶ Swim lessons reduce risk by 88%
- ▶ Multi-layer approach:
 - ▶ Swim lessons
 - ▶ Parent education
 - ▶ Physical barriers
 - ▶ Community awareness



Community Impact

- ▶ Partnerships with Head Start, preschools
- ▶ Free CPR classes
- ▶ Removing accessibility barriers
- ▶ Outcomes: survival skills, confidence, safety culture



Prevention vs Response

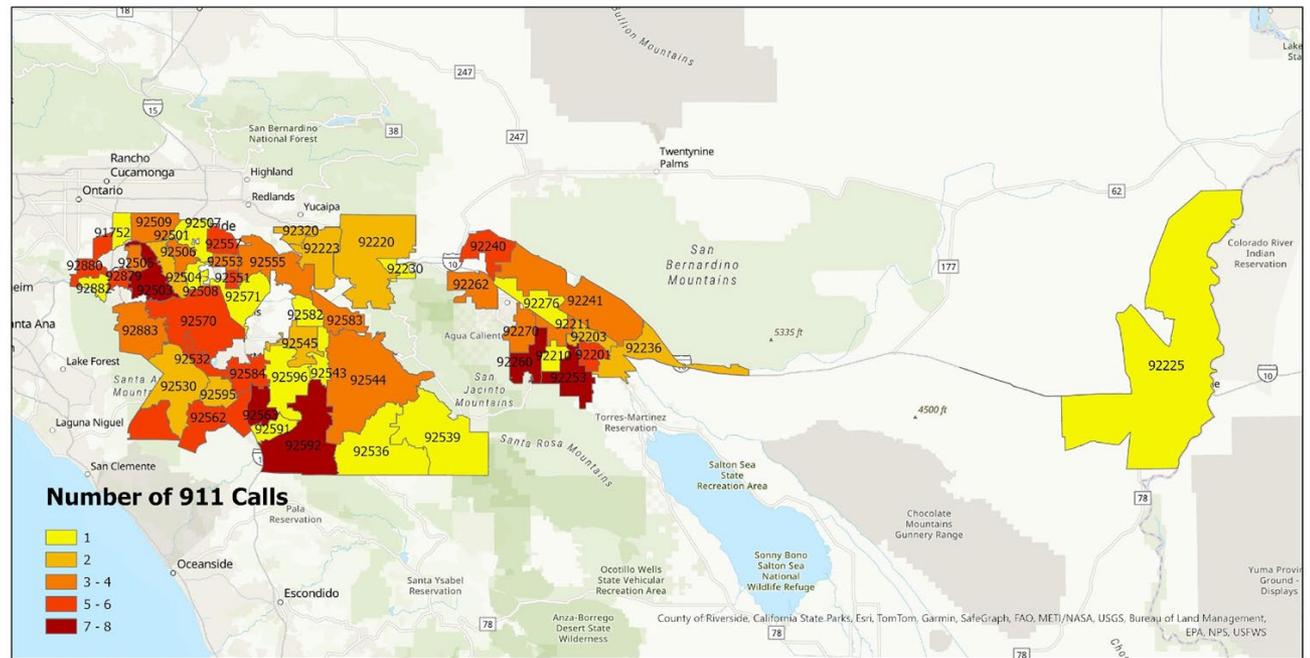
- ▶ Swim lessons: \$475 per child
- ▶ Near-drowning: tens of millions in costs
- ▶ Prevention is cost-effective



Equity & Access

911 Calls for Drowning/Near-Drowning Incidences of 0-5 Yr old Children in Riverside County (2022-2024)

- ▶ Target high-risk areas (e.g., District 5)
- ▶ Expand access = expand safety



Measurable Outcomes

- ▶ Children completing swim benchmarks
- ▶ Caregivers trained
- ▶ Increased access
- ▶ Reduction in drowning incidents



Water Safety: Not Just Lesson Anymore

New Model: Crisis Response After Near-Drowning

- ▶ **Near-drowning referrals now go directly** from Children's Services to our FRC
- ▶ **Immediate caregiver contact**, often same day
- ▶ **Full FRC intake** to assess family needs
- ▶ **Stabilizing the home**, not just offering swim lessons:
 - ▶ Pool fencing & door alarms
 - ▶ Safe sleep & childcare support
 - ▶ Trauma-informed care for the whole family



Golden Ticket Access

FIRST 5
Riverside County
Children & Families Commission

FREE Swim Lessons for Children 0-5
A gift of safety from First 5 Riverside County

If your family was referred by Children's Services because a pool or open water was nearby, this ticket is for you.

Water safety saves lives — and we're here to help make it easy, free, and local.

What to do:

1. Choose a swim program that works for you (see below)
2. Call to schedule lessons for your child (ages 6 months-5 years)
3. Say you were referred through Children's Services - First 5 Riverside County will cover 100% of the cost

Need help scheduling? Visit First5Riverside.org or call us at (800) 266-3880. We'll walk you through it.



One-On-One Survival Swim Lessons

SoCal Water Babies
(951) 251-5210
Serving Riverside, French Valley and Cathedral City
Active February - November

Lifesaver Aquatics
(951) 460-0024
Serving Murrieta and Surrounding Areas
Active February - October



Group Swimming Lessons Next Page ● ● ● ● ● ▶

Group Classes

Corona-Norco Family YMCA
(951) 736-9622
Serving Corona and Norco and Surrounding Areas
Active Year-Round

Desert Recreation District
MyRecreationDistrict.com/swim-water-programs
Serving Cathedral City, Coachella, Indio, La Quinta and Mecca
Active Year-Round

City of Palm Springs
(760) 323-8278
Serving Palm Springs and Surrounding Areas
Active Year-Round

Family YMCA of the Desert
(760) 565-7467
Serving Palm Desert and Surrounding Areas
Active March - June

City of Banning
(951) 922-3242
Serving Banning and Surrounding Areas
Active June - August

City of Temecula
(951) 308-6396
Serving Temecula and Surrounding Areas
Active June - August

City of Beaumont
(951) 769-8524
Serving Beaumont and Surrounding Areas
Active June - July

City of Desert Hot Springs
(760) 329-6411
Serving Desert Hot Springs and Surrounding Areas
Active June - July

Jurupa Area Recreation and Park District
(951) 361-2090
Serving Jurupa Valley and Surrounding Areas
Active June - July




Golden Ticket = fastpass to swim lessons for highest-risk kids

Co-designed with Children's Services to prioritize the most vulnerable families

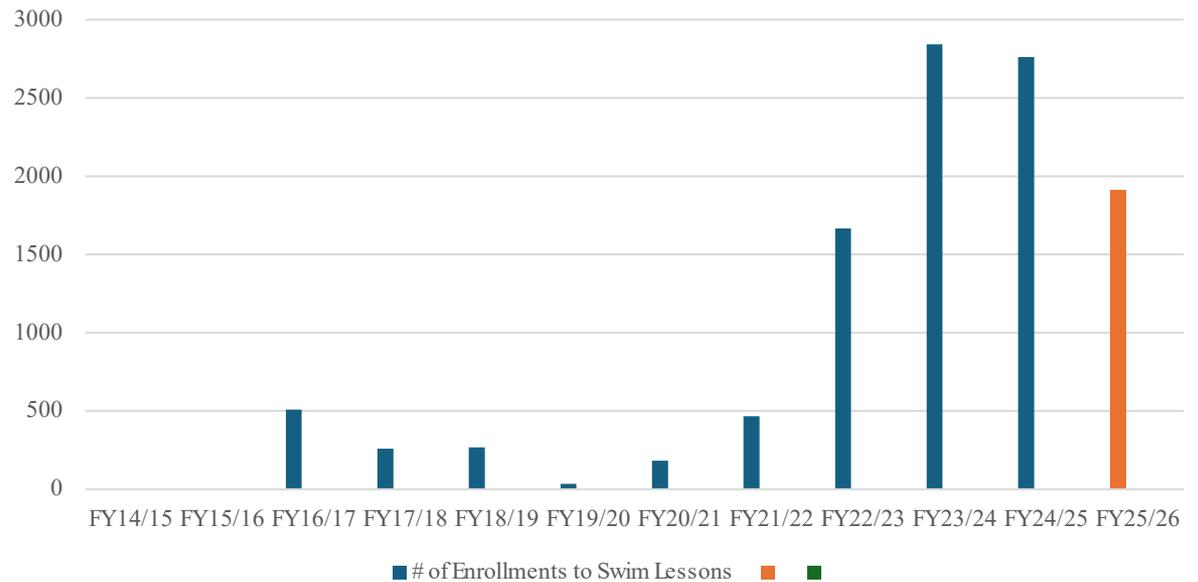
No long waitlist, no extra hoops

This is targeted equity in practice, not just outreach messaging

Drowning Prevention Data

Fiscal Year	# of Enrollments to Swim Lessons
FY 14/15	N/A
FY 15/16	100
FY 16/17	510
FY 17/18	259
FY 18/19	268
FY 19/20	35
FY 20/21	182
FY 21/22	466
FY 22/23	1,666
FY 23/24	2,842
FY 24/25	2,762
FY 25/26	1,910
Grand Total	11,000

Drowning Prevention Swim Lessons
Total Enrollments per FY



Where Water Safety Is Going Next

Adapting our rapid support model to serve veteran households with water hazards

Exploring partnership with Fire Department for **proactive prevention** including safety barriers *before* an incident occurs

Demonstrating that FRCs are the County's rapid wraparound arm, not just "a program"

Hard-wired swim lesson referral form now in A360

PSA to include **billboards** and other **community messaging** around water safety

Closing

- ▶ Every child deserves ***water as joy, not danger***
- ▶ Your investment = ***confidence, equity, lives saved***

