

NCHS Report on Unintentional Drowning Deaths

submitted by George Young 5/19/2014

In April of 2014, the National Center of Health Statistics (NCHS) released a report on unintentional drowning deaths in USA from 1999-2010. It was very interesting for me to review. All the numbers and stats are so very helpful for me to better understand the sadness of drowning. Kinda like a kid getting back a test score with much excitement or maybe a baseball fan following baseball only by viewing the numbers as written on paper in the box scores.

OK....I am kinda wired. Well, it took me a little time to establish the NCHS report viewed drowning (drowning is actually an old term) as "submersion". On the last page of the report it was the disclosure and defined. Unintentional Drowning was defined as "the process of experiencing respiratory impairment from submersion/immersion in liquid". So the same definition that has become the bench mark for recording drowning as stated in the 2002 World Congress Drowning report were used. I was going crazy with confusion wanting to be able to compare #'s to #'s in the correct way. Then I realized that the #'s in this report was a blanket of #'s including boating #'s . So Unintentional drowning means in a general term of submersion leading to respiratory impairment including boating. Most reports do not include #'s from boating related accidents.

Key findings in the report as seen through my eyes:

- From 1999-2010 a total of 46,419 deaths from unintentional drowning occurred in the US and an average of 3,868 deaths per year.
- Drowning deaths rates decreased over time for all age groups except for adults 45-84.
- Since 2005, unintentional drowning has replaced motor vehicle traffic incidents as the leading cause of death from boys 1-4 years old.
- Saturday is the day of the week that more unintentional drowning take place than any other day of the week, follow by Sunday then Monday. I was surprised about Monday being third.

- For Male the leading location of intentional drowning is in natural water (ocean, lakes, rivers and ponds).
- For Female the leading location for unintentional drowning were evenly divided equally between bath tub , swimming pool, other/unspecified & nature water.
- Under 1 year old children the leading unintentional drowning took place in bath tubs and for 1-4 year olds it takes place mostly in swimming pool.

I hope everyone finds this information interesting. Hopefully and just maybe it open your eyes to the sad #'s of unintentional drowning that takes place.