



Water Guardians: Levi's Legacy was created in memory of Levi Hughes. On June 10, 2018, while on vacation, he slipped away from a room filled with his parents and friends. He fell into the pool and drowned. Levi was gone for mere moments. His mother, Nicole Hughes, has dedicated herself to channeling her grief to help other parents avoid a similar tragedy.



Along with education and enrolling in swim lessons, adult supervision is an important way to help prevent drowning. Remember to DESIGNATE a WATER GUARDIAN to supervise children AT ALL TIMES that they have access to water. Drowning happens in seconds.

Goldfish Swim School proudly aligns with Water Guardians: Levi's Legacy.

SWIM LESSONS

where can we enroll?



At Goldfish, we offer swim lessons & programs for infants, toddlers and young children. We use our holistic philosophy, The Science of SwimPlay®, to build life skills both in and out of the water using play-based learning in a fun and safe environment. Our mission is simple: to help children be safer in and around the water.



Visit goldfishswimschool.com to find the location nearest you.

The BEST PRESCRIPTION for WATER SAFETY is SWIM LESSONS!

We know it's scary, but it is also true: drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death in children ages 1 - 4. But it doesn't have to be that way. We can do something to change that statistic, and it all starts with swim lessons for your child. Nicole Hughes tragically lost her son, Levi, to drowning. Please read her heartfelt letter to understand the importance of water safety awareness and swim safety.

Fellow Parents,

I am a mom to three children: Lily, Reese, and Levi. My house is filled with baby gates on stairs and safety outlet covers. I worry about screen time and organic vegetables. I thought I was doing everything to keep my children safe. How did I not know that drowning was waiting to snatch my son, to steal his childhood just as it was getting started?

On June 10, 2018, while on vacation in Alabama, my 3 year old son, Levi, slipped out of a room filled with people. He was wearing khaki shorts, watching TV with friends after dinner when he somehow got off the couch, out the door, down the stairs, and drowned — all within moments.

In the days following this tragedy, I was forced to do the unimaginable, like write my son's eulogy and pack up his beloved Spider-Man boots.

My husband, a physician, and I are loving, educated parents, yet we still lost a child to a preventable death. Shortly after losing Levi, we learned that drowning is the #1 cause of death for children ages 1-4, and the #3 for ages 5-19. It is a silent epidemic that our society mostly ignores. Nearly 70% of children who drown do so during a non-swim time — just like our Levi, who slipped out of the door while I was closing a bag of Cheetos.

HOW did we not know?

I firmly believe swim lessons would have saved him, and I will always regret not giving him a chance to fight for his life. I naively assumed swimming was something that could wait until he was older, and to be honest, lumped it together with dance, soccer, and Scouts — counting swimming as another extra-curricular activity rather than a necessity of equal importance to choosing the correct car seat or baby-proofing your home.

I was guilty of falling prey to the stigma that drowning only happens to neglectful parents who don't watch their children during swimming time. I created Water Guardians: Levi's Legacy in order to spread this awareness about drowning I so desperately wish I had known. Drowning requires layers of protection — swim lessons are a vital part. Supervision is also important. The "Water Guardian Tag" designates an adult as the designated supervisor any time children have access to water, even when they are not necessarily swimming.

In March 2019, nine months after losing Levi, the American Academy of Pediatrics released updated protocols for drowning prevention — including swim lessons, and talking to your pediatrician about water safety.

I am standing in front of you, with my hands on your shoulders, begging you to hear this message. We can change the way our culture perceives water, spread awareness about the real truth about drowning, and save future children.

Sincerely,

Nicole Hughes

Founder, Water Guardians: Levi's Legacy

DROWNING

did you know?

THE STARTLING FACTS, ACCORDING TO:

THE AMERICAN ACADEMY OF PEDIATRICS' 2019 POLICY UPDATE

- Drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death in children ages 1 - 4 years and the third leading cause of injury-related death among children ages 5 - 19 years.
- In 2017, drowning claimed the lives of almost 1,000 US children younger than 20 years old.
- In 2017, 8,700 children younger than the age of 20 visited a hospital ER for a drowning event.
- The components of water competency include: water safety awareness, basic swim skills and the ability to recognize and respond to a swimmer in trouble.

THE US CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION DROWNING PREVENTION TOOLKIT

- 69% of drowning deaths of children under 5 happen when they were not expected to be swimming.
- Most victims of pool-related drowning deaths were missing for 5 minutes or less when they were found.
- It's not just pools, ponds, oceans, streams, rivers or lakes that are drowning risks. Bathtubs, toilets and even buckets of water can be drowning dangers. Children can drown in as little as two inches of water.

PREVENTION

what can you do?



ENROLL YOUR KIDS IN SWIM LESSONS



EDUCATE ON WATER SAFETY TO ELIMINATE DROWNING



USE COAST GUARD-APPROVED LIFE JACKETS ON OPEN WATER



ALWAYS DESIGNATE A "WATER GUARDIAN"



INSTALL A 4-SIDED FENCE AROUND YOUR POOL



INSTALL DOOR AND POOL ALARMS



DO NOT STORE TOYS IN POOLS



DO NOT RELY ON FLOTATION DEVICES DURING SWIM TIME