

‘A few seconds’ can lead to summer tragedy

As the temperature hit triple digits in Maryland this week, folks sought relief in a variety of ways, especially in the cool water of pools, lakes and the ocean. As with many things, some joys come with risks.

A 6-year-old boy drowned while at Sandy Point State Park with family members over the holiday weekend. In just a matter of minutes, a fun family outing turned to tragedy.

Our hearts and our prayers go out to the family of the boy who drowned recently, and all families affected by such heartbreaking tragedy. Even those who survive near-drowning often face years of medical struggles. Whether it's a backyard pool or the neighborhood rec center, a park or a beach, with lifeguards or without, we have to be vigilant about children around water.

The first element is that we must teach. Before we teach children that stoves are good things because they help us cook our food, the first lesson we teach them is that stoves are hot, and that they should be careful around them. In the same way, children need to be taught care around water. Swimming lessons at an early age are beneficial, of course. But for young children, the lure of water to play in is irresistible. As adults, we have to be mindful. Often, after a drowning, you'll hear that the adults looked away for "just a few seconds"; that's all it takes for a child to slip under the water.

These tips may provide ways to mitigate the dangers of kids around water.

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