Fifth in a series of five.

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State to promote safety during National Public Health Week, April 4–10
Day five — Safety in the community — preventing child drowning

ANCHORAGE, ALASKA — The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services is placing special emphasis on safety during National Public Health Week, April 4–10. This year’s theme is Safety is No Accident. Unintentional injuries — such as motor vehicle crashes, traumatic brain injury and falls — rank among the 10 leading causes of hospitalizations in Alaska.

A different aspect of injury prevention is highlighted each day throughout the week.

For Friday, April 8, our focus is safety in the community — in particular, preventing drowning.

Alaska has 10 times the national rate of drowning. Drowning is the fourth highest cause of unintentional fatalities in Alaska, and No. 1 for kids ages 5 to 9.
- Most fatalities occur from accidents in open skiffs or canoes.
- Over half of Alaska drownings occur on lakes and rivers.
- Over 90 percent of fatality victims were not wearing a lifejacket (PFD/Personal Flotation Device).
- On average, three children die every day as a result of drowning in the United States.
- Between 2000 and 2009, 52 Alaskans under age 15 drowned.
- The Kids Don’t Float PFD (personal flotation device) loaner program started in Homer in 1996 and now has 488 loaner sites statewide.
- At least 19 lives have been saved since the Kids Don’t Float program went statewide in 1997.

For more information on the Kids Don’t Float program go to:

For more safety ideas go to our state injury prevention website:
http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/injury_prevention/.

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