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Burleson Nissan and Burleson Honda donate to Fire Department Drowning Prevention Initiative

Local car dealership steps forward to fund free drowning prevention lessons

The Burleson Fire Department is determined to end childhood drownings in our community and they are getting a huge financial contribution to make that happen from Burleson Nissan and Burleson Honda.

“We are so thrilled to have this wonderful partnership in this very important initiative,” said K.T. Freeman, Burleson Fire Chief. “Burleson Nissan and Burleson Honda didn’t hesitate for a second when we reached out to them to share our vision for this program.”

Burleson’s Drowning Prevention Initiative has developed through the department realizing a community risk and partnering with organizations to not only bring awareness to it but to work on correcting it.

“We, unfortunately, had a child drowning death in our community in October 2016 and talking with our partners at the Burleson Recreation Center and Sigma Swimming we were shocked to find that a large portion of our young population cannot swim,” said Chief Freeman.

“The scary situation is that a lot of parents, and the children themselves, believe they can swim,” said Coralee Flug, Burleson’s site coordinator for Sigma Swimming. “But when we evaluate them it is very apparent they cannot.”

Representatives from Burleson Fire, Sigma Swimming, the Burleson Recreation Center, Be Healthy Burleson, Cook Children’s, and North Texas Jellystone Park, along with Shanon Murphy, from the Kidd Kraddick Morning Show started meeting in April 2017 to find ways they can partner to end childhood drowning deaths. The team took part in the World’s Largest Swimming Lesson day in June at Jellystone Park and discussed how it would be great to offer additional free drowning prevention lessons to children in the community.

Burleson Recreation Center offered to donate their indoor pool to provide a space for the lessons and Sigma Swimming offered to do the lessons at a largely discounted cost of \$20 a child. With the goal of providing as many children as possible with quality lessons the team determined they had space and enough certified-instructors to offer four one-hour time slots every Saturday for one month. Each time slot will allow 66 children to receive a lesson. The child to instructor ratio is 1-to-6 and the children will attend a lesson every Saturday in April, which equals four hours of instruction time per child. 264 second-graders in the community will be able to receive free drowning prevention lessons through this initiative.

The task for the team was then to raise the \$5,280 needed to pay for the certified instructors and that is where Burleson Nissan and Burleson Honda stepped in.

“We are very passionate about the Burleson community, especially our youngest members,” said Justin Crain, general manager and managing partner for Burleson Honda and Burleson Nissan. “We are honored to be part of this great initiative that will save lives in our city and we look forward to all the great things that will come from this program.”

The criteria to register for the lessons are that the child must be in second-grade and either live in the city limits of Burleson or attend school in the Burleson Independent School District.

Currently, this program is open only to the second-grade age group due to the type of structure the lessons have. If you are interested in signing up other children for lessons, please contact the Burleson Recreation Center, 817-426-9629.

Registration for the initiative opens March 1.

The fire department is hopeful to add additional drowning prevention lessons to other age groups as the program continues. For more information about the program or to register your second-grader, www.burlesontx.com/DrowningPrevention



Burleson Nissan and Burleson Honda's General Manager and Managing Partner, Justin Crain, presents the Burleson Fire Department with a check for \$5,280 to provide 264 second-graders with four hours of swim lessons.

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