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**Burleson Fire Department and Drowning Prevention Coalition
offering free swim lessons**

For the second year in a row, free lessons are being provided

Children from four to 10-years-old can get four free drowning prevention lessons thanks to the Burleson Fire Department and the Burleson Drowning Prevention Coalition.

In an effort to end childhood drownings within the Burleson community the Coalition launched free swim lessons last year to all first, second and third-graders who live within the city limits of Burleson or who attend a Burleson ISD school. Over 200 children took advantage of the lessons in April 2018.

“We, unfortunately, had a child drowning death in our community in October 2016,” stated K.T. Freeman, Burleson Fire Chief. “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.”

This year the Coalition expanded the age groups to reach more children. Online registration will begin on March 4 and space is limited. Participants will attend a one-hour lesson for four weeks, every Friday afternoon/evening, starting on April 26. Multiple time slots are available to choose from during the registration process. All lessons will be taught by Sigma Swimming certified swim instructors and will take place at the Burleson Recreation Center, 550 NW Summercrest Blvd.

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

“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 inaugural year’s lessons were made possible by a donation from Burleson Nissan and Burleson Honda and this year’s lessons are provided free from the funds raised during the Burleson Block Party in October 2018. The Burleson Economic Development Corporation hosted the Burleson Block Party, an all-day event that celebrated our community, and residents and businesses donated to make the free swim lessons possible.

For more information about the program or to register your child,
www.burlesontx.com/DrowningPrevention

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