



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
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For Immediate Release

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Tampa Y Offers Free Swim Lessons during Spring Break

Tampa, FL (Feb. 18, 2019) – Recent data shows more children drowned in Hillsborough County last year than any other county in Florida. The number of drownings spiked to 11 in 2018. That’s the highest in the state and more than the previous two years combined. That same year, another six children drowned in Pasco County — two more than in 2017. Statewide, the number of child drowning deaths was 88, up 7 percent from the prior year, according to the Florida Department of Children and Families.

The Y and the Florida Blue Foundation believe teaching children how to be safe around water is not a luxury; it is a necessity. Thanks to a Florida Blue Foundation grant, the [Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA](#) will offer free [Safety Around Water](#) lessons to children **March 18-21** to coincide with Hillsborough County’s and Pasco County’s Public Schools spring break.

The Safety Around Water program is free and open to the entire community, beginners and non-swimmers, ages 3-12 years. During the 4-day course, certified instructors teach kids a sequenced set of skills that will reduce the risk of drowning and give them confidence in and around water.

Classes take place Monday, March 18 - Thursday, March 21. Participants must be present on the first day of class and bring their own swimsuit and towel. A YMCA membership is NOT required; however, due to limited space, pre-registration is required at these participating Tampa Ys:

[Bob Gilbertson Central City Family YMCA](#)
[Bob Sierra YMCA Youth & Family Center](#)
[Campo Family YMCA](#)
[East Pasco Family YMCA](#)
[New Tampa Family YMCA](#)

[North Brandon Family YMCA](#)
[Northwest Hillsborough Family YMCA](#)
[Plant City Family YMCA](#)
[South Tampa Family YMCA](#)
[Spurlino Family YMCA at Big Bend Road](#)

The Tampa Y will also offer the free Safety Around Water program in May and August of this year. The YMCA of the Suncoast, YMCA of Greater St. Petersburg, Manatee YMCA and Sarasota YMCA are also participating. Dates and times vary based on YMCA location.

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About the Tampa Y

The Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA is a cause-driven [4-star charity](#), strengthening Hillsborough and East Pasco communities for 130 years, through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the Association, 18 facilities engage 160,000+ men, women and children — regardless of age, income or background — to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve our community’s health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. The Tampa Y has long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change. www.tampaymca.org

About Florida Blue Foundation

Florida Blue Foundation enables healthy communities by making grants, building coalitions and rewarding best practices. More than three million people in Florida have received direct health services as a result of grants made to nonprofit organizations since its founding in 2001. Florida Blue Foundation is a trade name of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Foundation, Inc., an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. For more information about the Foundation, please visit www.FloridaBlueFoundation.com. Florida Blue and the Florida Blue Foundation are on Facebook and Twitter.