

Majority of Americans Believe Teaching Young Children to Swim is Important

(February 4, 2019)

Local park and recreation agencies provide access to low-cost aquatics programming in communities nationwide

Ashburn, Va. (Feb. 4, 2019) — According to a recent poll conducted by the [National Recreation and Park Association \(NRPA\)](#), more than 9 in 10 Americans (95 percent) believe it is important for children to learn how to swim at an early age. Parks and recreation is a leading provider of low-cost/free swimming lessons. Nearly 70 percent of agencies nationwide provide aquatics programming, including learn-to-swim lessons and water safety programs for children and adults.

People of all ages agree it's important for young children to learn how to swim. However, baby boomers (97 percent) feel the strongest. In fact, eighty-five percent of baby boomers believe it's extremely or very important while Gen Xers (79 percent) and millennials (73 percent) also feel it is extremely or very important.

“Every child, no matter their age or background, should have the opportunity to learn how to swim,” said Barbara Tulipane, CAE, NRPA president and CEO. “Parents and care givers everywhere are encouraged to visit a local aquatic or recreation center where there are affordable options for everyone.”

Research shows risk of drowning can be reduced by 88 percent if children participate in formal swimming lessons between ages 1–4. That's why NRPA is proud to partner with the World Waterpark Association to support the World's Largest Swimming Lesson™, June 20, 2019, which brings together tens of thousands of individuals from hundreds of communities around the globe who all participate in the same lesson over the course of a 24-hour period to raise awareness about drowning and the fact that swimming is a vital life-saving skill that every child should learn.

This poll is part of NRPA's [Park Pulse](#), a continuing series of monthly surveys that gauge the public's opinion on topics relating to parks and recreation. To explore previous Park Pulse survey results, visit www.nrpa.org/Park-Pulse.

To view the interactive charts with the survey results, click here.

To view the full-size infographic, click here.

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About the National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that all Americans have access to parks and recreation for health, conservation and social equity. Through its network of 60,000 recreation and park professionals and advocates, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy and active lifestyles, conservation initiatives and equitable access to parks and public space. For more information, visit www.nrpa.org. For digital access to NRPA's flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit www.parksandrecreation.org.