

Study: black males drown more often

CHICAGO (AP) — The first national study on childhood drownings suggests that rivers, lakes and ponds pose the biggest threat except for children under 5.

The study is based on figures collected from death certificates for 1,420 children under age 20 who drowned in 1995. It appears in the July issue of Pediatrics.

"These national data will greatly assist researchers in understanding where and how these deaths occur and in de-

signing effective programs to prevent drowning," said Dr. Duane Alexander, director of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, which conducted the study.

Among children who died in accidental drownings, 5 percent were less than one year old and 37 percent were between 1 and 4 years old. Fifteen percent were age 5 to 9, 15 percent were age 10 to 14, and 29 percent were between 15 and 19 years old.

Seventy-four percent were male. Forty-seven percent of the drownings happened in freshwater such as rivers, creeks, lakes and ponds, while 32 percent happened in pools. Only 4 percent were in the ocean.

The most common drowning sites by age group were bathtubs for infants, pools for 1- to 4-year-olds and fresh water for 5- to 19-year-olds.

The study also found that after the age of 5, black males face a 12 to 15 times higher risk of drowning in swimming pools than whites. While the research does not explain the disparity, the authors' theories include differences in swimming abilities, in opportunities to take swimming lessons and in safety conditions in pools where blacks and whites swim.

"A number of these deaths were in pools accessible to the public, rather than in private residential pools. Public pools hadn't been a big area of concern; however, our results present a very different picture," said Dr. Ruth Brenner, the lead author and a researcher at the NICHD.

The authors said the findings underscore the importance of recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics, which include constant supervision of infants and young children around water, swimming lessons for all children aged 5 and older, and use of life-jackets or other personal flotation devices when playing near rivers or lakes.

Independence day



Snook residents **Cody Vajdak** and **Casey Connor** buy fireworks at a fireworks stand on Highway 60 Monday. The stand is run by **Kevin Rhonda Jones** and their two children, **Tommy** and **Ashley**, who travel from Kansas to sell fireworks in the Brazos Valley each year.

Drowning danger zones

A study in the July issue of the journal Pediatrics examines nearly 1,500 childhood drownings, the second-leading cause of accidental death in children. Here's a look at where most drownings occur.

- 4% Ocean or sea
- 8% Unspecified
- 9% Bathtubs or buckets
Nearly 80 percent of infant drownings occur inside the home.
- 32% Swimming pools and hot tubs
Drownings in children ages 1 to 4 are most likely to occur in pools.
- 47% Rivers, lakes and ponds
Drownings in children ages 5 to 19 are most likely to occur in freshwater spots.

SOURCE: Pediatrics AP

Man gets 120 years for girl's rape

CHICAGO (AP) — A man was sentenced to 120 years in prison Monday — the maximum — for a sex attack that left a 9-year-old child known as Girl X blind, mute and crippled.

"I do not believe that even this sentence is enough for the acts of this defendant, but the law limits the sentence that I can impose," Judge Joseph Urso told Patrick Sykes, the 29-year-old convicted sex offender.

Prosecutors said that in 1997, Sykes lured a girl into an apartment at the crime-ridden Cabrini-Green housing project, sexually assaulted her, poured roach spray down her throat, beat her and left her for dead in a dirty stairwell. The girl became known in the Chicago media as Girl X.

Before the sentence was imposed, Sykes took the witness stand and declared: "No matter how much time I get in this courtroom today, I will still say it is not me. I am innocent."

Girl X testified this spring during Sykes' trial, using head movements to answer questions. She said a man she had often seen in her apartment building offered her a banana, luring her into an apartment, then pulled a knife on her.

On Monday, a prosecutor read a statement initiated by Girl X, now 14 and in a wheelchair, in which she said: "I am glad he is going to jail because he was wrong for doing this to me."

She also said that before the attack, she liked to dance and run around. "I miss walking and talking and playing

around and seeing," the statement read. "I can't use my hands. I miss using my hands."

At the time of the attack, Sykes, an unemployed ex-convict, was living in the apartment building with a girlfriend. He denied being the attacker, saying that he had never seen Girl X until she testified against him.

Police picked up Sykes and questioned him for three days. He was charged after signing what his interrogators said was a confession.

He denied having confessed and said he did not know what he was signing because he was coming out of an epileptic seizure when the paper written in longhand by a prosecutor was placed in front of him.

75 RE TEXAS SPOR

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work and play everyday

Intramurals [] Sport Clubs [] Aquatics
Outdoors [] Golf [] Fitness & Classes

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<h3>ADD SOME SIZZLE TO YOUR SUMMER</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FREE 'Summer Sizzler'!—Enjoy an intense, energizing and fun-filled workout or a more relaxed atmosphere with any of our THREE FREE CLASSES on Tuesday, July 17th. Choose from the Boot Camp Challenge, Red Hot Step & Dance, or Cool Conditioning. All classes will start at 5:30 p.m. and run until 7:00 p.m. and one FREE JUMP START program will be awarded at the end of each class. • JUMP START Your Fitness Goals—Rec Sports personal trainers will give you the platform to begin your healthy lifestyle with: 1 <i>personal training session</i>, a <i>complete fitness profile</i>, a <i>nutrition consultation</i> with the "food processor" and two <i>bonus gifts for only \$30!</i> • HOT 'Salsa Lessons'!—Register now through July 9th at Member Services. Price starts at \$25 per couple. Please visit us at Member Services or our website for more information. 	<h3>GET VALUE WITH GOLF</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golf Lessons!—Single and group lessons available for beginners to those looking to improve skills. Rates are a competitive \$30.00 per individual lesson or \$50.00 per group lesson. Discounts are available for 3 lessons or more. Contact Rick Kahlich at 845-1723 for more information. • Junior Golf Clinic—July 23–July 27, ages 8–12 8:00 a.m.–10:00 a.m. and ages 13–17 10:00 a.m.–Noon. \$75.00 per camper. Clinic will cover all aspects of the golf game. <p>Open to the public! We are located on the southside of the A&M campus. Call the Pro Shop at 845-1723 & visit us online.</p>	<h3>GET INVOLVED WITH INTRAMURALS</h3> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: left;">Event</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Registration Period</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>3-on-3 Basketball</td> <td>July 2–July 9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Slow-Pitch Softball</td> <td>July 2–July 9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sand Volleyball</td> <td>July 2–July 9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Half Court Indoor Soccer</td> <td>July 2–July 9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Water Basketball</td> <td>July 2–July 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Racquetball *</td> <td>July 2–July 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Golf</td> <td>July 2–July 10</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tennis *</td> <td>July 2–July 10</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><small>* Indicates a FREE event, others involve a minimal cost. Intramural registration closes at 6:00pm on the date of closing.</small></p>	Event	Registration Period	3-on-3 Basketball	July 2–July 9	Slow-Pitch Softball	July 2–July 9	Sand Volleyball	July 2–July 9	Half Court Indoor Soccer	July 2–July 9	Water Basketball	July 2–July 10	Racquetball *	July 2–July 10	Golf	July 2–July 10	Tennis *	July 2–July 10			
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<http://recsports.tamu.edu>