Supplement Your Drowning Prevention Efforts through Story Time

When most parents and caregivers enroll their children in swim lessons, the motivation is quite basic: to keep them from drowning. Knowing—and applying—the concepts of water safety is an essential component of drowning prevention.

Teaching water safety is required throughout the Red Cross Learn-to-Swim program. It is our expectation that some specific water safety content is integrated into every single lesson. Every skill that is taught in the early levels of the Red Cross Learn-to-Swim program is a safety skill—from entering and exiting the water safely, breath control, floating in treading, and fundamental swimming strokes. But the physical skills are just part of what they must learn. Children must also learn how to behave safely, how to make smart choices and how to handle a situation that goes wrong in and around water.

The Red Cross provides resources, including Longfellow's WHALE Tales and the Red Cross Swim mobile app, to help educate and reinforce water safety for children with catchy, memorable slogans such as "Swim as a Pair Near Lifeguards Chair," "Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket" and "Be Cool, Follow The Rules" through engaging, thought-provoking videos and activities.

In addition to the resources provided to teach the Red Cross Learn-to-Swim program, we encourage Water Safety and Basic Swim Instructors to recommend children's books about water safety to those enrolled in your program. Here are some books for you to check out:

- *Josh the Baby Otter: A Tale Promoting Water Safety for Children* by Blake Collingsworth
- *Stewie the Duck Learns to Swim* by Kim and Stew Leonard
- *Swimming Lessons with Stewie the Duck* by Kim and Stew Leonard
- *Swim Safe Little Seals: A Child's Introduction to Water Safety* by Jill Macgregor
- *The Polar Bear Who Couldn't, Wouldn't Swim* by Karen and Brian Cohn

Each book has a different approach and area of focus, but all weave water safety into engaging stories with fun characters. These memorable stories can be helpful tools to reinforce what children are learning either in advance of, during or after swim lessons.