



LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2017

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Pediatric Near Drowning in Lakeland's Steeplechase Community

Lakeland, FL - The Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) responded to a pediatric near drowning at 3126 Thoroughbred Loop West in the Steeplechase Community in Lakeland on Tuesday, August 8, 2017 at approximately 11:55 AM.

LFD Paramedics arrived within minutes and began life saving procedures on a three-year-old patient. On arrival, the patient had a weak pulse. LFD's emergency responders applied advanced life support skills, including the [Handtevy system](#), adopted in 2016 by the department for pediatric emergencies. The patient was stabilized for transport and airlifted to Tampa General Hospital by Aeromed 4 from a landing zone located at nearby Harvest Assembly of God Church. The patient was stabilized but in critical condition. His current condition is unknown.

The incident took place in an above-ground pool located in the backyard of the home. Sadly, the Lakeland Fire Department sees a spike in pediatric drownings every summer. This is a sad but important reminder for caretakers to please take extraordinary measures to help prevent possible drownings.

Every year approximately 300 children under the age of five drown in pools and spas. Florida leads the country in pediatric drownings. Some safety reminders include:

- Constant supervision around all bodies of water, regardless of how big or small.
- Keep children clear of pool drains and openings, as they can create powerful suction.
- Use locks, gates, doors, fences, and screens to create barriers to prevent children from entering pool areas.
- Establish a "pool watcher"; a designated adult to watch and enforce rules.
- Keep a telephone nearby whenever near a body of water to call for help in the event of an emergency.

Polk County EMS provided ambulance transport services on scene. LFD units on scene included E71, Heavy Rescue 73, Medic 2, and Battalion Chief.

- END -

Gary Ballard, Fire Chief

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