

## **For Immediate Release**

### **New Water Safety Standard Needed in Order to End Drowning**

Teaching people to stroke to the side of a pool does not meet the need of the majority of those who do not know how to survive in water.

Sarasota, FL./February 17, 2009

On the eve of the National Drowning Prevention Alliance meeting in Miami, February 23-24, Miracle Swimming Institute™ (MSI) of Sarasota, Florida, calls for a sweeping update to the historical methods of teaching people to be water-safe.

Founder, Mary Ellen (Melon) Dash, states that the original goal to make citizens water-safe in pools by teaching them to stroke to the side of a pool does not meet the need of the majority of those who do not know how to survive in water. “Many people who are learning to swim must first overcome fear and panic and learn to be in control,” she explains. “We have found that in order to survive in open water, people must then be taught how to stay afloat in deep water until help arrives, rather than learning how to perform a stroke for a few yards in order to pass a swimming test. The real test is waiting in deep water.”

Many traditional swimming instruction agencies are not reaching a large segment of the population due to the unmet needs of fearful swim students, especially adults, by current curricula, maintains Dash. Forty-six percent of American adults are afraid in deep water in pools. Sixty-four percent are afraid in deep, open water. (Gallup Poll, 1998) These students are at high risk in swimming and boating accidents and in storms. They will only try such agencies a few times before giving up, unsuccessful.

A higher standard of water safety would benefit all, but adults should be targeted first, since adults comprise 70% of America’s drownings. (Centers for Disease Control, October 2008) Many drowning victims drown in bodies of water that are not swimming pools. People who are taught to be calm in deep water can, by extension, propel themselves to a reachable destination. Dash appeals to municipalities, insurance companies, hospitals, doctors, parents, schools, and organizations with learn-to-swim programs to embrace this shift in teaching to ensure that their communities and family members are water-safe.

Founded in 1983, Miracle Swimming Institute developed a foolproof method to teach adults and children who are fearful in water. The MSI 5-Circles™ Teaching Method transforms fearful students into deep-water swimmers, one of two major requirements for drowning prevention. The other requirement is panic prevention. Founder Dash explains, “People can’t learn what to do with their arms and legs if they are afraid they might not live. We must teach people to depend on themselves for safety rather than relying on the bottom or the side of the pool.”

MSI believes drowning can end, worldwide, if proper teaching methods are used for beginning swim students. MSI, through its Conquer Fear™ program, in cooperation with the International Swimming Hall of Fame, provides instructor training for teachers worldwide specifically geared to teaching students who are afraid in water. For more information, call 941-921-6420 and visit [www.conquerfear.com](http://www.conquerfear.com). MSI was formerly known as Transpersonal Swimming Institute.

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