



## Media Release

6 November 2014

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**Drowning is preventable: Water Safety Council Fiji said Fiji, we've lost another child to drowning taking this year's toll to 37.**

Unattended toddlers are at a high risk because they are mobile, curious and require close and constant supervision by an adult. Children under five are the least capable of self-rescue of any age group. Most of the children to date who have drowned were unsupervised and playing when they fell and drowned.

Last year, approximately 30 per cent of Fiji's drowning's were children aged 1 – 18 years who were initially playing near water, fell and due to being unsupervised drowned. Parents and caregivers, never take your eyes off children in and around water. Active supervision means that the child is consistently watched by an adult with those aged 5 years and under being within arm's reach at all times.

Know your environment - there are different safety rules for beaches, creeks and rivers. Be aware of the local water environment and weather conditions before entering the water; refresh your first aid and CPR accreditations.

Any beach can be dangerous. Beach-goers should always be careful as the water conditions change frequently throughout the day. Ways your child can learn about safe swimming techniques and beach safety is to participate in the nippers programs that are held across Fiji.

Each Friday from 4.30 to 6.00pm next to Smugglers Cove Resort Wailolo Beach, Nadi Nippers Officers Godfrey Eaton and Uri Kurop hold specialised beach educational programs for those aged 5 years and over. In Suva at the National Sailing Centre from 4.00 to 5.00pm join Nippers Officer Samantha Sunderman.

"Some activities that we run include swimming, board paddling, sprints, tug of war, flags, first aid awareness with more activities to come" said Mr Eaton.

"Parents and caregivers, we believe in a close relationship between you and the Fiji Nippers Officers is important when demonstrating and practicing our beach safety messages. We need your assistance in making Fiji waters enjoyable and safe for your child and greatly appreciate your involvement" he said.

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**Drowning is Preventable**

According to statistics children who are aged from 1 to 18 have accounted for approximately 40 per cent of drowning's this year.

John Philp, Director Water Safety Council FIJI said "One drowning is too many –everyone is responsible".

Mr Philp and Mr Eaton said "Fiji let's work together to champion a lifestyle change in water safety measures through a collaborative, educational and research-driven approach on drowning prevention".

KEEP WATCH  
DROWNING IS PREVENTABLE

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