

# Drowning: The Silent Epidemic

On August 14<sup>th</sup> when Mallory slipped under the water unnoticed, she became one of more than 4,000 children who drown each year in the United States. By any form of measurement, losing 4,000 children per year under four years of age would be classified as a national epidemic. According to former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop MD, "If a disease were killing our children in the proportion that accidents are people would be outraged and demand that this killer be stopped." Dr. Koop went on to point out, "The greatest threat to the American child is his own home environment, that doesn't make sense and we've got to change it."



## Mallory's Story

August 14, 2007 started like any other typical day. I started my day taking care and playing with my four children. Around 6:00 pm, I started cooking dinner for my family and my husband whom was on his way home from work. I put our 13 month old twins, Marcus and Mallory into the bathtub. I turned the water on, plugged the tub and thought it was okay to go into the kitchen to turn over the pork chops cooking on the stove. I NEVER thought the unimaginable would happen, but it did. When I returned to the bathroom, Mallory was floating face up in the bathtub with her twin brother playing beside her. I pulled her out and immediately performed CPR on her. I then

ran to my neighbor's house to call 911, because my phone had dropped into

the water. As a team, we continued CPR until the paramedics arrived. My precious baby girl was pronounced dead after 45 minutes from arriving to the hospital.

I am sharing my tragedy with people in hopes of preventing another precious loss. I have always been diligent about watching my children around bodies of water or swimming pools, but never imagined my baby could drown in our own bathtub in such a short amount of time. It happens to good mothers and fathers all across this nation. It only takes a minute for your life to go from picture perfect to total devastation. My wish is for no one to experience this horrible tragedy and remember that any size of water, big or small, can prove to be dangerous. Life happens, accidents happen, but ISR gives each child the skills to float/swim and hopefully not panic in any type of water. I will never know if ISR would have saved our Mallory or not, but I strongly believe that the lessons learned from ISR can at the least give a child a chance to save themselves.

