



5th Issue: Summer 2021

# SWIM4 Elise

Elise could swim a mile in under 20 minutes!

A POSITIVE WAVE OF CHANGE

## The Foundation

The Swim4Elise Foundation works to honor the life of Elise Cerami by raising awareness of water safety. Elise had been a competitive swimmer for over 7 years, yet she fatally drowned 8 feet from an empty lifeguard chair during her club swim practice on June 20, 2016. No one saw Elise drown, as no one was actively scanning the water. The loss of Elise's life, when safety measures were absent, shakes a person to the core. As part of our awareness efforts, we share Elise's story in a relatable and meaningful way. Without a personal connection to the message, water safety may seem insignificant. Yet, it's absolutely applicable to anyone near water.

## Drowning Problem

While entirely preventable, drowning statistics are shocking. **Every year, Texas loses 80-100 children to fatal drownings and for each fatal drowning it is estimated that there are 5-8 additional nonfatal drownings.** Though the majority of these tragedies affect younger children ages 0-4, when older children ages 10-17 drown nearly half reportedly knew how to swim. Younger children drown at a greater rate in pools, older kids in open water. Anyone who is panicked in the water is primarily focused on breathing; they are unable to expel air to call for help. Ultimately, drowning is silent. You must be watching, as you can only save what you can see.

## Water Safety Efforts

The Swim4Elise Foundation partners with Cook Children's to provide meaningful water safety education and guidance to daycare-aged children each summer. We reiterate the message of "ALWAYS getting an adult before going near the water." The goal is to teach kids to be water safety advocates. This summer we are grateful to partner with SASO Girls who have helped to assemble over 4500 daycare packets. From May-August, we will be sharing the story of, "Stewie the Duck Learns to Swim," by the Leonard Family and "My Swim Adventure" by Danielle Bakic. Like the Cerami family, these individuals are also dedicated to raising awareness of water safety. #Swim4Elise



## Her Hot Pink Swimsuit

This is a picture of Elise's swimsuit. It was cut off of her the day she drowned so first responders could apply the AED to her chest. The Cerami family shares it to encourage dedicated scanning of the water when kids are swimming regardless of age or skill level. The Aquatic Safety Connection suggests that bright neon swimsuits will make your child more noticeable under water. Swim4Elise wants to emphasize, that regardless of the color of your child's swimsuit, actively scanning and searching the water top to bottom will give you a vigilant view of your child.

