

# PARENT LETTERS



## Trevor "Birdie" Davis Water Safety Foundation

June 10, 2006 was a day that changed our lives forever. After having just moved into our new home, we went to a pool party that was hosted by our former neighbors in honor of our family. We arrived with no intention of using the pool. We did not even bring our swimsuits, we thought we would have dinner, socialize and that would be it. But, our oldest son, Brandon, asked if he could go into the hot tub portion of the pool with some other children and I agreed to let him as I sat next to him and supervised them with some other mothers. At that point, our youngest son, Trevor, came toddling into the pool area and I began to watch him. Moments later a friend came up behind me and said hello and within seconds I lost track of Trevor thinking he had gone inside to find my husband. Within a minute, I was panic stricken and began to search the pool only to find him at the bottom of the deep end next to a pair of

children's sunglasses. I could not believe my eyes.

In the aftermath of losing our beloved son, Trevor, to an accidental drowning, we knew we had to do something to help young children protect themselves should they find themselves in a similar situation. That is when we were introduced to ISR and we knew instantly that this was something we had to work to bring to the Washington, DC, area. We know that had Trevor been through the program he would be alive today. That is when the Trevor "Birdie" Davis Water Safety Foundation was formed. Since August of 2006, we have sponsored 4 ISR Instructors and provided scholarships for 2 families. We now have 8 Instructors in the DC area and are continuing to expand the program. It has been an honor to work with Dr. Barnett and his wife JoAnn. ISR is truly a lifesaving program and we hope that our efforts will help save other children and families from having to endure the immense pain that we have suffered as a result of Trevor's death. Drowning is a preventable.



- Thank you, The Davis Family

## Not One More Child Drowns



I have two wonderful and beautiful boys, 4-year-old, Jayden, and 2-year-old, Evan. They have taken ISR lessons since they were each 14 months old and have received refreshers every year, sometimes more than one in a year. Just one week after completing their refreshers at the beginning of summer, my boys and I were playing in the backyard on a hot, Phoenix, summer morning when I mentioned to my boys that we should go swimming. With a secure pool fence around the pool, I let the boys continue to play in the backyard while I ran upstairs to change into my swimsuit and use the restroom. I was gone approximately eight minutes. When I came outside I saw my 4-year-old swimming in the pool and my 2-year-old sitting in the boat raft in the middle of the pool, both still in their pajamas. At first I didn't even know what I was seeing, because I was truly in shock and so confused. It was like my brain was in slow motion trying to process what my eyes were seeing. Then I saw the chair from the patio set in front of the gate. As my heart began to race and body began to shake, I started to cry and thanked God that my boys were alive and okay. In an instant I could have lost my family and my whole world! My first thought and the first

words out of my husband's mouth when I called him on the phone were, "that's why we put them in lessons, just in case something like this ever happened." After gathering my composure and trying to question my 4-year-old about his unbelievable stunt, it amazed me that he sounded so innocent and matter of fact, "Well Mommy, we just climbed over the fence," as if I should have been proud of their accomplishment. It just confirmed to me that young children don't truly un-

derstand death and tragedy, and can in no way comprehend the gravity of such an action. I have learned that you can never underestimate the skill and curiosity of young children, assume that they understand the risks nor can you assume that you will never make a mistake or get distracted as a parent. Everyone has those moments in life that we regret or split decisions we make that we can never take back and for some it turns out to be a, "Phew, that was close!!" moment and sadly for others it's a life changing tragedy. I truly believe we escaped tragedy that day due to all of your hard work and passion for the ISR program, and the highly skilled training and compassion of our instructor Mary Kruljac. There are no words to explain how extremely grateful we are for your efforts and dedication. I have heard Mary tell parents over the years that the lessons will not make your child drown-proof, nor will a pool fence, but it's another layer of protection and it's the final layer.

*-Thank you from the bottom of my heart, The Lopez Family*

## **Dad Brings ISR to Michigan**

When I first viewed the Miles video, sent to me by email, I knew I had to enroll my 2 ½-year-old daughter into ISR lessons. We have a quarter-acre pond ten feet from our back door that is 24 feet deep on one end. My wife and I were so afraid of what might happen if she got out of the house and made it to the pond alone. I was very disappointed to find there were no instructors, not one, in Michigan. The closest instructor was three hours away in Toledo, OH. It would be impossible for me to enroll my daughter into class from that far away.



At the same time, I was looking to start something new in my life, something that I could enjoy and get passionate about. Something I could do that would make a difference in the world and in my life. I looked into becoming a personal trainer or massage therapist. I actually went and visited three local massage therapy schools. Since there were no ISR Instructors near by, I decided to look into becoming an ISR Certified Instructor and was pleased to find the tuition was the same as becoming a massage therapist. The decision was easy! I knew I wanted to teach children aquatic Self-Rescue™ skills and I am very excited to bring the program to West Michigan and teach the community about the dangers of childhood drowning. Every time I am in the water with a child, I feel I have a huge responsibility to the child to do my best to ensure they learn the skills necessary to save themselves from an aquatic accident. I couldn't be happier with my decision.

*- Michael Petrella, ISR Certified Instructor*

## **The Need for ISR**



Well, I haven't exactly had an ISR story yet. But one thing I can tell you is our story. My husband and I moved from Utah to Oklahoma last year. We moved in with my parents, for a period of time, who have an above ground swimming pool in their backyard. For those of you who don't worry about those pools, guess again. While we were out on a date, my parents and siblings were home watching our little boy, Kolby. He was only 16 ½ months old. He found the stairs were down that leads into the pool. Might I remind you, that my dad was in the backyard with him building shelves in a shed with the door propped open and my mom had run inside the house when the phone rang to answer it. While she was gone, he managed to find and climb the stairs to the pool and fell in. It only takes a second. Only... he wasn't a miraculous ISR baby. He didn't make it. However, two months before the accident I was talking about the ISR program with my husband and told him that we needed to get him into lessons right away as soon as we moved in. I am expecting again on May 21, 2009, and Kolby's going to have a little brother. We are excited and saddened at the same time. It's a bitter-sweet feeling. One thing I know, the first thing to get done is this: My next baby will be enrolled and ready to start swimming lessons on his six month birthday. I can't wait.

*- Love and hope to you all, Edmond Family*