THINK WATER SAFETY THIS SUMMER

As the nation's primary school children begin their Summer holidays, and possibly plan a trip to the beach, ***Lifesavers Ireland***, (Royal Life Saving Society) is asking parents to ensure their children are safe near water.

With more good weather expected this summer, ***Lifesavers Ireland*** are urging children on school holidays not to swim in inland waters such as rivers, lakes, streams, and canals. Hot weather sadly often brings drowning tragedies as children go to local water sites to play and cool off. They may not realise the dangers attached to these places and believe it is safe to swim there.

Jack Britton, ***Lifesavers Ireland*** Beach Safety Manager said: "The combination of hot weather, children, and local water sites can often spell drownings. With the predicted good weather we have to get the message through to children that the only safe place to swim in this country is at a properly supervised swimming pool or a properly lifeguarded beach.
"It is vital that parents explain the dangers of water to their children. It is not enough to say don't do this or don't do that; your child needs to know why water can be dangerous.

"Children may not understand that even in the hottest weather, water in this country remains extremely cold and saps people's strength. They often over-estimate their swimming capabilities and are unaware of other hazards like hidden currents, rubbish and reeds."

As well as children, those most at risk are men from their mid-teens to their mid-30s. Male bravado and alcohol often play a part, as adults who have been drinking throughout the day sometimes decide to go for a swim in a nearby river or lake as a way of cooling down.
"We want people to enjoy the good weather this summer, and if the advice given is taken on board people will be able to enjoy their summer safely," Jack Britton said.

Lifesavers have produced a four point Water Safety Code

Spot the Dangers – Water can be dangerous, be aware of currents, deep water and the cold.
Take Safety Advice – Ask lifeguards or local people with specific knowledge about the area
Don't Go Alone – Always swim with someone else, and on a supervised beach
Learn How to Help – Why not take lifesaving lessons at your local pool ?

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Notes for Editors
Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death for children in Europe. On average 6 children drown each year in Ireland. The RLSS is the largest provider of lifeguard training worldwide, with activities in over 40 countries, and the leading provider of training and education in life-saving, lifeguarding, water safety and resuscitation skills in Ireland. Classes run at around 200 pools throughout Ireland.

For further information please contact

Jack Britton 087.2442454 or David Browne 086.2311730