Partners for Childhood Drowning Prevention is a new initiative of the American Academy of Pediatrics-Orange County Chapter (AAP-OC). Childhood drowning is the leading cause of injury death for California children 1 to 4 years of age and the second leading cause of injury death among children 5 to 14 years of age. Between 2018-2020, there were 2,007 incidents of drowning among children 1 to 4 years of age. The ratio of fatal to nonfatal incidents was 1:13.

Partners for Childhood Drowning Prevention: Foundations focuses on prevention of drowning through a two-year $150,000 grant from the California Department of Public Health’s Kids’ Plate Program. We will conduct a Public Education & Awareness campaign with training modules for both pediatric health care providers and parents. A strategic plan, patterned after the forthcoming Water Safety USA National Water Safety Action Plan will be developed on prevention of drowning among children 1 to 4 years of age in pools/spas.

Coalition partners working with AAP-OC on this project include AAP-OC’s Clinic in the Park; UC Irvine School of Nursing; UCI Institute for Clinical and Translational Science (ICTS); UCI Police Department; the Illumination Foundation; Melinda Hoag Smith Center for Healthy Living; the National Association of Hispanic Nurses-Orange County and Riverside; YMCA of Orange County; Riverside Public Health; the Orange Child Death Review Team, the Meow Meow Foundation; and the Newport Beach Sunrise Rotary Club.

Partners for Childhood Drowning Prevention: Advocacy focuses on promoting policy change at the local and state levels in partnership with AAP-California. We, (AAP-California) and the California State Alliance of YMCAs are co-sponsors of Senate Bill 855 (Newman) and coauthor Thomas Umberg, Childhood Drowning Data Collection Pilot Project, scheduled to be heard before the State Senate Health Committee. SB 855 will create a statewide childhood drowning data collection system through a three-year pilot program to be administered by the Department of Public Health (CDPH). The program will collect detailed data on childhood drownings and non-fatal drownings which result in significant health consequences, focusing on swimming pool incidents among children 1 to 4 years of age. The data collected will help inform prospective public policies designed to decrease childhood drowning incidents.

Phyllis Agran MD, MPH from AAP-OC stated: “At AAP-OC, we believe one more drowning is one too many. On behalf of our organization, I want to thank the funders at the Kids’ Plate Program for their support of our project. We recognize our Orange County State Senator, Josh Newman for his leadership by introducing SB 855 this legislative session and co-author Senator Thomas Umberg.”