



Ensuring Healthy Swimming for Generations to Come

"Swim for life!" advocates 90-year-old Gold Medalist Adolph Kiefer, whose daily swim keeps him strong. Kiefer, who at age 18 set the world record for the 100 meter backstroke, won the Gold Medal at the 1936 Olympics in Berlin.

Swimming, one of America's favorite pastimes, is on the rise, with some 7.4 million swimming pools and 5 million hot tubs in residential or commercial use. But so are swimming-related illnesses. Through its waterborne disease surveillance system, CDC has tracked a steady rise in disease outbreaks.

Studies found that pool codes differ across the country, resulting in a checkerboard of governance and enforcement that puts millions of people at risk. Chlorine-resistant germs such as *Cryptosporidium* are the major cause of diarrheal illness contracted while swimming. Analysis of pool inspection data reveals that many pools are not well-maintained. Swimming pool operators often have minimal training. Parents know about drowning, but may be unaware that

swimming can spread illness. Lack of awareness leads to disease-causing behaviors such as swimming between episodes of diarrhea, swallowing pool water, and poor hygiene.

CDC engaged partners such as the National Swimming Pool Foundation, the American Red Cross, YMCA, National Recreation and Park Association, World Waterpark



18-year old Adolph Kiefer set the world record for the backstroke in the 1936 Olympics.

Gold Medalist and healthy swimming advocate Adolph Kiefer and his great granddaughter Ginger Kiefer enjoy the water together.



Association, the Association of Pool and Spa Professionals, and many others. In 2005, CDC convened a national workshop with participants from a wide range of public agencies and the aquatics sector -- including Adolph Kiefer -- to plan a strategy. The main recommendation from the workshop was that the group needed to create a model national pool code.

With a grant from the National Swimming Pool Foundation, CDC initiated the national model pool code effort with participation from many of the original workshop participants. The Model Aquatic Health Code is a data-driven, knowledge-based risk-reduction effort to prevent disease and injuries and promote healthy recreational water experiences. The Model Code will identify best practices for use by state and local agencies, and establish uniform guidelines for the design, construction, operation, and maintenance of swimming pools.

As Olympian Adolph Kiefer says, "A trip to the pool or waterpark should be about fun and exercise -- not illness."

To download Healthy Swimming materials, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/>

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