

Float Like A Duck

History & Fun Facts



Mission

*Educating the public on the importance of **SAFETY** while celebrating the joys of water sports.*



Creation

For several years, Joseph M. Vassallo, CBP President of Paragon Pools and Mary Vail, MBA Publicist participated in numerous anti-drowning programs. They believed there had to be a more effective way of sharing the message with the public without using “trauma” or “scare tactics”.

Uniting their mutual passion for water safety and Mary’s experience as a swim instructor, the duo strategized to develop a more family-friendly program focusing on the positive elements of pools and water activities.



Creation

The result was the creation of ***Float Like A Duck™*** in 2003. Since its origination, Float Like a Duck™ has evolved into a popular, award-winning, multi-dimensional water safety initiative presented by Paragon Pools.

New and exciting elements have been introduced over the years.



Goal

“Water and water sports are an integral part of our lives whether it be in the bathtub, a pool, at the lake, or beach. Our goal through the Float Like A Duck program is to prepare the entire family with water safety skills, practices and preventative measures to ensure every experience is an enjoyable one.”

Joseph M. Vassallo, CBP, PHTA Fellow
President Paragon Pools
Water Safety Advocate



Messaging

Messaging focusses on ENFORCING the *A B C & D* s of water safety, with a BIG emphasis on *A*-adult supervision.

To accommodate the diverse cultural population in Southern Nevada, Float Like A Duck™ messaging is presented in both English and Spanish.



ABC&Ds

of Water Safety

Adult: supervision: always have an adult present.

Barriers: layers of barriers include alarms, fencing, locks and gates.

Classes: all family members should take swimming and CPR classes.

Devices: PFD's- personal flotation devices, life jackets and rescue tools.



ABC&Ds

of Water Safety

Spanish - IMPONGA el abecedario de seguridad en el agua

Supervisión Adulta: Siempre tenga a un adulto

Barreras: Tenga capas de barreras como alarmas, cercas, cerraduras y puertas

Clases: Tome clases de natación, de salvamento, y de resucitación cardiopulmonar

Dispositivos: Tenga DPF (dispositivos personales de flotación), chalecos salvavidas y herramientas de rescate disponibles



Event

Float Like A Duck began with an annual event held in May* of each year, strategically timed to kick-off the summer swim season as well as support National Water Safety Month. The event was FREE and Open to the public. Event activities included exhibits, hands-on safety training, open swimming in the water park and learn-to-float instruction.

Float like a Duck can be regarded as the first building block in a series of safety and water-related programs that families can build on throughout the child's upbringing.

*In 2020, the program was held on-line due to covid restrictions. The influx of on-line inquiries made us aware of the need for the program to reach families across the country and globally.



Why Floating is Important!

- Floating is a lifesaving skill.
- Individuals of any age can learn how to float on their back, from infants-to-seniors.
- Floating is one of the first steps in learning how to swim.
- Floaters have the ability to breath, to maneuver to safety, and if needed to call for help.



Graphic Artist

Designer Danny Romero is the official graphic artist for Float Like A Duck™.

Danny was introduced to the program through an educational project with The Art Institute of Las Vegas. Upon graduation with a degree in graphic design, Danny developed the original “floating” Duckie logo in 2008. He has continued to share his design talents by creating variations of the logo to celebrate anniversary dates. In addition, Danny is the artistic talent behind the popular Float Like A Duck collector cards and water safety coloring books.



Duckie the Mascot

Duckie the Mascot was introduced in 2008.

Utilizing a kid-friendly, sidekick named Duckie, Vassallo and his team are able to catch the attention of children and their parents, allowing them the opportunity to provide vital information about the importance of practicing safety measures, around all bodies of water.



Handout

Over the years a variety of colorful handouts with the ABC&Ds of water safety were published to distribute to the public, at events, presentations, and through our water safety partners.

The series of collateral materials includes brochures, bookmarks, collector cards, and coloring books.



Water Safety Coloring Book

The official Float Like A Duck Water Safety Coloring Book was introduced in 2008 and was designed for parent (grandparent, guardian) and child interaction. The publication's messaging in English and Spanish, features positive, actionable water safety tips, QR codes with links to water safety videos, and a "Certificate of Completion" to add the child's name.

Over the years the coloring book has expanded from its original 12-page format (including front and back covers) to 24 pages in 2022 to accommodate additional water safety tips. To date, over 19,000 have been published.

The latest edition, available for [free download](#) on the website features 3X Olympic Champion and PHTA/Step Into Swim VP Rowdy Gaines.



Partners

Water Safety Partners over the years, include area first responders, municipalities, local media and businesses, fellow water safety organizations, industry affiliates, and manufacturers.



Beyond the Event

Float Like A Duck programming expanded well beyond the annual event.

Duckie and Vassallo make complimentary guest appearances throughout the community at events, schools, hospitals, libraries, and parades to share the water safety message.



Water Safety Grants

In 2016, Float Like A Duck water safety initiative integrated a new dimension to its award-winning program with a sponsorship for the YMCA's Safety Around Water program. Since that initial investment in the community, Float Like A Duck/Paragon Pools has instituted an in-depth endowment program under the Water Safety Grants platform.

The grants provide not-for-profit organizations with financial funding to:

- Enhance water safety education,
- Provide free swimming programs for at-risk individuals,
- Train & certify lifeguards and YSL swim instructor certifications, &
- Support youth aquatic competitive sports.



Water Safety Grants

To date, \$28,500 has been distributed through the Water Safety Grant program. Of the \$28,500 total, \$15,000 was contributed by the PHTA Step Into Swim program with 100% of the funds serving the Las Vegas community.

Resulting in:

- Over 1,560 students provided with free swimming lessons,
- 37 students provided with free Train to Work- Lifeguard and/or YSL training/certification &
- 3 seasons of sponsorship for the Nevada Desert Mermaids, artistic swim team.



Video PSA's

In 2013, Paragon Pools began receiving requests from concerned water safety advocates from as far away as Alaska for information and advice on sharing the family-friendly Float Like A Duck messaging. To accommodate these long-distance requests, Vassallo and Duckie created personalized and topic specific outreach PSA videos to address their community issues.

These requests inspired a series of PSAs that anyone can watch and share with their household and community.

YouTube: [Float Like a Duck Video Playlists:](#)



Water Safety Affiliates

- Southern Nevada Child Drowning Prevention Coalition (SNCDPC) est. 2008- Founding Board Member: Joseph M Vassallo, CBP representing Paragon Pools & Float Like A Duck
- National Water Safety Month – PHTA: Partner
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)- Pool Safety Campaign: Collaborator/Partner since 2017



Crossing the Border

2021, 2022, & 2023 - Float Like A Duck Coloring Books and other water safety materials were presented to Cabo San Lucas Fire Department- Fire Chief Juan A Carabajal Figueroa for distribution to youths in the community.

“Water safety is a global concern, and we try to be as far reaching as possible with our messaging. Our website, YouTube channel, and social media platforms allow anyone to tap into our many resources,” states Vassallo. “However, being able to share the coloring books with the Fire Chief and the Cabo San Lucas community is truly an honor.”

[2023 presentation.](#)



Impact

Float Like A Duck is proud to be the longest running water safety initiative in the state of Nevada. Float Like A Duck along with other water safety advocates have made a definitive impact in the Las Vegas valley with regards to water safety awareness.

An immeasurable number of individuals and households have been exposed to the Float Like A Duck™ messaging via appearances, news reports, social media posts, PSA videos, and Float Like A Duck™ collateral materials.

The **MOST** significant impact is the reduction in submersions in SNV. Clark County population increased by 770,000 residents from 2003-2021, along with a significant increase in public, private, and residential pools throughout the valley. Data from the SNHD reveals the total number of submersions and fatal infant drownings decreased by 50 % or more from 2003 to 2021 per capita.



Impact

TV News Interviews



Accolades



Website & Social Media

Website: [Float Like A Duck](#)

Facebook: @Floatlikeaduck Twitter: @Duckieparagon Instagram: @Duckiefloatlikeaduck

YouTube: Float Like a Duck Video Playlists
~ [Water Safety Videos](#)
~ [National Water Safety Month \(May\) Water Safety Videos](#)



20th Anniversary Video

[Celebrating 20 Years of Float Like A Duck](#) is a 4m:44sec video with over 500 images, capturing the 2-decade evolution of the water safety initiative from its founding in 2003 through 2023.

The chronological video journeys through the history of the positive, family-friendly campaign, highlighting each year's signature event, special appearances, media interviews, handouts, awards, and other milestones. It culminates with an impressive review of Float Like A Duck's achievements as well as acknowledges the numerous Water Safety Partners who shared in spreading the vital message of water safety over the 20 years.

Thank you to the many volunteers who have shared and continue to give their time, talents, and resources in support of our mission,

Educating the public on the importance of safety while celebrating the joys of watersports.

