As swim season approaches, it is important for children to learn to be safe in and around water. The YMCA of Greenville and Upstate Pool Management is hosting a free Water Safety Week, March 28-April 1, 2016 that will feature educational information for children ages 3-8 and adults. Water safety knowledge makes everyone water smart from the start.

Water Safety Week consists of three 30-minute classes (Mon, Wed., Friday OR Tues., Thur., Friday) starting at 3 p.m. at the Caine Halter Family YMCA, the Eastside Family YMCA or the YMCA Program Center – GHS. The program is free, but registration is required by visiting a YMCA branch or calling, (864) 412-0288.

The YMCA of Greenville encourages children and parents to explore the many benefits of swimming, while also keeping safety top of mind. Consider these statistics regarding water safety and drowning:

• A recent report from the US Consumer Product Safety Commission revealed that children younger than the age of 5 represent more than 75% of all pool and spa submersion deaths and 78% of pool and spa submersions injuries in the US involving children younger than 15 years of age.
• Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional death for children between the ages of 1 and 4 and with minority children at a greater risk.
• Drowning can occur when there is a short lapse in adult supervision.
• Drowning happens quickly and silently.

“The YMCA of Greenville is committed to providing as many opportunities as possible for everyone to swim and learn water safety practices and our ‘Be Water Smart from the Start’ program is an excellent start to education”, said Kylie Dodd, Aquatic Director at the Caine Halter Family YMCA

The YMCA of Greenville encourages parents to take an active role in their child’s safety. Following are safety tips to practice when in and around the water:

• Only swim where there is a lifeguard on duty; never swim alone.
• Adults should constantly and actively watch their children.
• Inexperienced or non-swimmers should wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket. Inflatable “swimmies” are not a substitute for a life jacket.
• Parents or guardians of young children should be within arm’s reach.
• Children and adults should not engage in breath holding activities.

In addition to learning lifesaving water safety skills, children can increase their physical activity by swimming. Swimming also motivates children to strive for self-improvement, teaches goal orientation, and cultivates a positive mental attitude and high self-esteem.

As a leading nonprofit committed to youth development, the Y has been a leader in providing swim lessons and water safety for many years. The YMCA of Greenville continues to help youth and adults experience the joy and benefits of swimming, so they can be healthy, confident and secure in the water. There are a variety of programs to choose from including swim lessons for all ages, Masters swimming, SAIL prep, swim leagues, and family swim. To ensure that everyone has an opportunity to participate, financial assistance is available to those in need to help cover the costs.

To learn more about the YMCA of Greenville’s Water Safety Week call (864) 412-0288 or visit: www.ymcagreenville.org/water-safety-week To learn more or request information about swim lessons or other aquatics programs, visit www.ymcagreenville.org/aquatics

About the Y
The Y is one of the nation’s leading charity nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,700 Ys engage 21 million men, women and children – regardless of age, income or background – to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation’s health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. Anchored in more than 10,000 communities, the Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change.