

## Maryland Risk Watch Team is 20 Years Young

**THE MARYLAND RISK WATCH TEAM** is a statewide network of local EMS, Fire, and Rescue communities that provides education to children and families to prevention eight injury risk areas and prepare for natural disasters. The very first Risk Watch Training in Maryland was held at the Southern Maryland Pyramid EMS Conference in September 2001. Mary Marchone, from Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Community Outreach department, introduced the Risk Watch program. The curriculum was developed at Duke University in North Carolina and shared with the National Fire Prevention Association for national distribution. Between 2002 – 2004, four teams were created to pilot the NFPA Risk Watch curriculum in schools: Charles, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George’s Counties. Additionally a special-needs Risk Watch program was adapted within two schools in Prince George’s County. Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Kent, St. Mary’s, and Washington Counties joined the RW Team in 2005-2006.

Risk Watch was designed as a school-based curriculum linking teachers with community safety experts and parents. The curriculum includes five age group teaching modules: Pre-K/Kindergarten, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4, Grades 5-6, and Grades 7-8. There are eight injury risk areas: Fire & Burn Prevention, Motor Vehicle Safety, Bike & Pedestrian Safety, Water Safety, Poison Prevention, Falls Prevention, Choking, Suffocation Prevention, and Firearms Injury Prevention. The program includes activities for the classroom with parent/ caretak-

er letters for home reinforcement. Risk Watch provides children and their families the skills and knowledge they need to create safer homes and communities. The curriculum was first available in large three-ring binders and, later, on CDs with teaching resources for children, parent/ caregiver follow up letters, and educator references to core curriculum goals in reading, math, and science. In 2006, NFPA received a grant from United State Fire Administration to develop curriculum resources for the same five age groups on preparing for natural disasters.

In the subsequent years, the focus shifted from in-school programs to after school programming, community outreach and working with the fire prevention ambassadors to move teaching opportunities into the local fire stations. In addition, while the curriculum is no longer in print, the Maryland Risk Watch Team continues to update materials and expand risk areas based upon injury and fatality data specific to our state. Since 2005, the Maryland Risk Watch team has coordinated interactive educational displays at the annual June MSFA Convention in Ocean City. The EMS for Children State Partnership Grant at MIEMSS includes a Family Advisory Network (FAN) council that plans and leads the “Steps to Safety” activities at Convention. New educational resources have been developed on these topics: Vehicular Heat Stroke (Never Leave Your Child Alone in a Vehicle), Close Your Door, Dialing 9-1-1 with smart phones, and Emergency Ready Families. Infant Safe Sleep interactive displays are

*(Continued on page 6)*



**THE MARYLAND RISK WATCH TEAM** has four goals during the in-person Convention:

1. To provide young children and school-age children hands-on education experiences to be safer in their homes and communities through both psychomotor skills and new knowledge and high-risk injuries.
2. To provide young life safety advocates (tweens, teens, and young adults) with a mentored experience and specific lesson plans to work with younger children and their families.
3. To empower parents and care providers with knowledge on both the risks and the prevention strategies to keep everyone safer in their home and community (infants through seniors).
4. To demonstrate interactive safety displays based upon evidence based and best practices for life safety advocates across Maryland’s EMS, Fire & Rescue services. ■

## Maryland Risk Watch Team is 20 Years Young...

(Continued from page 5)

being developed for the 2022 MSFA Convention with the FAN Council leadership and the state Child Fatality Review team.

To invite children and families to come to the displays, mascots with safety escorts are onsite at Convention – Walker the Panda (EMSC), Sparky the Fire Dog, and Trauma Roo (Tidal Health Peninsula Trauma Center/ American Trauma Society). Mascot safety training is provided

to volunteers annually with careful monitoring for hydration and cooling.

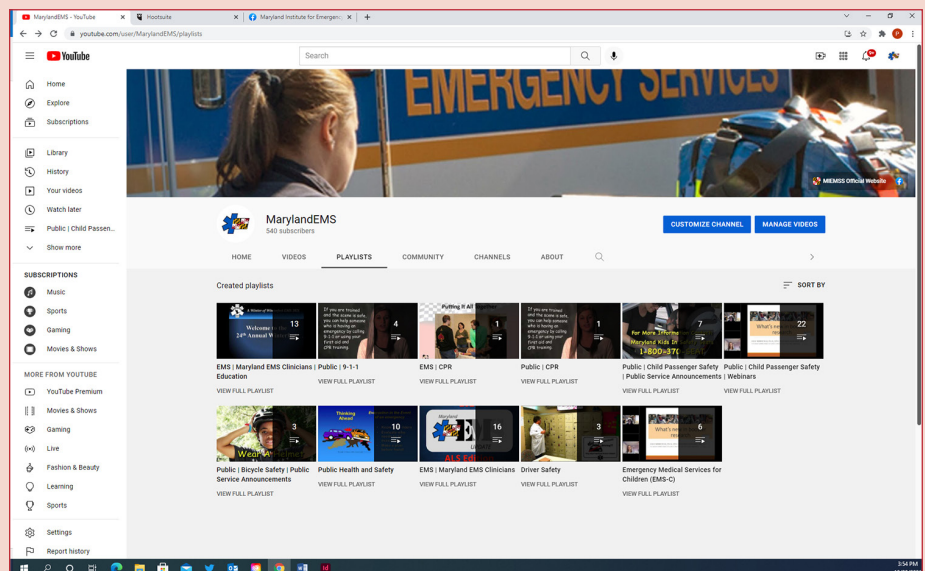
During the past 18 months, the work of both Risk Watch and Safe Kids Maryland have been through social media outreach and distance education due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, the day-to-day work of this team of volunteers recognizes the primary support given by the MSFA through the Fire & Injury Prevention and Life Safety Committee. In partnership with Safe Kids Maryland, resources are coordinated

and teaching tools are mobilized to reach children and teens across the state through daytime, weekend and evening programming. 2021 MSFA Convention educational program includes two injury prevention focused lectures: Medication Safety and Engineering behind seat belts and car seats.

For more information on the Risk Watch and Safe Kids Steps to Safety or to volunteer to help in 2022 at Convention, email [riskwatch@msfa.org](mailto:riskwatch@msfa.org). ■

### ~ Online Training Posted on the MIEMSS YouTube Channel ~

- MIEMSS' EMS for Children CPS Project hosted two webinars, "Vehicle Occupant Kinematics, Case Studies, and Tips for First Responders at Crash Sites" and "Data Collection Methods & Analysis for Useful Results in Child Passenger Safety", this spring. Both webinars, which have been posted to YouTube, offered CPS Technician and EMS continuing education.
- A training video on the use of both types of Outdoor Temperature Displays has been posted to YouTube, under the "Public Health and Safety" playlist.
- A series of five Child Passenger Safety public service announcements (PSAs) has been posted to YouTube.
- MIEMSS' YouTube features Bicycle Safety PSAs, including Helmet Safety, Riding Safety, and Bike Safety Resources.
- Other PSAs featured include Learning CPR, Driver Safety, 10 Right Care Steps, and What to Expect When You Call 9-1-1. ■



Visit [youtube.com/MarylandEMS](https://youtube.com/MarylandEMS)

**VISIT MIEMSS ONLINE AT [WWW.MIEMSS.ORG](http://WWW.MIEMSS.ORG)**

**Facebook: @MarylandEMS ■ Twitter: @MarylandEMS ■ Instagram: @maryland\_ems**