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Heartbreak Abroad: British Children Drown in Spanish Holiday Tragedy

July 30, 2025

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A family holiday ended in devastating loss as two young British brothers drowned off the

coast of Salou, Tarragona, on Spain's eastern seaboard. The boys, aged 11 and 13, reportedly got into difficulty while swimming at Llarga Beach on Tuesday evening, according to the Generalitat's Civil Protection authority.

The children's father, who had entered the water alongside them, was rescued alive but was left to witness the tragic incident unfold. Emergency services responded rapidly to the distress call, which was received at 8:47 p.m. local time. Seven land units from the Sistema d'Emergències Mèdiques (SEM – Catalonia's Medical Emergency System) attended the scene, along with a team of psychologists to assist the family in the aftermath.

Authorities confirmed the boys' deaths mark the 15th and 16th fatalities on Catalan beaches since the start of the region's official summer campaign on 15 June—surpassing last year's total for the same period by five. The rise in fatalities has prompted renewed calls from Civil Protection for greater public caution, especially among foreign visitors who may be less familiar with local swimming conditions.

“This is a stark reminder of the need to take extreme precautions at beaches, swimming pools and inland waters during the summer months,” Civil Protection said in an official statement. “If someone appears to be in distress in the water, alert the lifeguard service or call 112 immediately.”

Holidaymakers are being urged to respect flag systems at beaches and heed warnings issued by local authorities, as coastal conditions can shift quickly. This is especially true in popular tourist destinations like Salou, which experiences surges in visitor numbers during peak travel periods.

While Spain remains a favoured destination for British tourists, the incident has reignited concerns about water safety abroad. In recent years, regional authorities across Spain have invested in awareness campaigns and emergency response enhancements to tackle the growing number of drowning cases during the summer season.

No further information about the identity of the victims has been publicly released out of

respect for the family's privacy. British consular officials are understood to be in contact with the affected family and local authorities as they navigate the tragic loss.