

Tony Gwynn, Baseball Hall of Famer, Teams up with Guardian to Educate the Public About the Benefits of

by PR-Newswire

NEW YORK, Sept. 10 /PRNewswire/ -- The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America (Guardian) has teamed up with Tony Gwynn, former Major League Baseball All Star for the San Diego Padres and latest member of the National Baseball Hall of Fame, to educate Americans about the importance of life insurance during Life Insurance Awareness month (September). Gwynn's partnership with Guardian will include a national radio media tour on September 14, 2007.

Life Insurance Awareness Month is coordinated by the non-profit Life and Health Insurance Foundation for Education (LIFE) and supported by community leaders, elected officials, and companies like Guardian to increase public awareness about the importance of life insurance.

"After losing my father prematurely, I learned that life can throw you a curveball both on and off the baseball field," said Tony Gwynn, former outfielder for the San Diego Padres and founder of the Tony and Alicia Gwynn Foundation. "I was established in my career when my father passed, but nonetheless my dad had life insurance. But it isn't just star athletes and their families that need to protect their income. I encourage hardworking families, the people who keep our country running, to protect loved ones and plan for life's uncertainties. I am honored to work with Guardian to help spread the word about the importance of life insurance -- a critical safety net for a family's financial future."

"Tony Gwynn is a true humanitarian and community leader and we are thrilled that Tony has joined with Guardian to remind everyone about importance of adequate life insurance protection," said Barry Petruzzi, second vice president, Group Life and Disability, Guardian. "Fall marks the beginning of open enrollment season. This is the time when millions of Americans have the opportunity to review and update their employee benefits, including group life insurance. With workplace coverage, you can protect your family for less than what you spend on coffee each month."

According to a recent Guardian survey, *Benefits and Behavior: Spotlight on Group Life and Disability Insurance*, many employees do not spend enough time throughout the year reviewing their workplace benefits (1.4 hours selecting benefits, compared to 4.9 hours on holiday shopping) and do not have a solid understanding of employee benefits such as life insurance. For example, 70% of employees surveyed by Guardian believed that a medical check up was required for Group life insurance, which is typically not true.

According to recent data from LIMRA International's life insurance consumer studies, 56% of married parents believe their current life insurance coverage is inadequate. To complicate matters, LIMRA reports that half of the parents surveyed don't know how much insurance to buy and 39% worry about making the wrong decision.

Additional facts from LIMRA

'Til death do us part and then you're on your own

-- 28% of wives and 15% of husbands have no life insurance at all.

Life insurance and diversity

-- Compared with the general U.S. population, Hispanic and Chinese American households have significantly lower ownership levels of individual life insurance overall. African American and Asian Indian households have somewhat higher levels of ownership.

Guardian encourages life insurance awareness as part of its ongoing business practice. Individuals, families, and business owners should meet with agents and advisors, to ensure that they have adequate protection and to discuss their financial goals. This is important not only during the month of September, but as a part of an ongoing process of maintaining a holistic view of their financial picture.

"In addition to income replacement, life insurance has many uses and can also help philanthropists and business owners like Tony Gwynn to help charitable causes, protect their employees, and leave a legacy for

their families," said Kathy Readinger, second vice president, Individual Markets. "Permanent life insurance, such as whole life, has living benefits that not only provide a benefit for protecting against the loss of a breadwinner's income, but also provide significant living benefits that help one live a better life before and during retirement."

Source: The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America

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