Family of parasailing accident victim pushes for law

**Amber White, 15, died because the industry is unregulated, mother says**

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Shannon Kraus lost her 15-year-old daughter, Amber May White, to a parasailing accident last month, and she doesn’t want anyone else to have to go through what she’s been through. Hoping to avert a similar tragedy, she’s begun a campaign for national safety standards for the unregulated parasailing industry.

“This was an accident that didn’t need to happen,” Kraus told TODAY co-host Meredith Vieira during an exclusive interview Wednesday. “I don’t want it to happen to anyone else. We’re devastated. Every day, we walk around our house, and it’s empty. We don’t have Amber May’s laughter anymore.”

During the second week of August, as a back-to-school fling, Amber May and her sister, Crystal White, 17, went on vacation to Pompano Beach, Fla., with family friends while Kraus stayed home in Summerfield, Fla.
On Aug. 18, the girls called their mother from the beach, begging her to let them go parasailing.

Kraus said she tends to be overprotective and wasn’t keen on the idea, but the girls told her that they’d been watching people parasailing all day and it was perfectly safe. Kraus finally relented.

They went up around 1 p.m., according to police reports, about a half hour after the National Weather Service had put out a marine advisory warning about a line of thunderstorms coming into the area. Pictures taken while the girls were getting strapped into a harness together, beneath a big yellow parasail with a smiley face on it, show dark clouds gathering behind them.

Scot Kipp, the operator of the parasailing boat owned by Pompano Beach Watersports, Inc., had started the boat and was towing the girls along the shoreline when winds kicked up from about 15 mph to 40 mph.