

Fun in the Sun for Everyone!

Swimming is the most popular summer activity. While out having fun, whether at the pool, at the beach, or out on a boat, it's important to exercise caution and practice basic safety at all times.

According to the American Red Cross, over 90% of families with young children will be in the water at some point this summer, and almost half plan to swim in a place with no lifeguard. It is important to follow the basics of water safety, maintain constant supervision of children, and to be trained in life-saving techniques in case of an emergency.

COOL TIPS TO STAY SAFE THIS SUMMER!

- **Always swim in designated areas** with a lifeguard on duty.
- Use the buddy system – **NEVER SWIM ALONE!**
- **Swimming lessons are important** – even for children as young as 1 to 4 years old.
- **Never leave young children unattended** near water.
- **Teach kids to always ask permission** before they go near the water.
- **Designate a watcher** at pool parties.
- **Teach kids to walk**, not run, around pools or near the water.
- **Discourage horseplay**, such as pushing or holding others under water.
- Have young children and inexperienced swimmers **wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets**.
- **Discourage play around drains** and suction fittings.
- **Do not allow swimmers to hyperventilate** before going under water or have breath-holding contests.
- **Be cautious around natural bodies of water** such as the ocean shorelines, lakes, and rivers, even if you don't plan on swimming.

THE FACTS ABOUT DROWNING:

- Nearly 1,000 children die from drowning each year.
- Drowning is the leading cause of death in children ages 1-4 and is the second leading cause of unintentional injury and death in children ages 5-14.
- For every child under age 18 who dies from drowning, another 7 receive emergency department care for nonfatal drowning.
- Most childhood drownings in pools occur in residential pools, usually at home, or at the homes of friends, neighbors, or relatives.



RESOURCES

SAFE KIDS Worldwide

safekids.org/watersafety

Pool Safety

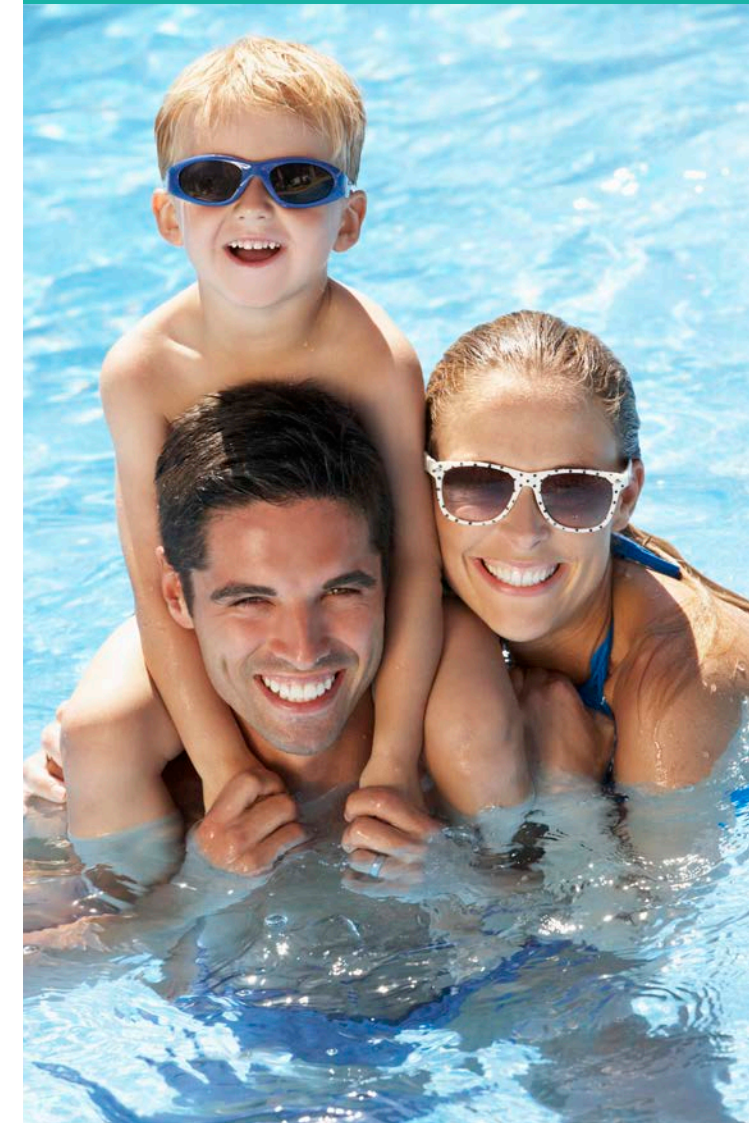
poolsafely.gov

National Water Safety Month

nwsm.phta.org

>INFOCUS

A Parent's Guide to Water Safety



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Restrict Access to the Water

- **Install barriers and safety covers** around your home pool or hot tub. Pool alarms are an option for additional protection.
- **Pool barriers should enclose the entire pool area and should be at least 4 feet high.** The latch should be high enough to be out of the reach of small children.
- For above-ground or inflatable pools, **remove access ladders and secure the safety cover** when the pool is not in use.
- **Remove any structures that provide access to the pool**, such as outdoor furniture, climbable trees, or playground equipment.
- **Place pool toys that are not in use away from the pool.** Toys can attract young children to the pool area.

Supervision Always!

- **Supervise children whenever they are near the water** — even if a lifeguard is present. **NEVER** drop your kids off at the public pool or leave them at the beach — always have a responsible adult present to supervise.
- **Stay within arm’s reach of young children.** Avoid distractions when supervising children near the water.

What to Do in an Emergency

- **SECONDS COUNT!** If a child is missing, check the water first.
- **Call 9-1-1** or your local emergency number.
- If you have a home pool or hot tub, **have appropriate safety equipment on-hand**, such as reaching or throwing equipment, life jackets, and a first aid kit.

Be Prepared

Check weather forecasts, and watch for changing conditions. Water conducts electricity, including lightning strikes. Get kids out of the water if you hear or see a storm approaching.

Apply sunblock and reapply often. Protect kids from the sun’s harmful rays. Hats, sunglasses, and clothing provide additional protection.

Keep kids hydrated by having them drink plenty of water. Watch for signs of dehydration and overheating, such as light-headedness or nausea.



Hypothermia, a condition where the body’s core temperature drops below 95 degrees, affects normal body function and can lead to drowning. Signs of hypothermia include muscle cramping and shivering. Being submerged in water can lower body temperatures, and kids lose body heat quickly when they’re active.

Be Prepared for an Emergency

Take water safety, first aid, and CPR courses. Familiarize yourself with basic rescue and life-saving techniques, and learn how to respond to emergencies.

The sooner CPR is given, the greater the chance for survival. In the time it takes for paramedics to arrive, your CPR skills could save someone’s life or reduce the risk of injury. Studies have shown that even poorly-performed CPR can save a life!

BEACH SAFETY

- **Direct children to a designated area** to swim and teach them to stay within sight of a lifeguard or adult.
- **Watch for dangerous waves and signs of strong currents** such as water that is choppy, foamy, or filled with debris. Undertows and large waves can be deadly, even for strong swimmers. Teach kids to get free of a current by swimming parallel to shoreline. Once free, swim diagonally toward shore.
- **Teach kids the meanings of colored beach flags and to obey them.** Beach communities across the globe have adopted a flag-warning system developed by the United States Lifesaving Association and the International Lifesaving Federation. Keep children out of the water if warning flags are up or if the surf appears rough.



BOAT SAFETY

Always equip kids with a properly-fitted U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket. The life jacket should be snug enough so that it won’t slip over the child’s head. The straps and buckles should be securely fastened. **Inflatable toys and water wings, which can deflate or slip off, are not acceptable substitutes for life jackets.**

- Teach children to stay away from propellers and not to jump off the front of a moving watercraft.
- Never overload a boat. If the boat turns over, teach kids to stay with it until help arrives.
- Keep a radio on board in order to check weather reports.

Summer is a great time to get outdoors and enjoy the water. With a few basic water safety precautions, everyone can avoid danger and keep having fun in the sun!