



## Protect Children Around Water – **All the Time**

Whether you live in a climate that's warm year-round or you enjoy outdoor activities during the summer, swimming and water are likely to be a big part of family fun. But the importance of safety around water cannot be overstated. Water safety is a part of daily life no matter where you live. Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional death in children ages 1 to 14 (*Injury Facts*®, 2016).

While many are aware of the importance of safety around pools and at the beach, parents also need to supervise their children near bathtubs. Nearly 30 percent of home drowning incidents occur when a child falls into a pool or is left alone in the bathtub (*Injury Facts*, 2016).

### Protect Your Children

- **Be attentive when your children are near water.** Teach children never to go near or into water alone – an adult should always be present. Designate an adult (or two) to be a “water watcher” and actively supervise children who are swimming. Drowning can happen silently, in seconds, and in just an inch of water.
- **Stay nearby. When infants and toddlers are in the water, adults should never be more than an arm's length away.** Gather all items you need before starting a child's bath. And at pools, even though there may be a lifeguard, it is important to watch over older children as well.
- **Get a good life jacket.** Traditional pool floats, like water wings, inner tubes and pool noodles, aren't designed to keep kids safe. Use a life jacket approved by the Coast Guard to be safer.
- **Know what to do in an emergency.** Make sure that you and anyone who takes care of your children are trained in CPR, so you'll all be ready if there's ever a need. Find a class in your area.



NATIONAL **SAFETY** MONTH 2016

## Learn to Swim

- **Start your baby out early.** You can introduce your little one to the water as early as 6 months old.
- **Sign your children up for swimming lessons.** Formal lessons can help reduce the risk of drowning, especially for kids ages 1 to 4.
- **Make sure your child knows the basics.** Everyone should learn how to float and tread water, and should also know how to figure out how deep the water is.
- **Teach kids the differences between swimming in a pool and swimming in open water.** Pools or areas specifically set up for swimming are best for young swimmers. Open water in the ocean, creek or other bodies of water can have uneven surfaces, larger waves and strong currents that can make swimming more difficult.
- **Keep children out of a hot tub or spa until they can stand on the bottom with their heads above the water.** They should also not use the hot tub or spa longer than 5 minutes at a time, especially at the maximum temperature of 104 degrees.

## Follow Pool Rules

- **Teach children to get into the pool feet first** unless they know for sure that it is more than 9 feet deep. Only then is it safe to dive, and only when an adult is watching them.
- **Stop horseplay around the pool.** Don't let your kids run or ride bikes near the edge of the pool.
- **Don't let kids eat, drink or chew gum in the pool.** They might end up choking. For more on choking hazards visit [makesafehappen.com/choking](https://www.makesafehappen.com/choking).
- **Teach children to never use a pool, hot tub or spa that's missing a drain cover.** They should let a parent or lifeguard know if a drain cover is broken, loose or missing, and avoid the water until the cover has been fixed.

## #Safe4Life

The National Safety Council is a proud partner of the Make Safe Happen program.



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## For Children and Parents

- **Always watch your child while he or she is bathing, swimming or around water.**
- **Gather everything needed** (towel, bath toys, sunscreen) before the child enters the water; if you must leave the area, take the child with you.
- **Empty all buckets, bathtubs and kiddie pools of water immediately after use** and store them upside down and out of your child's reach.
- **Install a 5-foot-tall fence with self-closing gate latches around your pool or hot tub.**
- **Consider installing door alarms** to alert adults when a child has unexpectedly opened a door leading to a pool or hot tub.
- **Keep a phone and life preserver near the pool or hot tub in case of emergency.** Just be sure to keep your focus on your children if the phone rings. The call can wait.

### FAST STAT:

**Drowning is the 2<sup>nd</sup> leading cause of unintentional death among children from one to four years old**, accounting for **30%** of all preventable deaths in this age group. The elevated drowning risk continues through the early teens, accounting for **14%** of all preventable deaths for children aged five to fourteen.

Source: *Injury Facts*<sup>®</sup>, 2016

### POOL AND BATH WATER SAFETY VIDEOS:

Visit [makesafehappen.com/pools](https://www.makesafehappen.com/pools) for helpful videos.