

## Drowning prevention information from Safe Kids Florida Suncoast

Drowning is a silent danger. Adults may assume they will hear a splash as a child falling into the pool, but children often slide into the water without making a sound. Most young children gain access to the pool when it's least expected, and you will not hear splashing, yelling, or crying because children will rapidly sink toward the bottom of the pool.

The most important thing you can do is to always watch children when they are in or around water of any kind – whether it's a pool; a pond, lake, or other body of water; or water around the home, like the bathtub or toilet.

Swim lessons are also important and are recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics for children over age 4. (Swim lessons may also be beneficial in helping children younger than 4 get used to being in the water.) Learning how to swim is an important life skill and aspect of drowning prevention.

Regardless of your child's age and skill level, swim lessons do not make anyone “drowning proof”

### Tips for Water Safety

- **Designate a water watcher** who will keep an eye on the pool. The job can be passed on from one adult to another, but it must always be made very clear who is in charge of watching the pool at any given moment.
- **Know what to do in an emergency**, including calling 9-1-1. Learn CPR and basic water rescue skills.
- **When you're serving as the water watcher**, avoid distractions like cell phones or side conversations. Younger children especially should always be within an arm's length of a watchful adult when they are in or around water.
- **Pools should be enclosed by a four-sided fence**, with a self-latching, self-closing gate. Keep objects away from the fence that children could use to climb over it, like furniture or pool toys.
- **Use other devices like alarms and pool safety covers.** Homes with pools should have alarms on any doors or windows with direct access to the pool. But remember that no device can replace careful supervision and designating a water watcher.
- **Children can drown even in very small amounts of water**, so empty or drain buckets, bathtubs, kiddie pools, or other items around the house that contain water when not in use. Never leave a child or children unattended in a bathtub, not even if it is for a quick second to grab a towel.
- **Think about any other places with water in and around your home**, and how you can secure those areas. For example, keep the lid down on the toilet seat and use a toilet seat lock. Keep the bathroom and laundry room doors closed. Keep any pet water bowls out of areas that children can access. Ask yourself – would my child be able to accidentally exit the house and reach my or neighbor's pool? If the answer is yes, it is time to act to prevent them from leaving the house.
- **Children should always wear a life jacket** that fits snugly and is approved by the U.S. Coast Guard on boats, around open bodies of water or when participating in water sports or recreation.
- **Teach children that swimming in open water** like lakes or the ocean is different from swimming in a pool. They need to be aware of things like uneven surfaces, currents, undertow and how weather changes can affect the water.



# Pool Safety

## DO



**Have rules** for your pool, ensure everyone knows them—and restate them often



**Keep children away** from the filter inlet, which can draw young children underwater



**If you have children in your pool,** make sure they know how to swim or have them wear protective flotation devices, but don't rely on these devices to exclusively protect the child

**Install fencing** to keep people out of the pool area without your knowledge



Most communities require fencing at least four feet high around all sides of the pool. Determine specific regulations for your area.



**Evacuate the pool** during a thunderstorm or in the rain

## DON'T



**DON'T:** allow glass or sharp, breakable items in the pool area

**DON'T:** allow adults who have been drinking alcohol into the pool area. Alcohol and swimming don't mix



**DON'T:** swim alone

**DON'T:** allow running, diving, pushing or dunking in your pool



**DON'T:** leave children unattended in or near the pool area for any reason



## Pool safety checklist



Have a cell phone in the pool area and post emergency numbers nearby  
**9-1-1**



Remove anything near a pool's fence that children could climb on to get into the pool, like tables, chairs, vegetation or toys



Collect all toys from the pool at end of each day so that children don't wander after them



When leaving the pool area, make sure all gates, locks, safety covers and alarms are working properly



Make sure at least one adult supervisor in the pool area knows CPR

Talk to your independent insurance agent about adding an umbrella policy, in case the unexpected happens.

Sources: [poolsafely.gov](http://poolsafely.gov), [backyard-lifeguards.com](http://backyard-lifeguards.com)

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# WATER SAFETY

## *Tips*



WHAT'S BETTER THAN  
A DIP IN THE WATER?



**BEFORE YOU  
DIVE IN,  
MAKE SURE YOU'RE  
PRACTICING WATER SAFETY!**

**DROWNING  
ACCOUNTS FOR  
APPROXIMATELY  
10 DEATHS PER DAY**



**1/3**  
OF ACCIDENTAL  
INFANT AND TODDLER  
DEATHS ARE RELATED  
TO DROWNING

## *Signs* OF DROWNING

- Swimmer is facing the shore
- Mouth at water level
- Head is tilted back
- The swimmer is upright and vertical
- Moving with a ladder-climbing motion



## IF YOU SEE SOMEONE

## *Drowning*

- Notify a lifeguard first
- Call 9-1-1 or another emergency service
- Throw an item for the person to grab
- Help them out of the water
- Check for breathing
- Perform CPR



## STAY SAFE!

## *Follow our Water Safety Tips:*

**1**

**WEAR A LIFE JACKET  
IN NATURAL WATERS**  
This includes children  
at the beach!

**2**

**STICK TO APPROVED  
SWIMMING AREAS**  
Look for posted signs  
or lifeguards on-duty.

**3**

**SWIM WITH A BUDDY**  
Keep an eye on each other!

**4**

**FOLLOW 'NO DIVING' SIGNS**  
The best way to avoid  
head or spine injuries.

**5**

**STAY OUT OF COLD WATER**  
Cold water can put your  
body into shock.

**6**

**KNOW YOUR LIMITS**  
Even the best swimmers  
get tired sometimes!

**7**

**SUPERVISE SMALL  
CHILDREN**  
Don't let a child swim alone  
and keep them at an arm's reach.

**8**

**ENROLL THE FAMILY  
IN SWIM LESSONS**  
Teach your family proper  
swimming techniques.

**9**

**LEARN CPR**  
Seconds can make all the  
difference in an emergency.

**10**

**KNOW THE SIGNS  
OF DROWNING**  
Drowning can happen quickly  
and silently, so being aware of  
the signs of drowning can help.

## *Stay Safe and Have Fun!*

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW HOW TO STAY SAFE IN THE WATER,  
ALL THAT'S LEFT TO DO IS GRAB YOUR BUDDY AND JUMP ON IN!**