

Florida consistently leads the nation in drowning deaths among children ages 1 to 4.

Water safety awareness is something every-one should be concerned about all year long. It takes only inches of water for a small child to drown so taking extra safety steps at home and around pools, flower pots, toilets, buckets, and all bodies of water.

Some facts about young children and drowning:

- The majority of deaths and injuries in pools and spas involve children ages 1-2 and occur in residential settings.
- Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional death to children ages 1-4
- Drowning occurs when there is a short lapse in adult supervision
- Little children drown quickly and silently
- Older children can drown too! Be mindful of the dangers of natural waters.

For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency care for nonfatal submersion injuries.

Nonfatal drowning injuries can cause severe brain damage that may result in long-term disabilities. <http://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars>

Check out this informational video:
<http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/qpi/poolsafety/poolsafety.html>

GENERAL RULES:

- Establish rules for your family and enforce them without fail. For example, set limits based on each person's ability, do not let anyone play around drains and suction fittings, and do not allow swimmers to hyperventilate before swimming under water or have breath-holding contests.
- Prepare for emergencies! Parents have a million things to do, but learning CPR should be on the top of the list. It will give you tremendous peace of mind – and the more peace of mind you have as a parent, the better.
- Avoid alcohol use. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance and coordination; affects swimming and diving skills; and reduces the body's ability to stay warm.

RESOURCES IN YOUR AREA:

Swim Lessons:

- Red Cross www.redcross.org
- YMCAs www.ymca.net
- www.floridapoolpro.com/safety

CPR:

- Local Fire & Rescue Department
- Red Cross

Other Resources:

- Department of Health - waterproofFL.com
- U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission – Poolsafely.gov
- National Drowning Prevention Alliance - www.ndpa.org



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT
OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
MYFLFAMILIES.COM

CHILD PROOFING IN A WATER-FILLED WORLD

Water is everywhere!

➤ Tips for Safety In and Around Water



Drowning is Preventable!

www.myflfamilies.com/watersafety

Emergencies call 9-1-1

What factors influence drowning risk?

Lack of Swimming Ability: Research has shown that participation in formal swimming lessons can reduce the risk of drowning among children aged 1 to 4 years.

Lack of Barriers & Layers of Protection: Barriers, such as alarms, gates and pool fencing prevent young children from gaining access to the pool area without caregivers' awareness. A four-sided isolation fence (separating the pool area from the house and yard) reduces a child's risk of drowning 83% compared to three-sided property-line fencing.

Lack of Close Supervision: At the time of incidents, most children were being supervised by both parents. Drowning occurs quickly & silently.

Location: People of different ages drown in different locations. For example, most children ages 1-4 drown in home swimming pools. The percentage of drownings in natural water settings, including lakes, rivers and oceans, increases with age.

Failure to Wear Life Jackets: In 2010, the U.S. Coast Guard reported that most (72%) boating deaths that occurred during 2010 were caused by drowning, with 88% of victims not wearing life jackets.

Alcohol Use: Among adolescents and adults, alcohol use is involved in up to 70% of deaths associated with water recreation, almost a quarter of emergency visits for drowning, and about one in five reported boating deaths.

INDOOR / OUTDOOR WATER

Indoor Safety:

- Do not leave young children unattended in the bathtub, even for a second. If you must leave, take the child with you. Always keep a young child within arm's reach in a bathtub.
- Know that a baby bath seat or ring does not keep kids from drowning.
- Don't leave a baby or young child in a bathtub under the care of another young child.
- Consider placing locks on toilet seat covers in case a young child wanders into the bathroom.
- It's also a good idea to keep doors to bathrooms and laundry rooms closed.

Outdoor yard safety:

- Empty any container, tub, bucket or large flower pot that has standing water or accumulated rain water.
- Empty and turn over all buckets as soon as you are done using them. Be mindful of cleaning buckets and coolers at parties.
- Know the hazards in your community: drains, ditches, canals, ponds, pools in neighbors' yards.

The items below are samples of safety products to consider for your home or sitter's home:

- Toilet seat locks
- Window / door alarms
- Safety gates
- Door latches / door knob guards
- Life jackets

RESIDENTIAL & NATURAL WATER

SAFETY

Pool Safety/ Boating/ Natural Water:

- Do not place large pet doors leading out to the pool or spa area.
- Install safety fencing with self-closing and self-latching gates around pools and spas.
- Keep the pool area clear of toys and items that may attract young children.
- Make sure pool drains have anti-entrapment covers.
- NEVER leave a gate to the pool open. Make sure doors and windows that lead to the pool are locked and/or have an alarms.
- Teach kids to stay away from pool and hot tub, drains, canals, and retention ponds.
- Assign a water watcher. NEVER assume that someone is watching your child.
- Teach age appropriate water safety rules to children & wear life jackets.
- Obey all safety signs and don't run or dive into ponds or lakes.
- Make sure kids take swimming lessons when they're ready, usually after age 4.
- Empty and turn over wading pools as soon as the kids are out.
- Instruct baby sitters about water safety.