

NEWS RELEASE

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Summer Fun-Safety Tips for Pool Season

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Every day, about ten people die from unintentional drowning. Of these, two are children aged 14 or younger. Drowning ranks fifth among the leading causes of unintentional injury death in the United States. Children four years old and younger are at the highest risk for drowning. The tips below can prevent drowning of children:

- Never leave a child alone near water. Not in the bathroom, not near a pool or any other body of water, and not at a beach. Kids drown not just in pools and bathtubs, but also in buckets filled with water, toilets, and hot tubs.
- Always follow safety directions when visiting water parks.
- Always keep an eye on your kids at public pools and beaches, and do not leave this task just to lifeguards. They may be trying to watch hundreds of people at one time.
- Enroll kids over age three in swimming lessons.
- Teach your kids to always swim with a buddy.
- Be responsible and protect your children: never consume alcohol when operating a boat.
- Make certain kids wear United States Coast Guard approved life jackets when boating.
- Always have a first aid kit and emergency phone numbers handy.

Many homes have swimming pools in their yards. Close supervision of children is extremely important if you or a nearby neighbor has a swimming pool. Young children are curious and quickly drawn to water. Therefore, children should be watched extra closely when a pool is nearby. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) offers these tips to prevent drowning:

- Fences and walls should be at least 4 feet high and installed completely around the pool. The bottom of the fence should be no more than 2 inches above grade. A fence should be difficult to climb over.
- Fence gates should be self-closing and self-latching. The latch should be out of a small child's reach.
- Any doors with direct pool access should have an audible alarm that sounds for 30 seconds.
- A power safety cover should be placed over the water area when the pool is not in use.
- For aboveground pools, steps and ladders should be secured and locked or removed when the pool is not in use.
- Babysitters should be instructed about potential hazards to young children in and around swimming pools and their need for constant supervision.
- All caregivers must know how to swim, know how to get emergency help, and know CPR.
- If a child is missing, the pool should always be checked first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- Well-maintained rescue equipment should be kept by the pool.
- Chewing gum and eating should be avoided while swimming, diving, or playing in water.

Always be cautious and alert while you and your family are spending time around a body of water. Please follow the above safety tips, be safe, and enjoy your summer!

References:

extensionhealthyhomes.org, Center for Disease Control (CDC), U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

[Safety Barrier Guidelines for Home Pools](#)