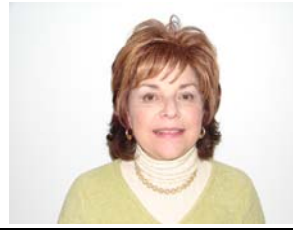


Water Safety

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Summer is upon us, and once again, it is time to underscore the importance of water safety. In light of the two toddler deaths last year, the importance of supervising children around water cannot be over-emphasized. Whether you are a parent, grandparent, guardian, older sibling, or babysitter, below are **things you should know about water safety:**

Kids drown quickly and quietly.

- *If you leave a child unattended near a pool or bathtub, you might come back in two minutes and find your child unconscious.*
- *Kids can drown in as little as an inch of water and are at risk of drowning in wading pools, bathtubs, buckets, toilets and puddles.*
- *A drowning child cannot cry or call for help.*

If a child is missing, check the pool first. Every second counts.

- *Even a near-drowning incident can ruin a child's life.*
- *Kids who survive near-drowning are likely to have brain damage.*
- *After four to six minutes under water, the damage is usually irreversible*

Every residential pool should have a fence all the way around.

- *Keep the gate locked and don't leave toys in or around the pool.*
- *Four-sided fencing could prevent an estimated 50 to 90 percent of child drownings in residential pools.*
- *Swimming lessons don't make your child "drownproof."*

On a boat, everyone should wear a PFD (personal flotation device, or "life jacket") at all times.

- *PFDs could prevent estimated 85 percent of boating-related drownings.*
- *"Water wings" and other inflatable swimming aids do not prevent drowning.*
- *Don't let a child under 14 operate personal watercraft such as jet skis.*

There is no substitute for active supervision.

- *Simply being near a child isn't supervising. Kids in or near the water need your undivided attention.*
- *Make sure they stay in sight and earshot at all times. If a child who can't swim is with you beside a pool or on the shore, keep the child within arm's reach.*
- *Keep a phone by the pool, but stay off your cell phone, do not text or accept calls while supervising.*

Make sure the swimming environment is safe:

- *No diving into water less than nine feet deep.*
- *No swimming near a dock or marina with electrical hookups (swimmers can be electrocuted in the water).*
- *Be wary of overcrowded swimming pools, especially if the lifeguard can't see everybody at all times.*

Among all unintentional injuries, drowning is the number two cause of death in children ages 14 and under. If you don't know how to swim, do not enter the water yourself—you and your child would both need to be rescued and could both drown.

For more information about drowning and water safety, visit www.safekids.org.

