

Swimming Safety Tips

Everything you need to know to keep your kids safe when swimming.

Whether it's a trip to the beach or a dip in the community or backyard pool, you can ensure that swimming is as safe as it is fun by following a few basic safety tips.

There Is No Substitute for Active Supervision

- Actively supervise children in and around open bodies of water, giving them your undivided attention.
- Whenever infants or toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within arm's reach to provide active supervision. We know it's hard to get everything done without a little multitasking, but this is the time to avoid distractions of any kind. If children are near water, then they should be the only thing on your mind. Small children can drown in as little as one inch of water.
- When there are several adults present and children are swimming, use the Water Watcher card strategy, which designates an adult as the Water Watcher for a certain amount of time (such as 15-minute periods) to prevent lapses in supervision. [Download a Water Watcher card here.](#)



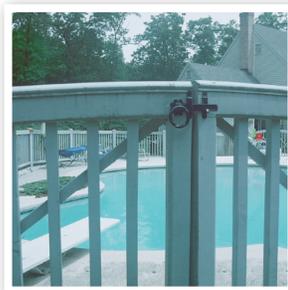
Educate Your Kids About Swimming Safely

- Every child is different, so enroll children in swimming lessons when you feel they are ready. Teach children how to tread water, float and stay by the shore.
- Make sure kids swim only in areas designated for swimming. Teach children that swimming in open water is not the same as swimming in a pool. They need to be aware of uneven surfaces, river currents, ocean undertow and changing weather.
- Whether you're swimming in a backyard pool or in a lake, teach children to swim with an adult. Older, more experienced swimmers should still swim with a partner every time. From the first time your kids swim, teach children to never go near or in water without an adult present.



Start Slow With Babies

- You can start introducing your babies to water when they are about 6 months old. Remember to always use waterproof diapers and change them frequently.



Drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death among children ages 1-4.



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Use Your Best Judgment

- A large portion of boating accidents that occur each year involve alcohol consumption by both boat operators and passengers. To protect your safety and loved ones around you, it is strongly recommended not to drink alcoholic beverages while boating.
- We know you 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. Local hospitals, fire departments and recreation departments offer CPR training.
- Make sure there's a working carbon monoxide alarm on any motorboat to alert your family to any buildup of toxic fumes from the engine.
- Let your teen operate a boat only in a supervised setting and in adherence to the laws in your area. Laws regarding the operation of a boat or watercraft vary from community to community.



Teach Your Kids the Difference Between Open Water and Pools

- Teach children that swimming in open water is not the same as swimming in a pool: They need to be aware of uneven surfaces, river currents, ocean undertow and changing weather.
- Make sure kids swim only in areas designated for swimming.
- Teach children not to dive into oceans, lakes or rivers, because you never know how deep the water is or what might be hidden under the surface.



Actively Supervise Kids In and Around Open Water

- Every child is different, so enroll your child in swimming lessons when you feel he or she is ready. Teach children how to tread water, float and stay by the shore.
- Make sure an adult is present whenever a teen is operating a personal watercraft.