



Global Children's Fund

Water Safety

Please enjoy this parent safety brochure, compliments of your child's school or child care facility. Keep in mind that this is but one small part of child safety, not intended to be complete safety education. Please visit us online at WWW.KEEPYOURCHILDSAFE.org, for a variety of free book downloads covering all aspects of child safety.

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Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional death in children. Water can be very dangerous for kids, yet it is also something that they are naturally attracted to. Parents can decrease the risks of drowning significantly simply by following a few simple rules for water safety.

Who is most at risk

Children under 4 account for around 80% of all drowning deaths. Children this age can drown in just about anything, because their muscles are not yet fully developed enough to get themselves out of a dangerous situation. Children have drown in toilets, in mop buckets, and even in puddles before.

Safety tips for parents

Parents should take the following precautions when it comes to water and their children:

- ✓ Encourage the use of life jackets during any water sport, even among good swimmers.
- ✓ Keep an eye on the little ones. Supervision is the main reason why children under 4 drown.
- ✓ Take proper precautions if you have a pool in your home. More than half of all drowning deaths for children 4 and under involve a pool.
- ✓ Keep an eye out for potentially hazardous bodies of water wherever you go, and keep children away. Remember, it only takes a second for a child to slip away, so keep a close eye out.
- ✓ Learn infant and child CPR
- ✓ Enrol your child in swim lessons, though remember, these do not make your child "drown proof."
- ✓ If your child is ever missing, search all area's of water FIRST. Every second is critical if your child has drowned, and could mean the differ-

ence between life and death. Many children could have been revived if their parents had checked all area's of water first and found them earlier.

Rules to teach kids

- ✓ Teach children they are never to play around floodwaters. Floodwaters can be extremely dangerous.
- ✓ Never chase a toy into a river or stream. Call an adult to help you get it.
- ✓ If you ever feel tired, dizzy, or weak in the water, get out right away and take a rest.
- ✓ Give water respect, and don't overestimate your swimming ability. Always play it safe, and always try new things with an adult in the water with you.
- ✓ Never jump or dive into any water without checking to see how deep it is first. It might be deeper, or not as deep, as you expect.
- ✓ Always check before going off a diving board, platform, or before jumping in the water to make sure the area is clear.
- ✓ Keep an eye out for others around you. Many swimming accidents happen because a child will be knocked unconscious or held underwater because people around them are not paying any attention.
- ✓ Never swim alone

Teaching kids

Our *Water Safety Book* teaches kids all this valuable information and more, and is available online through our web-site.