

## Water Safety Tips

- Never leave a young child unsupervised in or around water, even for a moment, and never allow children to swim without adult supervision.
- Kids don't drown only in pools. Bathtubs, buckets, toilets, and hot tubs present drowning dangers as well.
- Children should swim only in designated and supervised swimming areas.
- Always designate a responsible adult to serve as the "water watcher" – a supervisor whose sole responsibility is to constantly observe children in or near the water. Supervisors should not engage in distracting behaviors such as talking on the phone, preparing a meal or reading.
- Supervisors should maintain continuous visual and auditory contact with children in or near the water, and should stay in close proximity (waterside) so that they can effectively intervene if an emergency situation should arise.
- Supervisors should keep children who cannot swim within arm's reach at all times.
- While there is no specific recommended ratio of supervisors to child swimmers, the number of supervisors should increase when many children are swimming, younger or inexperienced swimmers are present, or the swimming area is large.
- If you're visiting a public pool, keep an eye on your kids. Lifeguards aren't babysitters.
- Always follow posted safety precautions when visiting water parks.
- Four-sided isolation fencing, at least 5 feet high and equipped with self-closing and self-latching gates, should be installed around pools and spas to prevent direct access from a house or yard. Never prop open the gate to a pool barrier or leave toys that may attract young children in or around a pool.
- Install barriers of protection around your home pool or spa in addition to the fencing, such as pool alarms, pool covers, door alarms or locks.
- Limit access to water sources in the home by installing and using appropriate safety devices (such as door locks and toilet latches) and by emptying and inverting buckets and wading pools immediately after use.
- Children should always wear an appropriately sized U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD) when on boats, in or near open bodies of water or participating in water sports. The PFD should fit snugly and not allow the child's chin or ears to slip through the neck opening.
- Air-filled swimming aids, such as "water wings" and inner tubes, are not safety devices and should never be used as a substitute for a PFD.
- Rescue equipment, a telephone and emergency phone numbers should be kept poolside.
- Enroll children older than age three in swimming lessons taught by qualified instructors. Look for classes that include emergency water survival techniques training. Keep in mind that lessons don't make your child "drown-proof."
- Always have a first-aid kit and emergency phone contacts handy. Parents and caregivers should be trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

### Educate children about these rules of water safety:

- Always swim with a buddy and an adult present.
- Never swim in an open body of water or participate in water sports without wearing a PFD.
- Don't underestimate the power of water. Even rivers and lakes can have undertows.
- Don't push or jump on others.
- Don't dive into unknown bodies of water like a river, lake or ocean, jump feet first to avoid hitting your head on a shallow bottom.
- If someone is in trouble in the water, call for help and throw something that floats to the victim.
- Be prepared for an emergency.

Source: Safe Kids Worldwide



**COMMUNITY  
PROTECTION**

Check out our course list online for a variety of safety trainings provided across the state at

[www.ndsc.org](http://www.ndsc.org)

*The North Dakota Safety Council is a private non-profit organization supported through grants, donations, memberships and training.*

