



Water Safety

ACTIVELY SUPERVISE:

Going to the beach or the community pool is a favorite summertime activity for many families, but drowning can happen very quickly and quietly. Actively supervising children around water is the best way to reduce the risk of drowning. Remind babysitters and other caregivers that supervision is more than just being in the same place as a child—give young children 100 percent of your attention when they are in or near water.

SWIMMING LESSONS:

Enroll your children in swimming lessons around age 4. Swimming lessons will help children become comfortable in the water, and teach proper breathing techniques and basic safety skills. However, don't assume swimming lessons make your child immune to drowning—there is no substitute for active supervision. Also, don't rely on inflatable swimming toys such as "water wings" or noodles. They are fun pool toys, but are not designed to prevent drownings.

WATER SAFETY AT HOME

Making sure home pools are safe is just as important as teaching your children how to be safe in the water. Follow these pool safety tips:

- Your pool should be surrounded on all four sides by a fence at least five feet high with gates that close and latch automatically.
- Make sure your pool is equipped with an anti-entrapment cover and a safety vacuum release system to prevent children from being caught in the suction of the drain.
- Don't leave toys in or near the pool where they could attract children.
- Empty all buckets, tubs, containers and wading pools immediately after use. Younger children can drown in as little as one inch of water.

The Facts about Kids and the Danger of Drowning

THE PROBLEM

Almost 800 children drown in the U.S. every year.



Two thirds of these deaths occur during May – August.

Drowning Risk Varies by Age



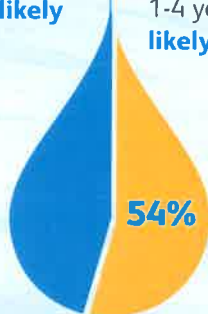
<1 year olds are **more likely to drown at home**



1-4 year olds are **more likely to drown in a pool**



5-17 year olds are **more likely to drown in natural water**



More than half of all child drowning deaths are among children ages 0 to 4.

PARENTS' MISCONCEPTIONS



MISCONCEPTION 1

Nearly half of parents surveyed think that if a child was drowning nearby, they would hear it.

Reality

Drowning is silent. There can be very little splashing, waving or screaming.



MISCONCEPTION 2

1 out of 3 parents have left a child alone in a pool for two or more minutes.

Reality

Drowning is quick. Once a child begins to struggle, you may have less than a minute to react.



MISCONCEPTION 3

More than half of parents surveyed think that when present, a lifeguard is the primary person responsible for their child's supervision at the pool.

Reality

Watching your child in the water is your responsibility. A lifeguard's job is to enforce rules, scan, rescue and resuscitate.



MISCONCEPTION 4

60 percent of parents surveyed would not worry as much about drowning if their child has had swim lessons.

Reality

Swim lessons are essential, but skill level varies. A review of children who drowned in a pool revealed that 47 percent of 10 – 17 year olds reportedly knew how to swim.

WATER SURVIVAL SKILLS

5 Survival Skills That Could Save Your Life in the Water



1 Step or jump into water over your head and return to the surface.



2 Float or tread water for one minute.



3 Turn around in a full circle and find an exit from the water.



4 Swim 25 yards to the exit.



5 Exit from the water. If in a pool, be able to exit without using the ladder.

WATER SAFETY TIPS



- Watch your kids when they are in and around water, without distraction.
- Teach children to swim and the 5 Water Survival Skills.
- Learn CPR and basic rescue skills.
- Make sure pools have four-sided fencing at least 4 feet high.

Pool Safely Water Safety Steps



Your greatest water safety assurance comes from adopting and practicing as many safety steps as possible.

* Adding an extra safety step around the water can make all the difference. You can never know which safety step will save a life — until it does.

Stay Close, Be Alert and Watch

- Always watch your children and never leave them unattended
- Keep children away from pool drains, pipes and other openings
- Have a phone close by at all times
- If a child is missing, check the pool first
- Share safety instructions with family, friends and neighbors

Learn and Practice Water Safety Skills

- Learn to swim; it's fun and good exercise
- Know how to perform CPR on children and adults
- Understand the basics of life saving so that you can assist in a pool emergency

Have the Appropriate Equipment

- Install a fence around the perimeter of the pool and spa of at least four feet in height
- Use self-closing and self-latching gates
- Make sure the pools and spas you use have compliant drain covers
- Install a door alarm from the house to the pool area
- Maintain pool and spa covers in working order
- Have life-saving equipment such as life rings or reaching poles available for use

simple steps
save lives

Pool SAFELY



Guidance for Safety

The Pool and Spa Safety Act

Pool Safely: Simple Steps Save Lives

Pool Safely is a national public education campaign to reduce child drownings, non-fatal submersions and entrapments in public swimming pools and spas. The campaign was developed by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to carry out the requirements of the *Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act*, federal legislation mandating new requirements for public pools and spas, including a public education campaign.

Few people know of the hidden dangers from drain or suction entrapments. What's more, nearly 300 children under the age of five drown in residential and public pools and spas each year. Submersion incidents requiring emergency-room treatment or hospitalization number in the thousands and many victims experience permanent disability, including brain damage.

CPSC is working with other safety groups and state and local governments to ensure drowning and entrapment prevention become important public safety priorities by:

- Enforcing requirements that all public pools and spas have anti-entrapment drain covers and other safety equipment, as needed;
- Reducing child drownings, non-fatal submersions and suction entrapments in pools and spas;
- Encouraging the use of multiple safety steps in and around pools and spas; and
- Educating the public on the importance of constant supervision of children in and around water.

You and your family can *Pool Safely* and enjoy time at pools and spas by adopting extra safety steps.

For more information and resources for public pool and spa safety and the Pool and Spa Safety Act, visit:

www.PoolSafely.gov

Follow us on Twitter @poolsafely

See us @ www.flickr.com/photos/poolsafely/

Watch us @ www.youtube.com/poolsafely



CPSC Pub. 361
0710



A public education campaign from the
U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Avoid Drain Entrapments

Hair entanglement: hair can get caught in a faulty or broken drain cover

Limbs: arms, legs and fingers can become lodged in a suction opening

Body: any body part that can cover a drain can be held down by suction

Evisceration: sitting on a broken or uncovered drain can cause injuries or disembowelment

Mechanical: jewelry or bathing suits can become entangled in a drain cover

A pool or spa with a broken, loose or missing drain cover should be closed immediately until repairs are made by a licensed professional. If you see a broken or loose drain cover, immediately notify a lifeguard and the pool/spa manager. Ensure all pools and spas used by your family have compliant drain covers and other anti-entrapment safety devices, as needed.

Make Sure Your Children:

- Do not play or swim near drains or suction outlets, especially in spas and shallow pools.
- Never enter a pool or spa that has a loose, broken or missing drain cover.

Pool Safety is partnering with leading national safety organizations, nonprofits, communities and the pool and spa industry to ensure the sustainability of the nationwide water safety initiative. Drowning, non-fatal submersion and entrapment incidents are preventable and you can help!



The Pool & Spa Safety Act

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (P&SS Act) was enacted to prevent the tragic and hidden hazard of drain entrapments and eviscerations in public pools and spas.



New drain covers come in a variety of sizes and shapes. For a list of cover manufacturers see: www.PoolSafety.gov.

Virginia Graeme Baker



In June 2002, seven-year-old Virginia Graeme Baker died after becoming stuck on a hot tub drain due to a powerful suction force. The drain's suction was so powerful that it took two adult males to pull her from the drain. They pulled so hard that the drain cover broke from the force. Graeme died from drowning but the real cause of her death was suction entrapment due to a faulty drain cover.

As of December 19, 2008, pursuant to the Pool and Spa Safety Act, all operating public pools and spas must have drain covers that meet the ASME/ANSI A112.19.8-2007 standard on every drain/grate. Drain covers are to display (per the ASME standard):

- Use — single or multiple
- Flow rate GPM
- "Life" (number of years)
- Wall and/or floor mount
- Manufacturer's name
- Model number

If a public pool has a single main drain (other than an unblockable drain), or multiple drains less than 3 feet apart, the operator must either disable the drain(s) or install a second anti-entrapment device or system, such as:

- Safety Vacuum Release Systems
- Suction-Limiting Vent System
- Gravity Drainage System
- Automatic Pump Shut-off System
- Drain Disablement

All products should be certified by one of the following independent, nationally recognized testing laboratories: Underwriters Laboratories, the National Sanitation Foundation, and IAPMO (International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials). CPSC staff advises checking with local and state officials to confirm any local/state certification or installation requirements.

Public pool and spa owners should have their facilities inspected by a licensed professional engineer and install P&SS Act compliant covers.

Report drain entrapments in pools and spas:

Call CPSC's Hotline at (800) 638-2772 or Email: Info@cpsc.gov