

# Pool, Ocean or Lake

## Always Practice Water Safety

ALWAYS know where children are. Never leave a child unattended in or near water in a pool, tub, lake, river, canal or ocean, even when lifeguards are present.

Containers that may collect water (buckets, ice chests, non-used “kiddie” pools, aquariums, etc...) pose a serious drowning risk to young children.

ALWAYS be aware of potential dangers in all environments, such as when visiting other homes, while on vacation, or at public/community pools. Never leave your child in an environment with unprotected water hazards.



Instruct babysitters and caregivers about potential pool hazards and emphasize the need for constant supervision of children and barriers.

If a child is missing or unaccounted for, always check the pool or spa first.

Whenever infants and toddlers are in or around water, an adult should be within an arm’s length, providing “touch supervision.”

In addition to parental supervision, designate a “Water Watcher” to maintain constant watch over children in or near the water. The “Water Watcher’s” job is to watch the water at all times, without engaging in social activities, conversations, phone calls, reading, computer use, cooking, cleaning, or any other distracting activity. After fifteen minutes, a new “Water Watcher” should be designated. Ensure that the “Water Watcher” is a sober adult who knows CPR and has basic swimming skills.

Do not use flotation devices as a substitute for supervision. “Water wings” or “floaties,” inflatable water rings, and other pool toys are NOT safety devices. Only U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets are designed and tested for safety.

EVERYONE SHOULD LEARN TO SWIM – Swimming is not an instinctive skill for humans. We cannot survive in water unless we are taught how to swim. All adults and children should learn to swim.

NEVER consider children “drown proof” because they’ve had swim lessons. Nothing will ever eliminate the risk of drowning. Even an Olympic Swimmer can drown.

If caught in a rip current, swim sideways until free; don’t swim against the current’s pull

Do not swim while under the influence of illicit drugs, medications that may cause impairment or alcohol

Protect your head, neck and spine -- don’t dive into unfamiliar waters -- feet first, first time

If you are in trouble, call or wave for help

Follow regulations and lifeguard directions

Swim parallel to shore if you wish to swim long distances

Never turn your back to the ocean -- you may be swept off coastal bluffs or tide pool areas by waves that can come without warning



[www.sandiego.gov/fire/safety/tips/swimming.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/fire/safety/tips/swimming.shtml)  
[www.sandiego.gov/lifeguards/safety/index.shtml](http://www.sandiego.gov/lifeguards/safety/index.shtml)