

A young boy with dark hair and a bright smile is floating in a swimming pool. He is wearing a red life preserver with black straps. He is holding onto the white edge of the pool with both hands. The water is a clear, light blue. The background shows the pool's edge and some water splashes.

# Water Safety

TOOLKIT

[GetParentingTips.com](http://GetParentingTips.com)



# Water Safety

## TOOLKIT

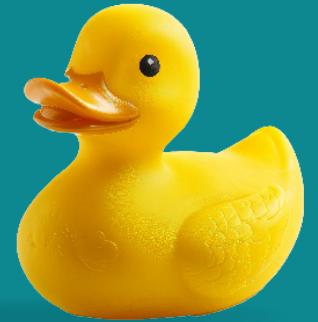


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Water is a great source of fun for the entire family, whether swimming, floating in the lake, jumping in ocean waves, or watching little ones play in a baby pool or tub. With all that fun comes the need to stay safe.

Many parents may not realize some of the hidden dangers associated with water activities or those that can occur in unexpected places. Use this toolkit to get tips on making sure children of all ages are safe around water.



## Understanding Water Dangers

Water safety is more than just swimming lessons and life jackets. Drowning is silent and fast. It can happen in water as shallow as 2 inches. Accidents can occur in unexpected places like bathtubs, buckets and toilets.

Educated parents are a child's best protection. It's important to understand the dangers of water, how to keep children safe in and around water, and how to instill water safety behaviors in their kids that last a lifetime.

Below is a brief overview of water safety tips that all parents and caregivers should know. Also included are specific handouts for these topics so that parents will have easy access to water safety reminders.

# Keeping Kids Safe Around Water



## Always Have a Water Watcher

Water safety for kids starts with designating a responsible adult as a “water watcher” any time children are in or near water, even when lifeguards are on duty. Depending on the number of children present, more than one water watcher may be needed.

Water watchers should:

- Stay focused on the child in the water and not be distracted by a book, phone or another adult.
- Be within arm’s reach of new swimmers since they may not have the skills and confidence of more seasoned swimmers.
- Have a phone nearby in case of emergencies.
- Get water safety training and know CPR if possible.

**If a water watcher notices that a child is missing, they should always look in the water first.**

## Swim Lessons and Safety Training

One of the best ways to keep children safe around water is making sure they know how to swim. According to the National Institutes of Health, studies show formal swim lessons reduce drownings by 88%. Many local community centers or youth organizations offer free or low-cost swim lessons. The Red Cross also offers lessons for kids and adults. The key is to make sure you have a qualified instructor.

# Water Safety at Home

Many parents may not realize there are hidden water dangers at home, including inside and outside the house.

## In the Bathroom

During bath time, it's critical that the adult responsible for the child's bath gathers everything they'll need before running the bath water so it's all within easy reach: a towel, soap, shampoo, tub toys, a clean diaper, and pajamas. If the supervising adult must leave the bathroom for any reason, they should remove the child from the tub. Adults should always

keep their eyes on their children during bath time.

As children start to crawl, toddle and walk, bathroom doors should be kept closed and toilet lids kept down. Safety locks on toilets can help provide an extra layer of protection for curious toddlers. It may seem strange, but toddlers can and do drown in buckets and toilets.







## In the Backyard

Kids must never play unattended around any backyard pond, fountain, hot tub or pool, including a kiddie pool. Young children are at risk in situations with very shallow water — even as low as 2 inches. So even something like a washtub for bathing the dog can be dangerous.

Parents should make sure these types of items are always emptied when done.

When playtime is over, toys should be removed and stored where they can't fill with rainwater. Large inflatable pools can be just as dangerous as in-ground pools, so they should always be emptied after each use or have a locked fence around them.

Families with hot tubs should follow the guidelines below. Children 4 and younger should not be allowed in a hot tub due to the water's depth and high temperature, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Other rules you should follow when a child is in or near a hot tub are:

- Children should be able to touch the bottom with their feet and their head should always be above the water.
- An adult should always be in the hot tub with them.
- The water temperature should be reduced to 98 degrees. Most hot tubs are set over 100 degrees.



## Water Safety at Home



- Children should stay only for a limited amount of time — 5 to 15 minutes — due to the high temperature.
- The cover should be completely off when a hot tub is in use — not just pushed or folded part-way off.
- The cover or lid should be on and locked when a hot tub is not in use so that young children can't get into it.

Families with pools should also take extra safety precautions. The first step is ensuring there is a safety fence around the pool so that children cannot access it. Unfortunately, there have been drownings due to a child slipping through exterior doors — even pet doors — while parents are asleep or distracted. Protective fencing, gates and doors provide the first line of defense against drownings.

The fence should have a self-closing, self-latching gate that opens outward, and the latches should be out of reach of children. A four-sided isolation fence (separating the pool area from the house and yard) reduces a child's risk of drowning by 83% compared to three-sided property-line fencing, according to the CDC.

Other ways to prevent a child from accessing a pool on their own are:

- Keeping back doors and pet doors locked to prevent children from entering the pool or hot tub.
- If possible, installing doorknob safety covers, locks or bolt latches higher up on exterior doors where children cannot unlock them.
- Installing a pool alarm that detects waves on the pool surface to alert an adult if a child or pet has fallen in.
- Adding a lock to a gate leading to the backyard for extra precaution.

**Hot tubs and pools should always be behind a fence that is at least 4 feet high.**



# Pool Safety

In addition to keeping a child from gaining access to a pool, families can put other guidelines in place to create a fun and safe environment for everyone.

## Pool Rules

Having a set of rules that everyone knows and understands can give everyone peace of mind. Some suggestions include:

- Always have an adult in charge of children when they swim.
- Children should always have their parent's permission to swim.
- When pool time is over, all toys in or near the pool should be picked up so a child isn't enticed to try to get them.
- Avoid drains. While it's rare, there have been cases where children were held underwater by the drain's force. Pools are now required to have safety drain covers, but it's still a good idea to teach children to avoid them.
- Make sure pool chemicals are stored in a safe place where children can't get to them.





# Water Safety Away from Home

Water safety away from home includes many of the same practices outlined above. Below are a few more specifics about ways to be safe in and around open water and water parks.

## Life Jackets

Water wings, noodles, floaties and inner tubes are fun, but they cannot be relied on to protect weak swimmers. Air-filled or foam toys are not safety devices and are not designed to keep swimmers safe. U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets are the only water safety devices that are certified to protect children.

Whether they're on a boat or a dock or near a body of water, children should wear life jackets. State law says children under 13 must wear a life jacket while boating. Adults can be great role models by wearing life jackets too.

## Open Water

Texas is full of beautiful creeks, ponds, lakes, rivers and beaches that offer many opportunities to make fun family memories. Before heading out, parents should talk to their kids about water safety and ensure the following.





### Children should:

- Always swim with a buddy. (That goes for adults, too.)
- Stay within the designated swim area.
- Watch for swim condition flags or signs.
- Enter the water feet first every time.
- Always wear a life jacket when on a boat or swimming in open water.
- Be aware of currents. Teach children that if they're caught in a current, they shouldn't fight against it. Instead, they should stay calm, keep their head above water, and swim parallel to the shore until they can get free.

### Children should not:

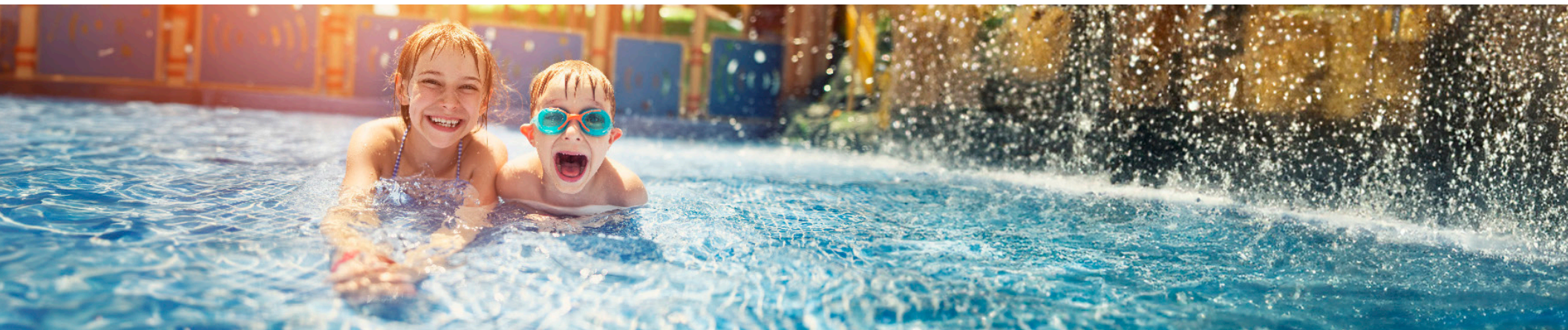
- Roughhouse or race each other near or in water.
- Swim around boats or other watercrafts.
- Swim in murky water or near drop-offs.
- Dive off swim platforms or into murky water.
- Play or swim in ponds, streams, gullies, ditches or canals.



### Water Parks

There is no consistent federal regulation of water parks, so parents should do their own research to make sure a particular park is safe. It's important to know the rules of the park and the swimming ability level needed for each ride or attraction before allowing a child to participate.

- Make sure everyone has a buddy — even adults.
- Use life jackets for small children and weak swimmers. Many parks have them available to rent or borrow.
- Always supervise children, even when lifeguards are present.
- Have an adult stay within arm's reach of small children and weak swimmers.
- Watch children extra closely in wave pools, where it can be hard to spot a swimmer in trouble.
- Don't allow children to drink the water. It can contain bacteria.
- Don't let anyone pressure a child to go on a ride that seems out of their comfort zone.



# Water Safety for Teens

Preteens and teenagers, especially those who've had swimming lessons and feel confident in water, often want to hang out with their friends at the pool or beach away from adult supervision. However, parents should know that while childhood drowning risk decreases after age 4, it goes up again during a child's teen years — even among strong swimmers.



The risk of drowning for adolescents likely increases for a few reasons: they tend to feel invincible, overestimate their skills and underestimate dangers. And any use of alcohol or other substances can impair mental judgment and affect physical equilibrium and ability.

## **Make sure teens:**

- Know how to swim. It's never too late to learn.
- Have adult supervision. If an adult isn't around, teens should always have a buddy with them.
- Understand water hazards and safety behaviors.
- Always enter water feet first to avoid obstacles or shallow bottoms, especially when "No Diving" signs are posted.
- Always wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets when boating.
- Know how to safely respond to a drowning emergency.



# Resources to Share with Clients

## Handouts

### Water Safety Tips for Infants and Toddlers



Water is a great source of family fun, but it's important to practice water safety, especially when you have an infant or toddler at home.



#### Bath Time

Here are some helpful tips to make sure bath time is as safe as possible:

- Gather everything you need before running the water, such as soap, shampoo, a towel, pajamas, toys and a clean diaper.
- If you need to step away — even for just a second — take your child with you.
- Keep your focus on your child to prevent any type of accident.
- Use anti-slip mats or stickers inside the bathtub and no-slip rugs or mats on the floor to reduce the risk of slips and falls.
- Check that the water is not too hot or cold before and throughout the bath.

**Keep toilet lids down and bathroom doors shut.**



#### Outside Play

Water safety for toddlers and infants at home also applies to pools and other bodies of water in the backyard. This means hot tubs, water sensory tables and even buckets filled with rainwater.

- Make sure all exterior doors are locked and doggie doors are closed so your children can't wander unsupervised.
- A locked fence is the best protection around pools and hot tubs.
- Empty kiddie and inflatable pools when playtime is over.
- Put pool toys away so children aren't encouraged to get near or in the water to fetch them alone.
- Store pool chemicals in a secure place where children can't reach them.
- Keep hot tubs off-limits for children until they are at least 5 years old.

**Drowning is silent and can happen in seconds.**

GetParentingTips.com

English

### Consejos de seguridad en el agua para bebés y niños pequeños



El agua es una gran fuente de diversión para la familia, pero es importante practicar seguridad, especialmente cuando tiene un bebé o niño pequeño en casa.



#### Hora del baño

Estos son algunos consejos para garantizar que la hora del baño sea lo más segura posible:

- Tenga listo todo lo que necesita antes de abrir la llave del agua, como jabón, champú, toalla, pijamas, juguetes y un pañal limpio.
- Si necesita alejarse, aunque sea un segundo, llévese al niño con usted.
- Mantenga toda su atención en el niño para evitar cualquier tipo de accidente.
- Use alfombrillas o calcomanías antideslizantes dentro de la bañera y alfombrillas antideslizantes en el piso para reducir el riesgo de resbalones y caídas.
- Verifique que el agua no esté demasiado caliente o fría antes y durante el baño.

**Mantenga cerradas la tapa del inodoro y la puerta del baño.**



#### Juegos al aire libre

La seguridad de los bebés y los niños pequeños en el agua también aplica a las piscinas y otros cuerpos de agua en su patio. Esto incluye jacuzzis, tablas sensoriales de agua e incluso cubetas llenas de agua de lluvia.

- Asegúrese de que todas las puertas que dan al exterior y las puertas para perros estén cerradas para que sus hijos no se puedan salir sin supervisión.
- Una cerca cerrada es la mejor protección alrededor de piscinas y jacuzzis.
- Vacíe las piscinas inflables y para niños cuando ya no las estén usando.
- Guarde los juguetes de la piscina para que a los niños no se les ocurra acercarse o meterse al agua a buscarlos cuando estén solos.
- Guarde los químicos de la piscina en un lugar seguro donde los niños no puedan alcanzarlos.
- No permita que los niños se bañen en un jacuzzi hasta que tengan 5 años.

**El ahogo es silencioso y puede ocurrir en segundos.**

BuenosConsejosParaPadres.com

Spanish

## Water Safety Tips for Children and Teens



As children get older, they become more independent. With independence comes more responsibility. Teens may want to hang out near the water away from adult supervision, but they need to know how to stay safe.



### Water Safety Tips

- Never swim alone. Even strong swimmers should have a buddy around to help them when needed.
- Always wear a life jacket while boating, skiing, jet skiing, kayaking or participating in other open water activities.
- Stay within designated swim areas.
- Learn about swim condition flags and signs, as well as currents in open water.
- Avoid roughhousing, running or racing in or around water.
- Weaker swimmers shouldn't rely on water toys like water wings, noodles, floaties or inner tubes to stay afloat.
- Always enter the water feet first to avoid obstacles or shallow bottoms.
- Avoid pool drains, which use strong suction to filter the water.

**Drowning is silent and can happen in seconds.**



### Extra Teen Tips

- Remind teens not to overestimate their skills or underestimate dangers around water.
- Underage use of alcohol and other substances is dangerous, especially around water, because it can impair judgment, equilibrium and swimming ability.

**It's never too late to learn to swim. The Red Cross offers swim lessons for all ages nationwide.**

GetParentingTips.com

English

## Consejos de seguridad en el agua para niños y adolescentes



A medida que los niños crecen, se hacen más independientes. Con la independencia viene más responsabilidad. Los adolescentes querrán reunirse cerca del agua alejados de la supervisión de un adulto, pero deben saber cómo mantenerse seguros.



### Consejos de seguridad en el agua

- Nunca nades solo. Incluso los mejores nadadores deben tener a alguien cerca para ayudarlos si es necesario.
- Usa siempre un salvavidas cuando estés en un bote, esquiendo, en una moto de agua, kayak o participando en otras actividades en aguas abiertas.
- Mantente dentro del área designada para nadar.
- Aprende sobre las banderas y señales de las condiciones para nadar, así como las corrientes en aguas abiertas.
- Evita los juegos rudos y hacer carreras en o cerca del agua.
- Las personas que no nadan muy bien no deben depender de los juguetes de agua como manguitos para los brazos, tubos de espuma, flotadores y aros inflables para mantenerse a flote.
- Entra siempre al agua con los pies primero para evitar obstáculos y fondos llanos.
- Evita los drenajes de la piscina, ya que usan succión fuerte para filtrar el agua.

**El ahogo es silencioso y puede ocurrir en segundos.**



### Consejos adicionales para adolescentes

- Recuerde a los adolescentes que no sobrevaloren sus habilidades ni subestimen los peligros en el agua.
- El uso de alcohol y otras sustancias en menores de edad es peligroso, especialmente cerca del agua, porque puede alterar el juicio, el equilibrio y la capacidad de nadar.

**Nunca es demasiado tarde para aprender a nadar. La Cruz Roja ofrece clases de natación para todas las edades en todo el país.**

BuenosConsejosParaPadres.com

Spanish



## Vacation Water Safety Checklist



Use these tips to help keep your family safe at the beach, lake or water park.

**If a child goes missing, look in the water first.**



Assign a "water watcher" to keep an eye on children who are in or near water. Consider someone who knows CPR to be your water watcher.



Don't use water toys like water wings, noodles, floaties or inner tubes to help weaker swimmers.



Make sure everyone wears a life jacket while boating, kayaking, jet skiing, water skiing, surfing or participating in other open water activities.



In vacation rentals or homes, keep exterior and pet doors locked to prevent children from entering pools, hot tubs or other bodies of water unsupervised.



Have a phone nearby in case of emergency, but don't let it or other devices become a distraction.



Watch children extra closely in wave pools, where it can be hard to spot a swimmer in trouble.

[GetParentingTips.com](http://GetParentingTips.com)

English

## Lista de seguridad para vacaciones en el agua



Utilice estos consejos para mantener a su familia segura en la playa, el lago o el parque de agua.

**Si un niño se pierde, revise primero el agua.**



Asigne un "vigilante del agua" para que cuide a los niños que están en o cerca del agua. Considere a alguien que sepa RCP para que sea el vigilante.



No use juguetes de agua como manguitos para los brazos, tubos de espuma, flotadores o aros inflables para ayudar a los que no nadan muy bien.



Asegúrese de que todos usen un salvavidas cuando estén en un bote, kayak, moto de agua, esquiendo, surfando o participando en otras actividades en aguas abiertas.



En las casas vacacionales o alquiladas, mantenga cerradas las puertas para perros y las que dan al exterior para evitar que los niños vayan a la piscina, jacuzzi u otros cuerpos de agua sin supervisión.



Tenga un teléfono cerca en caso de emergencia, pero no permita que este y otros dispositivos lo distraigan.



Vigile a los niños más de cerca en las piscinas de olas donde puede ser difícil detectar a un nadador en aprietos.

[BuenosConsejosParaPadres.com](http://BuenosConsejosParaPadres.com)

Spanish

## Social Media Posts



Safe summer fun is the best kind of summer fun 🛶☀️👦👦 Visit [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com) to learn more about #WaterSafety and the steps you can take to keep your family safe.



Drowning is silent and can happen in seconds. Visit [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com) for #WaterSafety tips to keep your children safe.



Bath time can be fun, but it can be unsafe if children are left alone. Always stay close by and keep your eyes on your child 🛶👦. Check out [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com) for #WaterSafety tips.





Being prepared can save lives 🏊. Knowing CPR and learning how to respond to a swimmer in distress can make all the difference. For more #WaterSafety tips, visit [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com).



Did you know drowning can occur in less than 2 inches of water and even in a bathtub or toilet 🚿? Check out [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com) to learn more about #WaterSafety.



Check out these #WaterSafety tips to keep your family safe at the pool. For more information, visit [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com).

**Swimming lessons can save lives.**



[GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com)

[Learn more](#)

Did you know formal swimming lessons can greatly reduce the risk of drowning among children ages 1 to 4? Many local community centers and youth organizations offer free or low-cost swim lessons. Visit [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com) for more #WaterSafety tips 🏊👓

**Teens need water safety reminders too.**



[GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com)

[Learn more](#)

Water safety looks different at every age, but it's always important. Check out [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com) for #WaterSafety tips for the whole family.

**Always have an adult water watcher.**



[GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com)

[Learn more](#)

Drowning can happen in seconds, so make sure your children always have an adult water watcher around. Check out [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com) for more information about water safety.

**Life jackets save lives.**



[GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com)

[Learn more](#)

Noodles, floaties and inner tubes can be used for fun but not as safety devices. Visit [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com) to learn more about #WaterSafety today.

**Practicing water safety at home can bring peace of mind.**



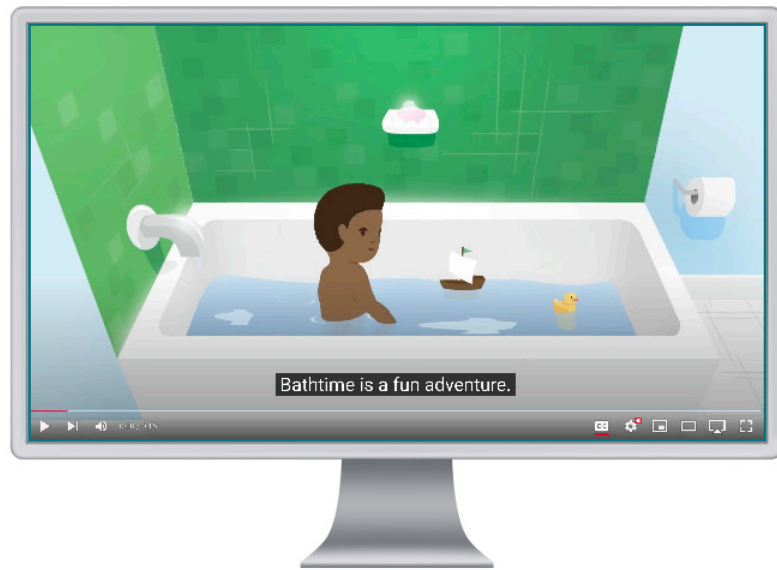
[GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com)

[Learn more](#)

Kids have a knack for getting into things they aren't supposed to — including pools, hot tubs and spas. Make sure your water features are always surrounded by a fence that is at least 4 feet high. For more home water safety tips, check out [GetParentingTips.com](https://GetParentingTips.com).



## Video Links



Sailor English:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n\\_B9b6LUoIU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n_B9b6LUoIU)



Sailor Spanish:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5ylbeteipg>

## Video Links



Mermaid English:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iD7L5FKDJtQ>



Mermaid Spanish:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XE\\_kL-TIGvQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XE_kL-TIGvQ)

