

SUMMER WATER SAFETY GUIDE

Staying safe around water doesn't mean having kids wear water wings

A recent American Red Cross survey* shows that almost half the adults surveyed on water safety say they've had an experience where they nearly drowned, and one in four know someone who has drowned.

While over 90% of families with young children will be in the water at some point this summer, almost half (48%) plan to swim in a place with no lifeguard.

With so many planning to be in, on or near the water, it is important to follow the basics of water safety, maintain constant supervision of children and to get trained!



PRACTICE WATER SAFETY

- Swim in designated areas supervised by lifeguards.
- Always swim with a buddy; do not allow anyone to swim alone.
- Ensure that everyone in the family learns to swim well. Enroll in age-appropriate Red Cross water orientation and Learn-to-Swim courses.
- Never leave a young child unattended near water and do not trust a child's life to another child; teach children to always ask permission to go near water.
- Have young children or inexperienced swimmers wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets around water, but do not rely on life jackets alone.

MAINTAIN CONSTANT SUPERVISION

- If you have a pool, secure it with appropriate barriers—many children who drown in home pools were out of sight for less than 5 minutes and in the care of one or both parents at the time.
- Actively supervise children whenever around water—even if lifeguards are present. Always stay within arm's reach of young children.
- Avoid distractions when supervising children around water.

KNOW HOW TO RESPOND TO AN AQUATIC EMERGENCY

- If a child is missing, check the water first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- Know how and when to call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number.
- Enroll in Red Cross water safety, first aid and CPR courses to learn how to respond.
- Have appropriate equipment, such as reaching or throwing equipment, a cell phone, life jackets and a first aid kit.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO

- Print and circulate this flyer at your pool, community center and beach bulletin boards.
- Visit RedCross.org for more swimming and water safety tips.
- Contact your local Red Cross chapter to find out which aquatic facilities in your area offer Red Cross courses, and sign up!

*Source: Red Cross Telephone survey of 1,002 U.S. Adults 18 years and older on March 20-23, 2009 conducted by ORC International.



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