



DROWNING IN CANADA

On average, 450 Canadians die in fatal drowning incidents every year. Drowning is the second leading cause of preventable death for children under 10 years of age.

Among children, those under five are most at risk. Their natural curiosity, combined with a magnetic attraction to water, means they have a high risk of drowning anytime they are near water.

MOST CHILDREN WHO DROWN IN BACKYARD POOLS GAIN ACCESS FROM THE HOUSE.

DROWNINGS ARE PREVENTABLE

Drownings involving toddlers can be prevented if parents or caregivers are Within Arms' Reach around water.

- Designate a parent lifeguard. An adult should supervise whenever children are using the pool. If you must be absent for a moment, designate another adult to replace you. If necessary, close the pool until someone can assume supervision duties.
- Stay by the side of the bathtub until all water is drained and you have removed your child from the tub. Toddlers can easily slip below the surface and drown in 2-5 centimeters of water in just seconds. Most bathtub drownings occur because children were left alone "just for a moment."
- Drain bathtubs when they are not in use. Empty unattended barrels, buckets, and wading pools of water and turn them over.
- At the beach or pool, children who cannot swim should wear a lifejacket or personal flotation device (PFD). An adult supervisor needs to be Within Arms' Reach of these children at all times.
- Even children who do know how to swim require adult supervision. Active and engaged adult supervision is required at *all times*.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

The Lifesaving Society is a national, charitable organization working to prevent drowning and water-related injury through its training programs, Water Smart® public education, drowning prevention research, safety management services, and lifesaving sport.

The Society establishes aquatic safety standards and consults widely on aquatic safety issues for aquatic facility owners and operators, governments, agencies and the judicial system.

Annually, over 1,500,000 Canadians participate in the Society's training programs. The Society also certifies all of Canada's National Lifeguards.

Each province and territory has a Branch that provides programs and services for their region. Branch listings can be found at www.lifesaving.ca.

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The Lifeguarding Experts

WITHIN ARMS' REACH

Water Smart® advice for parents

DROWNING IS A SILENT KILLER

Individuals who are drowning rarely call, wave or signal for help. They are unable to keep their head or arms above the water's surface. Those who manage to get their faces above water are inhaling air - not calling for help.

Drowning is fast. A fatal drowning can occur in only 10 seconds, and in just 2-5 cm of water in bathtubs, toilets, wading pools, wells, and even buckets.

Never leave a child alone near the water. Don't be distracted by your phone, another child, or anything else that takes you away from supervision.

IF YOU'RE NOT WITHIN ARMS' REACH OF YOUR CHILD, YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR.

BACKYARD POOLS

When setting up a backyard pool ensure there are multiple layers of protection in place to prevent unauthorized access. Annually, evaluate the pool to ensure that safeguards are still present and multiple layers of protection are in place to ensure that young children cannot enter the pool unsupervised.

You need at least two layers of protection in place for your backyard pool, but more layers are always better:



Fences

- Have a four-sided pool fence that does not attach to the house or any other building.
- The pool fence should be a minimum of 1.5 metres in height. Check local bylaws concerning fencing to see if your municipality has additional requirements.
- The fence should be made of a material or combination of materials that cannot easily be climbed.



Gates

- The gate for your fence should be self-closing and self-latching/locking and designed so that children cannot access it from the outside (i.e. an adult needs to reach over the fence to release the latch)
- Consider using a combination lock rather than a keyed lock for extra security.
- Ensure the gate is closed and locked when no adult supervision is present.

RESTRICT ACCESS

If you can't eliminate the water hazard, restrict access to it.

- Keep hot tubs covered and locked when not in use.
- Fence off natural or artificially constructed bodies of water on your property.



Pool Cover

- If a pool cover is used, place it over the entire pool; never leave it half on or half off.
- Being able to lock your pool cover in place is recommended.



Pool Deck

- Ensure you have safety equipment (reaching pole, throw rope or ring buoy) on hand and available at the pool whenever it is in use.
- Ensure you have easy access to a telephone on the deck at all times.
- Make sure the telephone and all safety equipment is maintained in good working order at all times.
- When not in use, the pool and surrounding area should be cleared of all toys and other materials. Any items left behind are an automatic magnet for young children.



Pool Alarms

- Pool alarms for gates, beam alarms for the pool deck, and motion detectors that float in the pool can alert you to trouble, but they should never be depended on to keep a child out of the water. Alarms of all types are a secondary layer of protection.

WITHIN ARMS' REACH

Being Within Arms' Reach means being close enough that you can grab your child at any time they need help, but it also means being close enough so that they can grab you.

Being Within Arms' Reach of children under age seven at all times they are in, on or around the water is an important layer of protection against drowning.

GET THE TRAINING

If you have a pool, cottage or camp, you need to be your family's lifeguard.

Your children's water safety education is not complete until they earn the Bronze Medallion. Enroll them in Lifesaving Society courses so they learn how to be Water Smart® before they get in too deep.

If you live, work, or play around water you should learn some first aid skills. Take a Lifesaving Society First Aid & CPR course.

Contact your local pool or recreation centre to find courses for your whole family.

