



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

*The Lifeguarding Experts*

## **Summer Water Safety Tips for Parent and Caregivers of Young Children**

Spending time in and around water is lots of fun, especially for young children. However, drowning is the second leading cause of preventable death for children under 10 years of age, and children under 5 are most at risk.

The backyard pool is the most common place where children under 5 drown, but drowning can occur in as little as 10 seconds and can occur in just inches of water. Parents and caregivers need to be vigilant around all types of water – pools, beaches, even splash pads.

- Never leave children alone near water. And stay close – within arms' reach.
- Use a system like the ON GUARD card to designate a specific adult to be responsible for supervising children in or around water. Watch every child and enlist help if needed.
- Make sure to give 100% of your attention when supervising. Put cell phones, magazines and BBQ duties aside. Find another adult to take over if you need to turn away for any reason.
- Watch the face – especially the eyes. Many victims don't call, wave or signal for help because they can't keep their head or arms above water.
- Stay by the water's edge and make sure you have a clear view of the whole area – be ready to respond quickly.
- At the pool, the lake or the beach, young children and children who can't swim should wear a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD).
- Restrict access to backyard pools by fencing all sides.
- Never rely on a single measure to prevent young children from getting into a pool. Use multiple barriers or strategies to restrict access.
- Empty and turn over wading pools and buckets of water when not in use.
- Keep hot tubs covered when not in use.
- Take parent & tot lessons at your local pool. A positive introduction to water is important and gives toddlers a chance to get used to water with their parents in an instructional setting.