

Is Your Pool Safe?



Home swimming pools offer years of fun and activity for families. They also can be a significant threat to young children—those living in the home or in the surrounding neighborhood. The vast majority of children who drown in home pools were not expected to be in or around the pool.* Most children who drown in home pools do so by entering the water without their parent’s or caregiver’s knowledge. Do not test your child’s swimming ability by allowing this situation to occur!

Prevent access to the pool area.

- Ensure that pool barriers enclose the entire pool area, are at least 4-feet high with gates that are self-closing, self-latching and open outward, and away from the pool.
- Teach children to never go near the water without an adult; the pool area is off limits without adult supervision.
- Keep toys that are not in use away from the pool and out of sight. Toys can attract young children into the pool.
- Pool covers and pool alarms can be used as added layers of protection.

Set rules for the pool and enforce them without fail.

- Examples:
 - No children allowed in the pool without active adult supervision
 - Nobody swims alone
 - No bottles or glass around the pool
 - No running or pushing
 - No diving unless the pool meets the safety standards
- Make sure everyone in the household learns to swim well.
- Designate a responsible individual as the person to watch over children whenever they are in, on or around any body of water, even if a lifeguard is present.
- Do not serve alcoholic beverages to individuals who are or will be supervising or participating in water activities.

Know how to respond to an aquatic emergency.

- If a child is missing, always look in the pool 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 what to do. Insist that babysitters, grandparents and others who care for children know these lifesaving skills.
- Have appropriate equipment, such as reaching or throwing equipment, a cell phone, life jackets and a first aid kit, and practice using the equipment.

**Source: Consumer Product Safety Commission*

For more information or to enroll in Swimming and Water Safety courses, contact your local Red Cross chapter.

