



## Longfellow's WHALE Tales

### Water Habits Are Learned Early

**Dear Parent/Caregiver,**

Today in Longfellow's WHALE Tales Water Safety for Children, your child learned that they should never be in, on or around the water alone—or without the permission and presence of a supervising adult. Instead, they should always “Swim as a Pair with a Lifeguard There.”

They also learned about the ways the adults in their life provide important layers of protection when they are doing water activities. **That's, of course, where you come in!**

- Even if lifeguards are present, it's important that you (or another water-competent adult) keep your eyes on your child and any other child you are responsible for at all times when in, on and around the water. Being water competent means having basic water safety knowledge and swimming skills along with knowing how to more safely help others in a water emergency.
- When there is no lifeguard on duty and in private pool settings without a lifeguard, do not allow children to be unattended in, on or around the water. This also applies during bath time. It only takes a few seconds for something to go wrong, such as a drowning emergency.
- Set a good example. If you're not sure that you meet the definition of water competent above, take a class to boost your skills and knowledge. You can learn more at [redcross.org/watersafety](https://www.redcross.org/watersafety).

#### **The Importance of Designating a Water Watcher**

In a group setting, tragedies often occur because people assume someone else is supervising the children in the water. Instead, the safer thing to do is to designate a water watcher whose sole responsibility is to supervise children during any water activity. Each adult can take shifts as needed. The important thing is to be sure there is at least one or more adults who are keeping their eyes on the water at all times.

Learn more about this important role at [redcross.org/watersafety](https://www.redcross.org/watersafety). You can also go to [redcross.org/waterwatchercard](https://www.redcross.org/waterwatchercard) to make a badge that can be used to designate the water watcher at any given time.

Yours in good, safe fun!

Longfellow