



Longfellow's WHALE Tales

Water Habits Are Learned Early

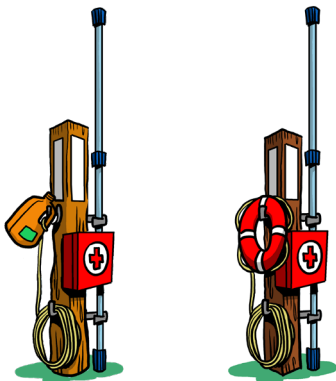
Dear Parent/Caregiver,

If you have any type of pool or private waterfront area at your home or if you live in or visit settings where an unguarded aquatic facility is available for your family's use, you've probably already given a lot of thought as to how to keep your child(ren) safe from accidental drowning.

Among the most important precautions you can take are to:

- Always secure a home pool or private waterfront area when not in use with fencing that fully surrounds the area and has a self-latching gate that a young child cannot reach.
- If you have an above-ground pool, also ensure it cannot be accessed by removing any steps or ladders into it or emptying out the water when it is not in use.
- Make sure your child knows to only swim or go near the water when supervised by a capable water watcher, no matter what.
- Ensure every member of your family learns to swim.
- Know what to do in a water emergency, including how to safely help someone and how to perform CPR.

In addition, it's important to ensure that some basic safety equipment is kept in an easy-to-access spot near where your family swims. This could be on a safety post such as the one in the illustration here, or the equipment could be attached to a poolside shed or fence. Equipment should include:



- **Something that can be used to reach out to someone who is having trouble in the water**, such as a 10- to 12-foot reaching pole or shepherd's crook.
- **Something that can be thrown to someone who is having trouble in the water**, such as a ring buoy or a heaving jug with a rope attached. (See page 2 to learn how to make a heaving jug.)
- **A first aid kit including emergency contact information**, such as phone numbers for getting help and information that will help responders find your location (i.e., the street address and the names of the nearest cross streets).

You can learn more, including how to safely help someone who is having trouble in the water, by taking advantage of the resources available at [redcross.org/watersafety](https://www.redcross.org/watersafety). Or visit [phta.org/safety](https://www.phta.org/safety) and select the link for "Public Safety" for a list of pool equipment you should have and more.

Stay safe!

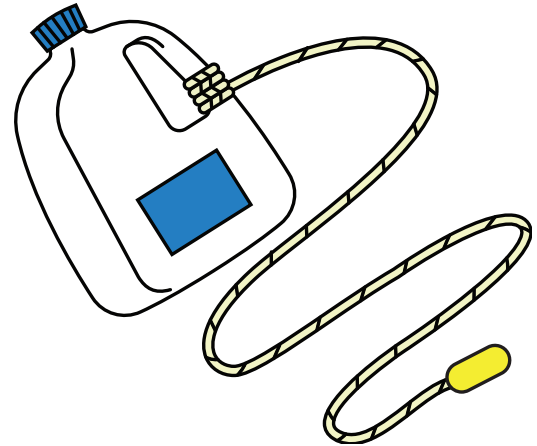
Longfellow

Family Activity: Make a Heaving Jug, or Two!

A heaving jug is a homemade, emergency throwing device that can be used to help someone stay afloat if they are having trouble in the water as you also help them safely return to dry land. Not only can a heaving jug be effective in an emergency, it's super easy to make.

Materials Needed

- An empty 1-gallon plastic jug, such as a milk carton, cleaned and rinsed
- Water or sand
- A 40-foot line of rope
- Waterproof markers for decorating your jug



Directions

- Fill the 1-gallon plastic jug with 1/2-inch of water or sand and screw the top on tightly. (If the jug has a snap-on top, use strong glue to hold it in place.)
- Securely tie a 40-foot rope to the handle of the jug. Tie a large knot or place a small buoy at the end.
- Use the waterproof markers to decorate and personalize your jug.

How to Use a Heaving Jug

Once ready, store your heaving jug poolside or at the waterfront area your family uses. Make a second jug that you can bring along if you will be at any other pool or waterfront area that doesn't have safety equipment reliably available on-site.

If someone is in having trouble in the water, gently toss the heaving jug to them. As you do, stand on the end of the rope near the knot or buoy so you don't accidentally throw in the whole line when you do. Once the person grabs the jug, slowly and carefully pull them back to safety while they gently kick their legs to help.