



YMCA WATER WISE

TIPS FOR A FUN AND SAFE SUMMER IN THE WATER

BEWARE OF THE DANGEROUS “TOOs”

Too tired, too cold, too far from safety, too much sun, too much strenuous activity. Non-swimmers or exhausted swimmers are unable to call for help.

USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM

Always swim with a buddy, and select swimming sites that have lifeguards on duty. The buddy system is an excellent way to ensure no swimmer is left alone.

ASSIGN AN ADULT “WATER WATCHER”

Drowning is fast and usually silent. Assign an adult who is committed to supervising the pool area. If you must leave the pool area, take kids with you. Most drowning victims go missing from sight for less than 5 minutes.

DRINK LOTS OF WATER

Drink plenty of fluids, particularly water, to prevent dehydration. It's easy to get dehydrated in the sun, especially when kids are active and sweating. Dizziness, feeling lightheaded, and nausea are some of the signs of dehydration and overheating.

LEARN TO SWIM

Learning to swim is the best thing anyone can do to stay safe in and around the water. Set water safety boundaries based on each swimmer's ability. For example, inexperienced swimmers should stay in shallow water.

THROW! DON'T GO.

If someone is struggling in the water, throw anything that floats to them so they can try to hold on to it. Don't go in the water after them, or you too can become a drowning victim.

SOBER IS ALWAYS SAFER

Avoid drinking alcohol when swimming, boating, or water skiing. Alcohol influences balance, coordination, and judgement, and its effects are heightened by sun exposure and heat.

TOYS ARE NOT SAFETY DEVICES

Don't use air-filled or foam toys, such as water wings, noodles, or inner-tubes, instead of life jackets. These toys are not designed to keep swimmers safe. Use Coast Guard approved life jackets.

LEARN CPR

In the time it takes for paramedics to arrive, your CPR skills could save someone's life.

TAKE FREQUENT SWIM BREAKS

When swimming all day, or at a waterpark, establish a time for mandatory swim breaks. This allows adult supervisors to ensure all swimmers are safe, staying hydrated, and re-applying sunscreen.

WATCH OUT FOR ALL WATER

Never leave a child alone near a pool, spa, bathtub, toilet, bucket or any standing water in which the child's nose or mouth may be submerged.

KNOW THE TERRAIN AND WEATHER

Be aware of any drop-offs and hidden obstacles in natural water sites. Always enter water feet first, and pay close attention to the weather to avoid strong winds, thunderstorms and lightning strikes.

AVOID DISTRACTIONS

If you are in charge of supervising kids in the water, put away cell phone, magazines, and other distractions. Stay close by and don't let yourself look away.

REMOVE UNUSED TOYS FROM THE POOL

Accidents happen when a child leans an inch too far to reach toys floating in the pool. Remove all toys when kids get out of the water and store them away from the pool's edge.

ONLY DIVE IN DESIGNATED AREAS

Not all swimming pools are designed with diving in mind, especially residential pools. Most spinal cord injuries result from diving into shallow water, so limit diving to approved and designated areas.

ENFORCE SAFETY RULES

Be strict about safety rules and let kids know the consequence of disobeying them. Follow the lifeguards' instructions and signal them if you see someone in trouble.

