

Stay Safe This Summer: Essential Water Safety Tips for Every Family

With warmer weather comes more time around pools, lakes, and oceans, but whether you're swimming, boating, or just relaxing near the water, safety should always come first. Drowning is a leading cause of unintentional injury death for children, and many of these tragedies are preventable. As we dive into the summer season, take time to brush up on essential water safety tips to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

Swimming Safety

1. Always Supervise

Children should never be left unattended near water—not even for a moment. Always assign a responsible adult as a designated “Water Watcher,” especially during parties or large gatherings.

2. Teach Children How to Swim

Swimming is a vital life skill. Enroll children in age-appropriate, certified swim lessons to help them gain confidence and competence in the water.

3. Use Proper Barriers

If you have a pool at home, install a four-sided fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate. Pool alarms and safety covers add extra layers of protection.

4. Learn CPR

Knowing CPR can make the difference in an emergency. Take a certified class and ensure caregivers and older children are trained as well.

Boating Safety

1. Always Wear a Life Jacket

Everyone—regardless of age or swimming ability—should wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket when on or near open water.

2. Don't Mix Alcohol and Boating

Alcohol use is a leading contributor to boating injuries. Always designate a sober, responsible boat operator.

3. Check the Weather

Before heading out, review the forecast and stay aware of changing weather conditions. Rough waters and storms can appear quickly.

4. Follow Boating Laws

Take a boating safety course and know your local and state regulations. Obey speed limits and no-wake zones, and ensure all safety equipment is onboard.

Drowning Prevention

1. Drowning Is Often Silent

Unlike in movies, drowning rarely involves splashing or yelling. Be alert for signs like head low in the water, gasping, or floating face-down.

2. Avoid Entrapment Risks

Keep children away from pool drains, pipes, and other openings. Make sure drain covers are compliant with safety regulations.

3. Stay Within Arm's Reach

For young children or inexperienced swimmers, always stay close enough to reach them in case of trouble.

4. Be Prepared for Emergencies

Keep a phone nearby to call 911 in case of emergency, and have rescue equipment like a shepherd's hook or life ring accessible near pools.

Make Water Safety a Year-Round Priority

Water safety isn't just for summer vacations. Whether at a hotel pool, a backyard party, or a family lake trip, it's always the right time to stay alert and be prepared. Talk to your children about safety rules and make sure everyone knows how to respond in an emergency.

Together, we can prevent drowning and create a culture of safety around water. Let's enjoy the season responsibly—and make memories that last for all the right reasons.