



Children's Health  
Education Center™

A member of Children's Hospital and Health System.



**Safe Kids**

Wisconsin  
LEAD AGENCY: CHILDREN'S  
HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER

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# Water Safety

Family-friendly water safety tips around  
rivers, lakes, pools and hot tubs.

## Hey parents ... Keep kids safe around water!

Each year, more than 800 children die due to accidental drownings. An estimated 3,600 children go to the emergency room after nearly drowning, resulting in permanent brain damage for some children.

### Home Water Safety

Children can drown in as little as one inch of water – and it can happen in no time at all!

- Never leave a child unsupervised in a bathtub.
- Use toilet seat locks to prevent a child from opening the lid.
- Keep doors shut to bathrooms and use a latch or a child safety knob on the door.
- Empty all containers and store after each use. This includes, buckets and wading pools.

### Pools and Hot Tub Water Safety

Did you know half of drownings take place in the child's home pool, and 1/3 occur at the homes of friends, family or neighbors? In 2006, near-drowning incidents in the pool were responsible for more than 3,700 injuries to children age 5 and younger. Consider these tips for safe play around pools and hot tubs:

- Teach your child how to act and play around water. Turn this sheet over for kid-friendly teaching tips.
- Never leave a child unsupervised in the pool.
- Install a phone by the pool or keep a cordless phone nearby to call 911 in case of emergency.
- Keep rescue equipment by the pool, know how to use it.
- Enclose the pool or spa completely with a barrier. Fences should be at least five feet high and have self-latching, self-closing gates. Layers of protection are important to also consider using door and pool alarms and pool safety covers.
- Lock or remove ladders from above-ground pools. Remove all toys from pools to avoid children being tempted to retrieve them.
- Always secure safety covers and barriers to prevent children from gaining access to spas or hot tubs when not in use.

### Pool or Hot Tub Entrapment and Entanglement

Entrapment occurs when part of a child's body, hair or swimsuit becomes attached to a drain because of the powerful suction of a pool or hot tub's filtration system.

- Children should never to go near a pool drain with or without a cover, and pin up long hair when in water.
- Install multiple drains in all pools, hot tubs, whirlpools and hot tubs. This minimizes the suction of any one drain, reducing risk of death or injury.
- Regularly check to make sure drain covers are secure and have no cracks. Replace flat drain covers with dome-shaped or anti-entrapment ones.
- Know where the manual cut-off switch for the pump is in case of emergency. Consider installing an approved "safety vacuum release system" (SVRS), a tool that quickly and automatically turns off the pump (and stops the suction) when something is trapped in or blocks the drain.

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# Hey kids ...

## Do you know how to play safely around water?

Playing safely around water is very important. And when we say water, we don't just mean the backyard pool. Public pools, lakes, streams, rivers and other bodies of water all are examples of where you should be careful. Even your bathtub at home is an example of somewhere we need to be safe around water.

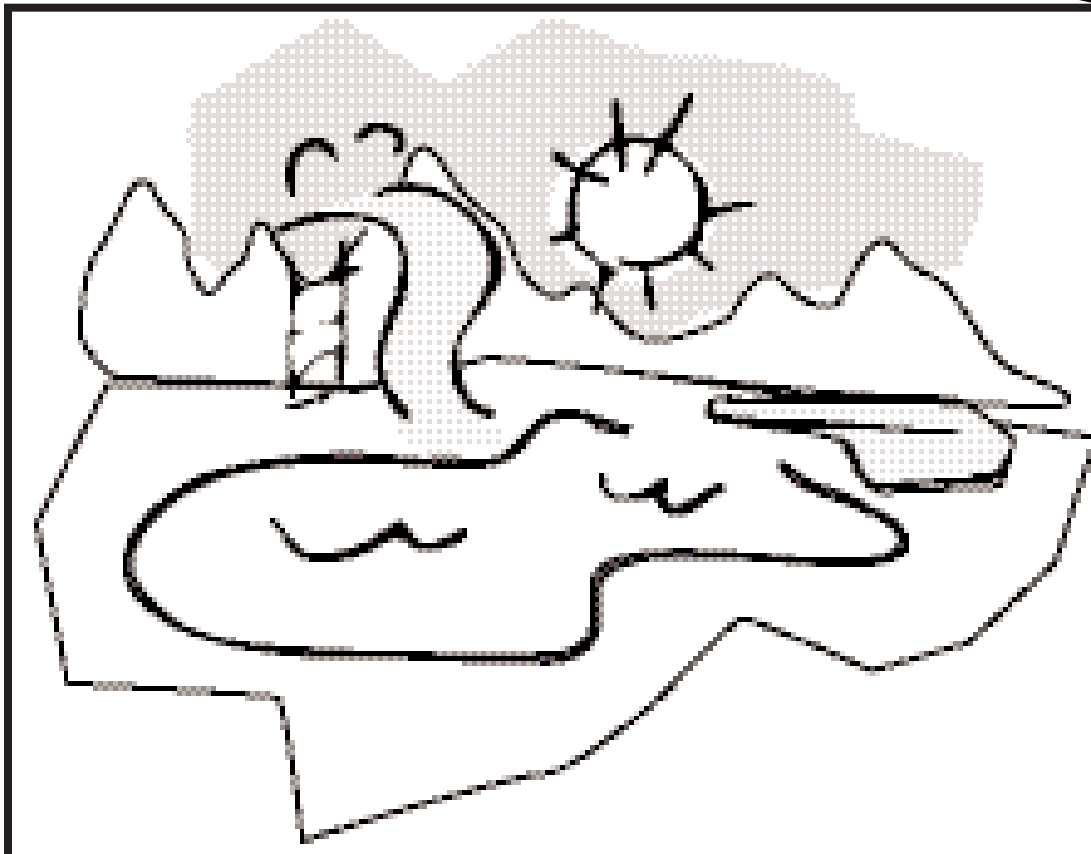
### Can you remember the following tips for safe water play?

- Enter water only when you know a trusted adult is watching you.
- Swim only where signs say it's OK to swim and make sure lifeguards are watching you.
- Learn how to swim.
- Swim with a buddy.
- Enter water feet first.
- Wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal safety device around bodies of water.
- Never run, push, dunk or jump on others in or around water.
- If you see someone in water having a hard time swimming or in trouble, call 911 and get an adult. Never go into the water.

Sources: *Safe Kids Worldwide* ([www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)) and *U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission* ([www.cpsc.gov](http://www.cpsc.gov)).



Color  
me!



**Drowning happens when too much water gets into a person's lungs. The lungs can't carry enough oxygen to the brain and the rest of the body.**

**Be a safe kid ... know how to stay safe around water!**