



**KEEP**   
**WATCH**  
TO PREVENT DROWNING

**KEEP WATCH  
AND KEEP ME SAFE  
AROUND WATER**



**ROYAL LIFE SAVING**  
WESTERN AUSTRALIA



**Water should be seen as a fun and enjoyable environment for children but it also presents a serious danger. Drowning is the leading cause of preventable death in children aged 0-4 years in Australia and children are most at risk around their own home.**

**The good news is that there are simple actions that parents and carers can take to reduce the risk and keep their kids safe.**

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

- On average, 4 children under 5 years of age drown every year in WA
- For every toddler drowning death, 10 children are admitted to hospital as the result of a drowning incident
- A toddler can drown in seconds and in as little as 3cm of water
- Toddlers are at risk of drowning all year round
- Swimming pools and baths are the most common toddler drowning locations. Fishponds, inflatable paddle pools, buckets, dams and even pet water bowls are all potential drowning hazards



## **SUPERVISE**

### **Always keep watch of your child around water**

- Supervision is the single best way to prevent toddler drowning. Tragically, many drowning deaths occur in only a few minutes when parents or carers are distracted.
- Adequate supervision means a responsible adult is within arm's reach at all times when children are in or around water. It is not the occasional glance while you do chores, talk on the phone or attend to other children, and it is not looking at your children playing outside while you are inside the house.
- If you must leave while your child is bathing, swimming or around other water sources, always take them with you or leave them in the care of another adult.
- Older children should never be left to supervise younger siblings around water. Children can become easily distracted and not notice something has gone wrong or they may think the toddler is 'playing' in the water and not call for help.
- Remember that drowning happens quickly and silently. By always keeping watch around water you can stop a 'near miss' from becoming a tragedy.



## RESTRICT

### Restrict your child's access to water at all times

- Toddlers love to explore their surroundings and are often attracted to water. Creating a barrier between your child and water can slow them down and give you time to respond when they are on the move.
- Having a compliant and well-maintained barrier around your pool is one of the most effective ways to prevent toddler drowning. Remember that pool fencing legislation applies to below-ground, above-ground and inflatable pools.
- Children most commonly access pools through an open gate so ensure that your gate self-closes and self-latches from all positions and never prop the gate open.
- It is important to regularly check pool barriers to ensure there are no holes or damage and that there is nothing leaning against the barrier or nearby that a child could use to climb over the fence.
- Prevent access to other water locations by emptying paddle pools, baths and buckets immediately after use.



## TEACH

### Teach your child water safety skills

- Enrol your child in formal water familiarisation classes. These classes build confidence and introduce children to basic water safety and survival skills. Introducing water familiarisation skills can also be an enjoyable bonding time for parent and child.
- Be aware that no water familiarisation class can 'drown-proof' a child. If a child falls into water unexpectedly, they may panic and fail to apply their swimming skills. Always keep watch when children are in or around the water, regardless of their swimming ability.
- Water familiarisation also includes setting rules and boundaries for your children near water. Ensure that you and other adults enforce the rules to set a good example. When you're visiting new aquatic locations with your child, make sure you discuss any new or different rules.
- Floaties such as rings or armbands are a tool to help your child become comfortable in the water but they are not lifesaving devices! Only use these products under close adult supervision
- Contact your local swimming pool or Royal Life Saving WA to find an Infant Aquatics program near you.



## RESPOND

### Learn CPR and call Triple Zero (000) in an emergency

- In many emergency situations involving children, a parent will be the first person on the scene and can provide lifesaving assistance until emergency help arrives.
- If children have found their way into water, every second counts. If your child is missing around the home, always check water sources both inside and outside the house before looking elsewhere.
- Every parent should learn first aid and CPR. Like any skill, resuscitation skills can be forgotten if not practised regularly. Update your resuscitation skills by completing a refresher course every 12 months. In the case of a drowning, any CPR is better than no CPR. Even if you haven't completed a course, try your best until further help arrives.
- Royal Life Saving WA runs three hour Heart Beat Club resuscitation courses which are specifically designed for parents with young children. The course covers common child injuries such as choking, burns and scalds and drowning, with a major focus on child and infant CPR.
- Contact Royal Life Saving WA for a list of upcoming courses or enrol online today.



Would you like to know more about how you can prevent your child from drowning?

CALL 08 9383 8200

EMAIL [info@royallifesavingwa.com.au](mailto:info@royallifesavingwa.com.au)

WEB [royallifesavingwa.com.au](http://royallifesavingwa.com.au)

 [RoyalLifeSavingWA](#)

 [RoyalLifeSavingWA](#)

 [TheRoyalLifeSavingSociety-WesternAustralia](#)