



## Swimming and water safety

**Maintain constant supervision.** Drowning usually happens quickly and silently when most children were out of sight for less than five minutes. Avoid all distractions when supervising kids around water.

**Teach kids how to swim.** Every child is different, so enroll children in swim lessons when they are ready. Consider their age, development and how often they are around water.

**Teach children that swimming in open water is different from swimming in a pool.** Be aware of situations that are unique to open water, such as limited visibility, depth, uneven surfaces, currents and undertow. These potential hazards can make swimming in open water more challenging than swimming in a pool. Use designated swimming areas and recreational areas whenever possible.

**Wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket when boating or participating in other water activities.** Choose a life jacket that is right for your child’s weight and water activity. Weak swimmers and children who cannot swim should wear life jackets when they are in or near water.

**Learn CPR and basic water rescue skills.** It is important to know how to respond in an emergency without putting yourself at risk of drowning.

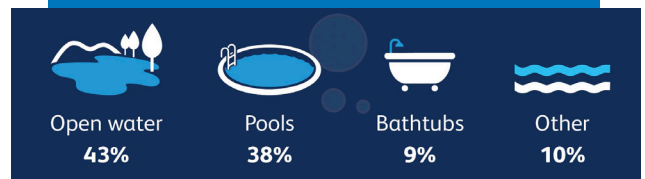
- If a child is missing, check the water first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability.
- Know how and when to call 911.
- Enroll in Red Cross water safety, first aid and CPR courses to learn what to do. Insist that babysitters, grandparents and other caregivers know these life-saving skills too.

**Drowning is the leading cause of injury-related death among children ages 1-4 years old.**

**An estimated 7,000 U.S. children go to an emergency room each year after nearly drowning.**

**Water can include lakes, ponds, swimming pools, rivers, reservoirs and quarries.**

**More children and teens drown in open water than in pools.**



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