



How to introduce your little ones to the water, safely

Whether you're getting ready to open your pool for the summer or close it for winter **it's always a good time to discuss water safety with your children.**

As you have discovered, toddlers move quickly. They are curious and tend to investigate with little or no fear. This is especially dangerous around water because young children tend to gravitate towards it; whether a pool, open water or a bathtub. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for children under 5.

So how do you help prevent this from happening and create good habits for both you and your children? Here are five tips for parents of toddlers to introduce their little ones to water safety:

1. Educate instead of creating fear

- Avoid "scary" words and focus on educating your children about the water
- Teach them to always ask an adult for permission to swim or play in the water

2. Practice at home in the bathtub

- Have them lay on their back with their ears in the water
- When they get water in their eyes teach them to blink it away instead of rubbing their eyes

3. Toy safety

- Ensure that toys are never left in a body of water because they will act as a draw for your child. This includes the pool, small blow-up pool and even the bathtub

4. Survival lessons

- Put your child into swim survival lessons as early as possible. This will help them acclimate, make them comfortable and ensure that they have a positive relationship with all bodies of water
- Trust the experts to teach lifesaving skills like back floating and moving through the water to safety

5. Focus on you first!

- For adults who are not confident in their swimming abilities, it is a huge benefit to take lessons, so that you are able to be confident and safe in water and be able to help little ones (not just your own) if necessary

6. Use a 'Water Watcher' and take our safe swimmer pledge!