

HOME SWIMMING POOL SAFETY



Who's at risk?

Children age 4 and under have a higher rate of death by drowning than any other age group. Approximately 300 kids in this age group drown in home swimming pools every year. And in 2002, nearly 2,700 kids age 14 and under were treated in hospital emergency rooms for drowning-related incidents.

Keep your head above water with these safety tips:

- Install barriers around your home swimming pool. One key barrier is a four-sided fence, four feet high, with slats less than four inches apart. The gates should be self-closing and self-latching, and no child should be able to reach the latch.
- For above ground pools, secure and lock steps and ladders, or remove them when the pool's not in use.
- Door and pool alarms offer additional protection.
- No amount of barriers or alarms replace supervision – always watch kids in the water. It only takes a few seconds for tragedy to strike.
- Have a cordless phone, emergency numbers, a first aid kit and rescue equipment near the pool. And learn CPR!
- Kids should never swim alone. More swimming pool don'ts:
 - Don't run near the pool.
 - Don't push or jump on others in the water.
 - Don't dive or jump into shallow water.
- Drowning isn't the only danger. If you see storm clouds or hear thunder, get out of the pool immediately to avoid electrocution.
- Contaminated pool water can make you sick. So for others' sake, don't swim if you're sick yourself, don't change a baby's diaper near the pool, and put swim diapers on babies and toddlers. It's also good practice to shower before you swim.

Sources: *Injury Facts*, 2004 edition, National Safety Council, 2004

"How to Prevent a Drowning," *Family Safety & Health*, National Safety Council, 2003

"Frequently Asked Questions About Pool Safety," *Family Safety & Health*, National Safety Council, 2000

National SAFEKIDS Campaign

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

