



## Remember to be Water-Wise

Cool splashes and the excited laughter of children can be heard in many neighborhoods and parks as our swimming pools fill with kids of all ages. Whether your child swims in your backyard pool, a neighborhood swimming pool, a park pool or even a lake, you and your child should be aware of the risks of being around water.

- Drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1-4 and the second leading cause of death for children under age 14.
- A child can drown in less time than it takes to answer the phone.
- The majority of children who drown in swimming pools had been missing from sight for less than five minutes and were in the care of one or both parents at the time of the drowning.
- Children can drown in as little as an inch of water and therefore at risk of drowning in wading pools, bathtubs, buckets, diaper pails, toilets, spas, hot tubs and neighborhood retention ponds.

How can you lessen the risks that your child may face? Practice these guidelines and talk to your children about why they are important:

- Never leave your child unsupervised around any type of water.
- Do not go inside to answer the telephone or answer cell phone calls while your child is swimming or near the water.
- Teach your child to never swim alone.

- Keep safety devices such as a ring buoy or a throw rope near the pool.
- Keep all toys away from swimming areas to avoid children being drawn to them for play near water.
- Keep a telephone near your pool for emergencies.
- Make sure to separate the deep end from the shallow end of a pool by using a floating dividing line.
- Never let your child swim when he is tired or overheated (hourly breaks are recommended).
- Teach your child to swim away from platforms or diving boards.
- Require your child to wear personal floatation devices (life jackets) near water if they do not know how to swim.
- Remember that Indiana's safe boating laws require that all boats carry a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal floatation device (life jacket), readily available for each person on board.
- Children and non-swimmers should wear appropriately sized life jackets at all times when boating.

Being around water should be fun and safe for the entire family. Involve your children frequently in open discussions about being "water-wise" so they know the importance of practicing safety around water this summer. Then, put on your suits, apply your sunscreen and head to the pool, lake, or seashore!

*For more information on water safety or to request information on how to hold a safety event in your community, please contact Rebecca Agness in the Community Education Department at Riley Hospital for Children at 317-274-2964 or visit Safety Smart at [www.rileyforkids.org](http://www.rileyforkids.org)*