

## **Keeping Kids Water Safe During Summer**

According to Penny Shaw, a child safety expert and coordinator of Safe Kids of the Piedmont, summer can also be a dangerous time for drowning. She describes it as "the 100 deadliest days of the year."

She tells parents who own a swimming pool to make sure someone is watching the children at all times and that they should also know where their children are at all times, whether they are in or around the pool.

According to Paul Bradley, a firefighter and paramedic, children can drown in less than two feet of water. He said children who can't swim and will be around water should wear a floatation device. Kids who can't swim at all should stay farther from the water. Bradley reminds parents to immediately call 911 in any life-threatening situation. Chloe Salsameda "Experts remind parents of safety tips ahead of summer"

<https://www.wspa.com/news/local-news/experts-remind-parents-of-safety-tips-ahead-of-summer/> (May 11, 2022).

### **Commentary and Checklist**

According to the CDC, in the U.S. there are an estimated 3,960 fatal unintentional drownings, including boating-related drowning. This is equivalent to an average of 11 drowning deaths per day.

There are also 8,080 nonfatal drownings which is equivalent to an average of 22 nonfatal drownings per day. Nonfatal drowning can result in costly hospital confinement and long-term health problems such as brain damage and disability.

According to stopdrowningnow.org, drowning can happen very quickly and silently. It can happen in as little as 20 to 60 seconds.

Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children ages one to four. It also remains in the top five causes of unintentional injury-related death from birth to five-years-old. Sadly, 23 percent of child drownings happen during a family gathering near a pool.

All adults who have children or work with children should know how to keep children safe if they have plans of going in or around water. Here are some water safety tips:

- Know the basics of swimming (moving through the water and floating) and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation)
- Teach children how to swim. This can reduce the risk of drowning by 88 percent for one to four-year-old children who take formal swim lessons.
- Pool fences should completely separate the house or facility play area from the pool.
- Always closely supervise children when they are in or near water (including bathtubs), at all times.
- Require appropriate safety devices such as life jackets.
- Stay off your digital device when children in your care are engaging in water play. Avoid other distracting activities like playing cards, reading books, or using alcohol or drugs.