

Summer Fun and Water:



Photo courtesy of Canterbury Community Nursery School, Richmond, VA.

What You Need to Know

Summer Fun and Water: What You Need to Know

There's nothing better than playing in the water on a hot summer day but parents and caregivers need to know basic safety precautions that make this an enjoyable and fun-filled experience for everyone. Nationally, almost 1,000 children die each year by drowning.

Did you know that a child can drown in less than 2 inches of water? That means that tragedy can happen where you least expect it...the sink, the toilet bowl, a fountain, a bucket or small bodies of standing water. Children under the age of 4 are particularly vulnerable.

Make sure you practice these **three "layers of protection":** *Supervision, barriers and emergency preparedness.* Children should never be unattended or unsupervised near a water hazard or have access to any body of water or water feature without an adult making it accessible. All staff should be trained in emergency procedures should an accident occur and have access to emergency contact numbers both in and out of the classroom.

Some Tips

- Take a walking tour of your outdoor space and identify any potential water hazards that exist. Make a list and identify what actions you can take to lessen the risk associated with those water hazards.
- If you have any standing water in your outdoor space, take action to remove it. It's not only a potential drowning hazard but also a breeding ground for insects.
- If you operate a family child care home and have a pool in your outdoor space, make sure that access to the pool is blocked by fencing, gates with locks and door and pool alarms. It only takes a minute for a young child to wander into danger.
- If you care for infants and toddlers, use water only in small amounts and make sure that there are plenty of adults monitoring water play with these young children. They are also particularly vulnerable to heat stress and the sun, so make sure you're monitoring them during that play.

- Many of our licensing systems now prohibit wading pools in child care. If you are allowed to utilize these pools, make sure they are filled with a minimum amount of water (just enough to splash and get wet) and that any play in the pools is monitored constantly.
- Indoors, make sure that doors to restrooms are closed so that children can't wander into them, particularly if you have toilets without lids. Again, supervision is the key and no young child should be allowed access to the bathroom without adult supervision.
- Hoses, mud/sand pits and water tables can all provide a fun and supervised water experience for young children. ***Put them in their swimsuits and let them get wet and dirty.*** They'll have a great time and you'll provide a fun and educational experience for the children in your care.



If you'd like to get more tips about keeping children safe around water, *HealthyChildren.org*, a website of the American Academy of Pediatrics, has several resources available like [Swim Safety Tips](#). The Florida Department of Children and Families also provides [Summer Safety Tips-Water Safety](#) that were developed for parents and are available in both English and Spanish.

Families also provides [Summer Safety Tips-Water Safety](#) that were developed for parents and are available in both English and Spanish.

Remember: "Keep Your Eyes on the Kids" and look for fun alternatives that provide a safe water play experience! A little water goes a long way!



Sources:

Summer Safety Tips-Water Safety, Florida Department of Children and Families, www.MyFLFamilies.com
Water Safety, www.KidsHealth.org , KidsHealth from Nemours
Water Safety, www.HealthyChildren.org , American Academy of Pediatrics
 Copyright © 2015 Southern Early Childhood Association, All rights reserved.
 Photos courtesy of Canterbury Community Nursery School, Richmond, VA.

