



Rethink Pool Safety

Drowning is preventable because much of the battle to protect children around water happens in your own mind. Here are some mental shifts to make (and old habits to break) in order to keep your children safe around pools.

It Can Happen to You

Tragically, many of the parents who lose children to drownings never considered that their child could be at risk. They weren't negligent; they just failed to realize how close the danger was.

Don't Pass the Buck

Be sure to take ownership of your child's safety. Don't count on responsible behavior from your children, or every adult. Try to be with your child when they are in the water, and know who is watching them when you can't be there.

Not the Time to Multitask

Train yourself to view pool time with your kids as an exclusive activity. Pools make poor baby sitters. It's tempting to send your kids to the pool so you can catch up on emails or yard work. Supervising your children means your eyes are on them, and it requires your full attention.

Supervision Fails

Don't trust in your ability to monitor your children 100% of the time. Eventually, your supervision will break down. Set up secondary barriers to keep your kids safe that don't rely on your constant attention, like fences, pool coverings, alarms, and lifejackets for non-swimmers.

Let's Get Vigilant About Doors

Develop a habit of keeping doors and gates that lead to water closed and locked. It's easy to get lackadaisical over time, but they are your last line of defense. Create a routine for yourself of shutting and locking doors behind you, then checking them frequently.

Know Yourself, and Prevent Distraction

If you know the pull of a good novel or smart phone is strong enough to distract you, choose to leave them behind when you take the children to the pool. The best-case scenario is for you to get in the water with your children so that you can always be within arm's reach and attuned to their safety.

Visualize Your Emergency Response in Advance

Prepare yourself mentally for emergencies. Plan what steps to take and practice them.

Don't Stop at Your Pool

Even if you've done everything you can to safeguard your own pool, don't stop there. Every pool your child might visit has the potential to be dangerous. Make sure other pool owners and parents in your neighborhood know how to keep children safe around pools.