



## Family Safety

### 9 Tips for Protecting Your Child in Water Environments

Practicing water safety is a year-round endeavor for all families. Drowning hazards are ever-present to young children and tragedies can happen when parents turn their backs – even for just a second. The following tips will help families protect their young children from an accidental or unsupervised water encounter.

- ✓ **Remember:** These tips aren't just for pool safety. Hot tubs, spas, Jacuzzis, lakes, rivers, retention ponds, irrigation ditches and flooded areas all pose a serious risk to your child.
- 1. Effective Supervision. There is only one thing in the world to protect your child against drowning – effective supervision. Among every other tip provided, this is the most important. Never turn your back on your child around water, ever.
- 2. Pool Safety (applies to all water areas). Covered pools and hot tubs can be a serious hazard oversight for well-meaning parents during winter months. Make sure your pool or hot tub is appropriately secured, year-round, with:
  - a. Pool alarms and alarms on all doorways that access a pool area.
  - b. Permanent pool fencing with a self-latching gate.
  - c. Locks on doors and windows that lead to the pool (locks must be out of the child's reach).
- ✓ **Remember:**  
Double check locks and make sure your pool security devices are working. Safety gates are good deterrents but should not be relied upon as a sole defense. ***Did you know that the average three year old can climb a pool fence in 34 seconds?***
- 3. Self-rescue Skills. If the above defense measures fail, your baby needs to know skills for self-rescue should she find herself in a potential drowning scenario. Infant Swimming Resource emphasizes water self-rescue skills as a comprehensive water-safety plan for young children. ISR has successfully trained more than 150,000 babies and toddlers and delivered more than six million lessons with a 100 percent safety and survival rate, zero injuries and 784 documented cases of a child's self-rescue using ISR techniques.
- 4. Educate Others. Nannies, grandparents, neighbors, friends and all caregivers to your child should be educated on water-safety tips. Make sure they each understand the importance of these tips and that appropriate security devices are installed where relevant.
- 5. Keep toys stored away. Toys are tempting for young children; never leave them outside around pool areas. Ever.
- 6. Keep a portable phone by the pool. This phone should only be used for emergencies.
- 7. Keep jets aimed towards the shallow end and the steps. If your baby does fall in, properly positioned jets will create a current that will guide her toward the shallow end and the steps so she can exit the pool.
- 8. Keep water levels at the uppermost limit. This will help make it easier for your child to reach the outside elevated ledge and to either get out of the water or hold onto the edge and call for help.
- 9. No Diving Boards. Ever. Diving boards pose countless injury risks to young children.