

Safe Summer Swimming



Walking, hiking, biking and swimming are all great summer activities. Safety is of utmost importance when doing these activities to ensure your child reaps the benefits of being active without injury. Water safety is a must as drowning and water related accidents are the leading cause of death and injury for Canadian children.

Practice these safety tips when your child is around open water:

- Keep your child within your sight and easy reach when they are in or around open water. Stay within arms reach of any child that does not swim well and any children under the age of 5 years old.
- Do not rely on older siblings or friends of your child to keep them safe. Older siblings can often misjudge the depth of water or strength of currents, putting both themselves and younger children at risk.
- Learn how to swim or ensure an adult who is able to swim is around when your child is in the water.
- Ensure that young children and weak swimmers wear life jackets when swimming or boating. The life jacket should be the appropriate fit for your child's weight. Buckle the jacket and use all of the safety straps to make sure they do not slip out of the lifejacket.
- To make sure your child is safe when at your cottage, secure a play area away from the water that is secured by a fence at least 1.2 m or 4 ft high. It only takes a brief period of time when you are not watching for your child to get to the water.
- Make sure your child has taken swimming lessons. Supervision is still needed when they are around the water even if they can swim.
- Teach your child about the hazards of currents in water and help them understand why they cannot do certain things when they are in or around the water.

Practice these safety tips when your child is around water at playgrounds or water attractions:

- Always supervise your child.
- Teach rules for safe play, the importance of walking rather than running as well as taking turns using the equipment.
- Ensure they wear the appropriate water foot wear (to prevent cuts and scrapes).
- Make sure damaged or broken equipment is reported so it can be fixed.
- Pools and ponds at home should be fenced on all 4 sides to prevent drowning.
- Empty wading pools and home playground water features after each use.

Adapted from: <http://www.parachutecanada.org/injury-topics/topic/>

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