



## HOME POOL SAFETY

**Q. Why do so many drowning deaths occur in home swimming pools?**

A. Home swimming pools are located close to the house and the child's natural curiosity brings them into contact with the pool. In the majority of home swimming pool drowning deaths the toddler fell in or went in voluntarily.

**Q. How do children get into the home swimming pool?**

A. The most common entries for toddlers into the home pool are: via an open gate, through a house door, or by using nearby equipment to climb over the fence.

**Q. Will I hear the child calling for help when drowning?**

A. No. Many parents mistakenly believe they can listen out for their child but drowning can occur in a matter of seconds without any splash or crying out to alert parents.

**Q. How can I prevent my child from drowning?**

- A. Royal Life Saving believes there are four things you need to do to prevent drowning:
1. Fence the pool with a four sided fence, this means that access to the pool is via a gate not the house. It is also preferable that the pool area is only used for swimming and that any equipment not related to the functioning of the pool should be stored outside the pool area.
  2. Children should be supervised whenever they are in, on or around water, and this supervision should be by an adult and the child should be within arms reach at all times.
  3. Have you and your child undertake water familiarisation classes.
  4. Learn resuscitation

**Q. I have a pool fence, how could my child get into the pool area?**

A. Unsupervised children can access the pool area by using nearby garden and furniture items to provide them with a foothold to climb over the fence. Additionally, in many social situations a pool gate is propped open to provide ease of access. This should never be done.

**Q. What can I do about this?**

A. Royal Life Saving has created the Keep Watch program to reduce the problem of toddler drowning prevention in Australia.

Keep Watch has four key messages:

- Supervise
- Fence your pool and lock the gate
- Familiarise your child with water
- Learn resuscitation

Toddler drowning prevention involves all of these components.

**Almost half of all drowning deaths in the 0-5 year age group occur in home swimming pools.**

### Swimming Pool CHECKLIST:

- Have you brought everything you need to the pool area so you don't need to return to the house and leave the children unattended?
- Have you enrolled your children in water familiarisation classes? This will give them water confidence and is the stepping stone toward learning to swim in the future.
- Have family members undertaken a Resuscitation course and ensured it is updated annually?
- Is the pool fenced?
- Is the gate self-closing and self latching?
- Ensure the gate is not propped open at any time

Royal Life Saving has developed a number of fact sheets on water safety issues in Australia. Contact Royal Life Saving on:

**1300 RESQ ME**  
(1300 7377 63)

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