



WHO IS **AT RISK** FOR DROWNING?

Drowning is a leading cause of death for all children.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control, for every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency department care for non-fatal submersion injuries. Children 1 to 4 years old have the highest drowning rates and are most at-risk.

- **Babies** can drown in just one inch of water, and they can die when left unattended in bathtubs, even for just a few minutes.
- **Drowning is the leading cause of preventable death for children age 1 – 4.** Small children are curious about water, but most do not yet know how to swim, or understand the dangers of water. Research indicates that toddlers often drown silently, rather than shouting for help or splashing for attention.
- **Teens** are at risk for drowning because they may not wear a life jacket while boating, they may not be aware of risks and safety measures in bodies of water, may not be able to judge water conditions, overestimate their own swimming ability (particularly when with friends), may use alcohol or drugs while on or in the water, or have not learned how to swim.
- **Children with autism** are 160 times more likely to die from drowning than their peers.



OVER THE PAST TEN YEARS IN CONNECTICUT, THERE WERE 43 UNINTENTIONAL DROWNING DEATHS OF CHILDREN

Risk Categories

- Children under 3 years old and younger accounted for nearly 30%
- Children between the ages of 4 and 8 accounted for over 20% of drowning deaths
- Teens are at the greatest risk for drowning (35%)

Disproportionality

Minority children are disproportionately affected by drowning. In Connecticut, 65% of children who drowned were Black or Hispanic. Additionally, nearly 75% of all drowning in Connecticut are boys.

FIVE DROWNING PREVENTION STAGES

- 1 Supervision.** Watch kids when they are in or around water, without being distracted. Keep young children within arm's reach of an adult. Swim only at guarded lakes, rivers and beaches.
- 2 Empty tubs, buckets, and kiddie pools after use.** Store them upside down so they don't collect water. Close toilet lids and close bathroom doors and consider use of safety toilet locks/ toilet seat lid-lock.
- 3 Barriers to water. Install fences around home pools.** A pool fence should surround all sides of the pool and be at least four feet tall with self-closing and self-latching gates and consider adding a pool alarm system.
- 4 Water Safety and Emergency Skills.** Know what to do in an emergency. Learning CPR and basic water rescue skills may help. Wear age-appropriate safety devices including life jackets.
- 5 Learn to Swim.** Help kids participate in formal swimming lessons.

RESOURCES

- Find swim classes and lessons (*Red Cross*) available in your area.
- Learn how to choose the right life jacket (*United States Coast Guard*)
- General open water safety information
- Keeping Kids Safe in Open Water (*Safe Kids*)
- Drowning Prevention for Curious Toddlers: What Parents Need to Know & Water Safety for Teens (*HealthyChildren*)
- 10 Open Water Safety Tips (*National Drowning Prevention Alliance*)