

SUPERVISING CHILDREN AROUND WATER

Adult supervision is the best protection for children – even for those who can swim.

Drowning is one of the leading causes of death for Canadian children aged one to four. For every toddler who dies from drowning, it is estimated there are three to five additional near drownings, which require hospitalization. A small child can drown in only a few inches of water — enough to cover the mouth and nose. The most common location for infant drowning is the bathtub, but there are also high percentages of drowning in home pools and from boating accidents

When supervising children around water, consider the following:

- Regardless of the location, ensure children are supervised; whether at home or on vacation.
- Ensure that your backyard pool is fully fenced with a self-closing, self-latching gate, an easily retrievable first aid kit and a phone.
- When boating, ensure everyone in the boat has a properly fitted lifejacket on and fastened.
- Don't drink alcohol before or during swimming or boating activities.
- Avoid swimming in areas where there are potential currents that may be dangerous.
- Take swimming and water safety lessons and know how to respond in an emergency by taking first aid/CPR lessons.
- Consider using a personal flotation device at all time around water, especially for young children and new swimmers.

Adapted from Canadian Red Cross: www.redcross.ca