

MEDIA RELEASE



Family Water Safety Tips This Summer

Splash into Summer, Splash into Safety

Summer is here, and its time to take the togs out and hit your favourite swimming spot. Safekids New Zealand and WaterSafe Auckland wish families a fun-filled and injury-free summer, with safety tips to keep your children safe in, on and around water.

“Children love the water, whether it’s swimming in a pool, at the beach, or kayaking and sailing at sea or on a lake,” said Ann Weaver, Director of Safekids New Zealand. “Unfortunately, while water can be fun, it can also be dangerous.”

According to Safekids, New Zealand has one of the highest drowning rates in the OECD for children aged 0-14 years, with an average of 15 children drowning each year and a further 37 hospitalised.

“Drowning is the second leading cause of death with preschoolers, making up 70% of childhood drownings, and 64% of hospitalisations for non-fatal drownings. Alarmingly, the number of children aged 1 to 4 that drown in New Zealand is twice as high as in Australia, and four times more than the United Kingdom,” Ann added.

Summer Splash Safety Tips

Teresa Stanley, WaterSafe Auckland’s Drowning Prevention Manager, emphasises the importance of adult supervision. “Please remember, there is no alternative to close, active and constant adult supervision of children anywhere near water.”

“This means keeping within arm’s length of young children, and being focused on the child – not reading, talking or texting on the phone.”

Below are some safety tips to follow this summer:

- **Stay within sight and reach of your child, and maintain hand contact with infants when in, on and around water.**
- **Always drain the bath (and put plugs up high), paddling pools and buckets after use.**
- **Know your responsibilities around fencing for your home pool and spa.**
- **Enrol children in swimming lessons and water confidence classes.**
- **Children must always wear a fitting child’s lifejacket when on a boat.**
- **Learn CPR and First Aid.**
- **Designate an experienced adult swimmer to actively supervise children.**

For more summer safety tips, visit www.safekids.org.nz and www.watersafe.org.nz.

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Editor's Notes:



Photo Caption: Enrol children in swimming lessons and water confidence classes.

About Safekids New Zealand

Safekids New Zealand is the injury prevention service of Starship Children's Health and a member of SAFE KIDS Worldwide. Our mission is to reduce the incidence and severity of unintentional injuries to New Zealand's children aged 0 - 14 years.

To find out more about the Safekids, visit www.safekids.org.nz or contact 09 630 9955 or email info@safekids.govt.nz.

About WaterSafe Auckland

WaterSafe Auckland is recognised as the regional coordinating body for drowning prevention, water safety promotion and education. Their mission is to build a water safety culture through effective collaboration, education and promotion.

To find out more about WaterSafe Auckland, visit www.watersafe.org.nz, phone 09 306 0809 or email watersafe.ak@xtra.co.nz.