

It only takes a minute for a child to slip silently underwater while her caregiver leaves the room to answer the phone.

Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death among children ages 1 to 4, and the second leading cause for children 1 to 14. Most drownings happen during a brief lapse in supervision, when a caregiver becomes distracted or involved in another activity.

A young child can drown quickly and silently, in as little as two inches of water. For every child who drowns, others will be admitted to a hospital with injuries sustained in a near-drowning. Some of these children will suffer permanent brain damage.

Childhood drownings occur in backyard swimming pools, bathtubs, baby pools, decorative garden ponds, lakes and rivers, ditches, and even buckets. The good news is that drowning tragedies can be prevented by supervising children at all times when they are in or near water.

Watch kids near water, and save a life.



Emergency Phone Numbers:

Rescue/Ambulance **911** _____

Nearest hospital _____

Fire department _____

Police department _____

Poison control _____

Family doctor _____

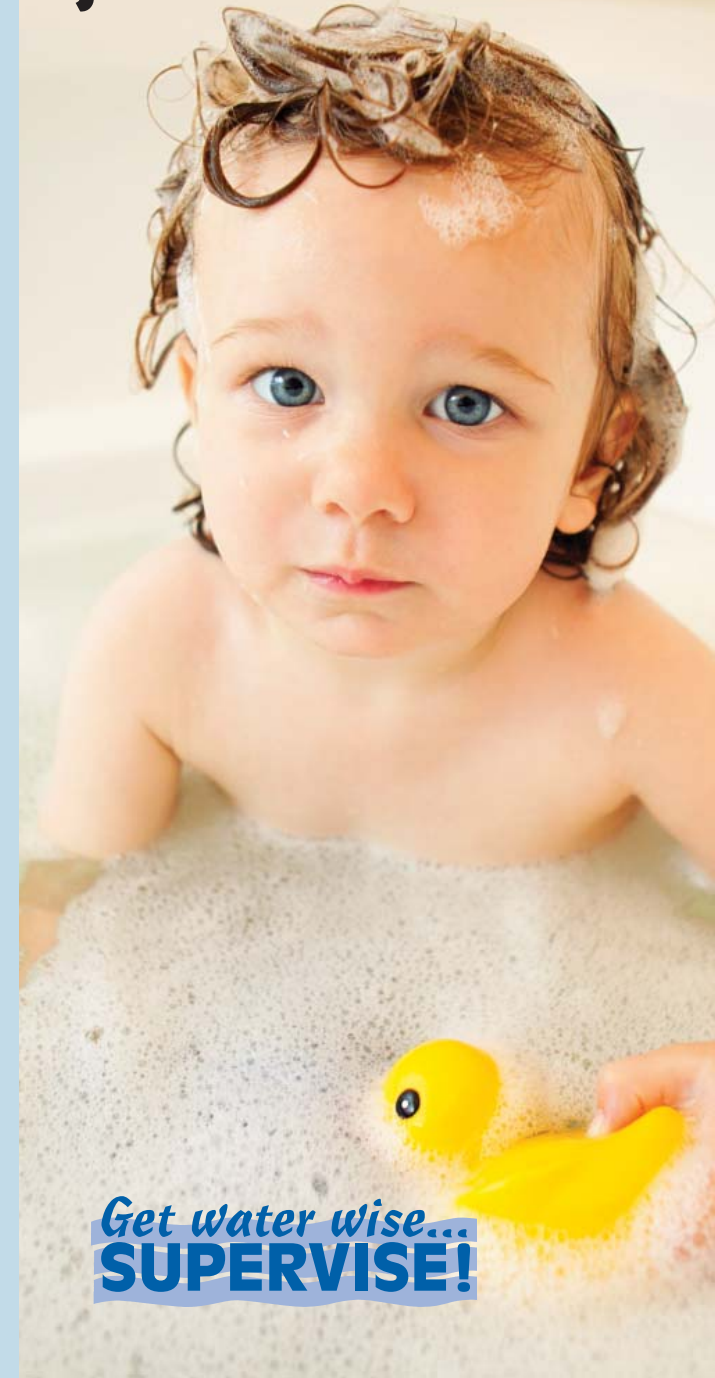
Neighbor with a car _____

Get water wise...SUPERVISE! is a collaboration between the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services, Prevent Child Abuse Illinois, American Red Cross, Illinois Department of Public Health, and other community partners.

The committee's mission is to remind the public that drowning is a swift, silent occurrence that can be avoided when parents, guardians and other care providers exercise constant supervision of children in their care when participating in water activities. For more information or to order materials, call 217-785-0429.

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“I left her in the bath for just a minute.”



**Get water wise...
SUPERVISE!**

Swimming pool safety:

Appoint an adult who can swim to watch children while they are in the pool. The supervising adult should not read, talk on the phone, mow the lawn, leave the pool area to answer the door, or do any other distracting activity while watching the children.

Don't consider your children to be 'drown-proof' because they've had swimming lessons.

Keep ladders, patio furniture and toys away from above-ground pools. Toddlers are better climbers than you might think!

Fence in your pool completely and install a self-closing, self-latching gate. Pool safety covers and alarms provide added protection.

Young children should wear or use personal flotation devices, but these devices **do not** replace adult supervision. They could deflate or slip from underneath a child, leaving him in a dangerous situation.

Remind baby-sitters and other caretakers not to leave children unattended near or in water.

Keep pool water clear and remove floats and other toys when the pool is not in use. Cloudy water and items floating in the water may prevent a child from being seen.

Learn CPR and keep rescue equipment, a telephone and emergency numbers near all pools. Seconds count when it comes to preventing death or serious injury.

Baby pool safety:

Don't be lulled into a false sense of security because of the shallowness of baby pools. Small children could drown in as little as two inches of water and should always be kept within arm's reach when they are in a baby pool.

Empty the baby pool immediately after use and store it upside-down.

Bathroom safety:

Never leave a young child alone in a bathtub or allow a sibling watch a younger child. If you need to leave the bathroom, take your child with you.

Infant bathtubs and bathtub seats are bathing aids, not safety devices.

Keep the toilet lid down and use a toilet seat lock to keep children from opening the lid.

Put a latch on the bathroom door to keep children out of the bathroom when unsupervised.

Bucket safety:

Five-gallon buckets of water pose a threat to babies and toddlers who may topple into them while playing and be unable to free themselves.

Empty and store all buckets out of children's reach.

Ice safety:

During winter months, be aware of frozen ponds and lakes where ice could be thin. Do not walk or sled on these areas.

Lake and river safety:

If you are having a picnic in a park or camping near a river, find out where the bodies of water are so you know where to look **FIRST** if a child goes missing.

Swimming across a lake or river is not like swimming in a pool, and it's easy to misjudge the water. Teach children that it is unsafe to dive head-first into the water because it may be too shallow, and to stay out of murky or fast-moving water – there may be hidden dangers in the water that can't be seen by standing on the shore.

Children should always wear life vests when swimming in lakes and rivers.

Garden pond safety:

Children are naturally curious, and find water, fish and frogs irresistible. The plants that often surround garden ponds may also make it difficult to see a submerged child, increasing the danger. If you have young children, consider filling in the garden pond until they are older.

Install a rigid screen across the pond to create a secure cover. The screen must be strong enough to support the weight of a child and must remain above the surface of the water at all times. If the screen is below the surface of the water, a child could still fall face-down into the pond and drown.

Fence in the pond area and install a self-closing gate with a childproof lock.

Supervise children at all times when they are outside. It only takes a minute for a child to wander away and head straight for the pond in a neighbor's yard.