

Practice Note: Pool Safety

This practice note is to assist practitioners in providing information to the families they work with, to share with colleagues and other community professionals and to support the work they do to keep children and families safe. Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death among young children under the age of 10 in Ontario. It is generally considered that for every death, there is an estimated four to five additional near-drownings, which requires hospitalization. The majority of child drownings occur in backyard pools within a short time frame while left unsupervised. Small children lack the cognitive skills to realize they are in danger.

Pool Safety Tips

Here are some important safety tips for pool owners that will help create a safer environment for children and reduce the risk of drowning. Please visit the website listed below for additional safety tips.

- Never leave a child unsupervised near a pool.
- Completely fence the pool. Install self-closing and self-latching gates. Position latches out of reach of young children.
- Do not use flotation devices as a substitute for supervision.
- Place tables and chairs well away from the pool fence to prevent children from climbing into the pool area.
- Keep toys away from the pool area because a young child playing with the toys could accidentally fall in the water.
- Have a telephone at poolside to avoid having to leave children unattended in or near the pool to answer a telephone elsewhere. Keep emergency numbers at the poolside telephone.
- Learn CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).
- Keep rescue equipment by the pool.

http://www.keepkidshealthy.com/welcome/safety/pool_safety.html

Additional Resources

Below is a list of some resources available to the public on pool and water safety and the prevention of child deaths by drowning.

Safe Kids Canada

These websites provide information on pool safety, lifejackets/Personal Floatation Devices (PFDs) and safer pool fencing laws. Some information on pool fencing is available to download as a PDF.

<http://www.safekidscanada.ca/Professionals/Safety-Information/Index.aspx>

<http://www.safekidscanada.ca/Professionals/Advocacy/Pool-Fencing/Index.aspx>

Canadian Red Cross

This website provides information on water safety through safety tips, articles and fact sheets (available in PDF to download). The Canadian Red Cross also provides information on the programs and courses (first aid, CPR, swimming and water safety) for different age groups available in your area.

<http://www.redcross.ca/article.asp?id=1047&tid=024>

Lifesaving Society

This website provides information on backyard pool safety with backyard pool safety inspection guidelines and a backyard pool checklist. They also provide additional information on lifejackets, drowning research and reports, and a section for people to purchase information and equipment.

<http://www.lifesavingsociety.com/who's-drowning.aspx>

