

Water safety with babies and young children



Keep your children safe in water

- Teach your children **water safety** instructions.
- **Remember drowning happens silently and without splashing. All children must be supervised appropriately around water and children under 8 must always be actively supervised around water.**
- **Do not** be distracted by your phone or other interruptions.
- **Be alert** to ponds and pools when visiting other people's homes and when out and about.
- Beaches can be busy and distracting. Stay together and keep an eye on your children at all times.



Keep your children safe in water at home and in the garden

- **Supervise small children and babies at all times.** Babies and small children can drown in the bath or in a garden pond or paddling pool. They can drown in just a few centimetres of water. Drowning happens silently.
- Empty the paddling pool as soon as it has been used, then turn it upside down.
- Turn a pond into a sandpit or securely cover it while your children are little.
- Make sure your child cannot get to the neighbour's pond or pool.
- Make sure pond and swimming pool covers are secure.



Keep children safe at bath time

- Get everything you need ready before bath time.
- A responsible adult should stay with your baby or young child when the bath is running and **keep them within arm's reach** at all times when they are in the bath.
- **Do not** ever leave a baby or young child in the bath. It only takes seconds for a baby or child to drown.
- **Do not** be distracted by your phone or other interruptions.
- Pull the plug out as soon as bath time is over.
- **Do not** let young children or older children with medical conditions lock the door.
- Bath seats are **not** safety devices and are not necessary. **Babies should not be out of arms reach in a bath seat for even a second as they can slip out.**



Keep your child safe swimming

- Children and young people may think they are a stronger swimmer than they are or not understand the risks.
- **Supervise your children in and around water at all times.**
- Ensure that your children and the whole family know the basics of water safety and who to contact in an emergency.
- Choose safe places to swim like public pools and beaches with lifeguards.
- Teach children to swim between the red and yellow flags (the areas patrolled by lifeguards).
- Do not use inflatables, they can be swept out to sea when the wind is blowing.
- **Learn about Cold Water Shock.** Even in high summer, the sea and rivers in the UK are cold enough to induce cold water shock, which can be a precursor to drowning. Always treat water with respect and learn more about cold water shock here: rnli.org/safety/know-the-risks/coldwater-shock

Learn to Swim



Barnet's Better gyms offer swimming lessons for all ages and abilities.
Visit: www.better.org.uk/swimming

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