

## Pool Safety - Keeping Afloat Around the Pool

While a pool can be many things to many people, some benefits are universal. By enjoying a backyard pool, homeowners improve their health and fitness, release and eliminate stress, and create a vibrant atmosphere for special occasions and family fun. Overall, pool ownership is a lifestyle change and one for the better - you don't have to leave home to escape the rat race. A pool gives opportunities to encourage togetherness or to appreciate quiet moments alone.

Health professionals agree - swimming is the most beneficial activity for your whole body being stress-free for joints and limbs. Improved self-confidence and a positive attitude change are also part of the pool exercise package. Pool aerobics serve as a preventative and therapeutic activity and a cardiovascular conditioner, especially for those with arthritis and other disabilities.

Any occasion becomes a special event when the setting is your backyard pool. Think of the possibilities- Company parties, wedding receptions, family reunions and quiet gatherings of friends – your social calendar will fill up along with your pool. With colorful decorations, mouthwatering food and music to fit the mood, your pool parties will create memories that will last a lifetime. The possibilities are endless.

### **What better place to entertain your kids and their friends than at home, *safe in your own family pool?***

Drowning is the fourth leading cause of death of children under five years of age in the US, and the leading cause of death in some states such as California, Florida and Arizona; enough cannot be said or read on this subject.

Almost 300 under-fives drown each year in residential swimming pools and spas in the US. According to the USPS Commission “an estimated 3,000 children under age five and an even greater number of adults are treated in hospital emergency rooms following submersion accidents each year. Some of these submersion accidents result in permanent brain damage.

Children must be constantly supervised when swimming. The more people in or around the pool, the more supervision is necessary. You need to assign one person who is dedicated to watching the children. If that person leaves, they must pass their duty to another responsible adult (a sober one who can swim!).

Pool water must be completely protected whilst not in use to prevent drowning - with a Safety Cover or a Safety Net. Pool alarms can give a false sense of security, as the child is already in the water when the alarm sounds, pool fences can be climbed over and have gates which can, and do, get left open. For complete peace of mind the best, and most economic, solution is a Katchakid Pool Net. Katchakid keeps children safe whether the pool is full or has been drained for winter, but allows you an unobstructed view of your pool.

Teach and enforce basic pool rules –

No eating, running or glassware in or near the pool.

Keep objects not in use out of the pool - kids will enter the water if they want something that they see floating in it.

Take a mobile phone to the pool to remove temptation to run in the house for '*just a minute*'. Note the Emergency Services phone number and store it in your mobile phone.

Remove small children from the pool if adults want to play rough.

Pool water washes sunscreen off – keep lathering it on the children and on yourself!

Don't force children to participate - let them adjust to this new environment slowly.

Kids are more comfortable if other kids are in the pool with them.

Enrol your child in swimming lessons, or teach them yourself.

Drain play-pools and invert when not in use.

**NEVER** swim during a thunderstorm.

Learn artificial respiration techniques.

Don't rely on lifeguards at public pools to watch over your children; they need your help as they are supervising many children at once.

Diving injuries can result in quadriplegia, paralysis below the neck, therefore -

**NEVER** dive into aboveground pools, they are too shallow.

Don't dive from the side of an in-ground pool - enter feet first.

Dive from the end of a diving board and not from its' sides.

Dive with your hands in front of you and always steer up immediately to avoid hitting the bottom or sides.

Don't dive if you have been using alcohol or drugs because your reactions will be slow.

Improper use of pool slides presents the same danger as improper diving techniques - never slide down headfirst; slide down feet first only.

Remember, too, that we set the example for our children. If we follow the rules it will be easier for kids to follow them. The bottom line is; you can't be too cautious around water. It may seem that these tips are only important during warmer months; however, pool safety all year around is important. Just because you're not swimming in the pool in January doesn't mean that it isn't a drowning hazard. If a pool is drained for the winter a child can still fall in and sustain injuries or even death.

Safety Equipment - You need a bare minimum of a 'shepherd's crook' pool hook and a life preserver. These items are only of use if they are within reach, so keep them poolside at all times.

80% of falls occur on or near the steps. Ladder steps must be firmly secure; cement and tiled steps must be free from obstructions.

If you have a dog or a cat, eventually it will end up in the pool - if there is no way for the pet to climb out it may drown.

Fit a Katchakid Safety Net. After almost 40 years and more than 400,000 installations, there has never been a drowning accident when a Katchakid is correctly fitted.

Fit lights to the pool. Underwater and pool area lighting allows you to keep an eye on things in the evenings.

Enjoy your pool, stay cool and stay alive!

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