

WATER SAFETY

Dear Colleagues,

Children can be fascinated by water and splashing about is great fun. With the summer holidays approaching please raise awareness of the importance of keeping children safe near water by displaying resources and engaging parents and carers about these safety messages.

Did you know?

- Babies and toddlers drown silently in as little as 5cm of water; even rainwater collecting in a bucket can be a danger for a small child. [Child Accident Prevention Trust](#)
- Drowning is the third highest cause of accidental death of children in the UK [RLSS](#)
- Young children can also drown in swimming pools. This usually happens when they wander away from their parents and fall into the pool. Families need to take extra care when on holiday with easy access to a villa pool.
- Children don't cry out for help and wave to be rescued. Instead they disappear under the surface of the water [Child Accident Prevention Trust](#)
- Most drownings involving two to three year olds happen in the home and garden (CAPT).
- Baths are the commonest place for babies and young children to drown. A bath seat is not a safety device.

Top tips

- Empty a paddling pool after use and securely cover water tanks, hot tubs and drains.
- Fill in garden ponds or make sure they are securely covered. Also make sure the garden is secure so that a child can't get to a neighbour's pond.
- On beaches check when the tide will be high and low and make sure that you won't be cut off by the rising tide.
- Inflatable dinghies or lilos are a well-known hazard – it's easy for them to be blown out to sea.
- Children need to be supervised around water. They might understand instructions but are likely to forget if they are having fun or are excited.
- Never leave a baby or young child alone in the bath, not even for a second!

Resources

- [Leaflet](#) How safe is your child in the garden?
Also available from www.westsussex.gov.uk/healthpromotion Code L09/32
- [Outdoor Swimming Society](#) tips for safe summer swimming.
- [RNLI](#) Beach safety advice including downloadable [activity posters](#) primarily aimed at 4+ years, but could be used to engage younger children.
- West Sussex County Council – learn to swim at your local [Leisure Centre](#)