

# Summer Pool Safety

The following 10 suggestions can greatly reduce the chances you'll ever find your child in trouble in a home pool or spa:

- 1.** Make sure the child is attended to at all times in and around the pool. This does not mean simple visual monitoring, but active attentiveness with small children kept within arm's length.
- 2.** Use passive flotation devices such as life vests as supplements to an overall safety program. But beware: Due to the weight distribution of small bodies, these devices will not always keep a child afloat in a face-up position--supervision is essential.
- 3.** Avoid submersing the child's head when in the pool. Substantial amounts of swallowed water can be dangerous for small children as salt concentrations in their bodies can be lowered to dangerous levels and can cause seizures.
- 4.** Install pool barriers such as an electrically operated pool cover or isolation pool fencing--a removable barrier that installs around the perimeter of the pool separating it from the house. Studies in New Zealand and Australia found this type of fencing reduces swimming pool drownings anywhere from 50 to 80 percent.
- 5.** Install alarms in home doors that open directly into pool areas to minimize the possibility the child will enter the area unnoticed.
- 6.** Don't rely on swimming lessons. Children under the age of 5 generally cannot be made water-safe as they lack the strength, gross motor coordination, judgment and learned-skill retention needed to aid themselves during an accident.
- 7.** Install a phone in the pool area or keep a cordless phone with you at all times.
- 8.** Obtain training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and insist anyone watching your child does the same. Survival depends on rescuing the child quickly and restarting the breathing process, even while the child is still in the water. Seconds are crucial: many children die or suffer severe brain damage before emergency medical personnel ever arrive.
- 9.** Keep basic lifesaving equipment--such as a pole, rope and life preservers--nearby at all times.
- 10.** Never use solar pool blankets. Children can easily fall into the pool and slip under the blanket, making it difficult for them to break the surface or to be spotted once the child is submersed.

*Resources taken from: [www.family.go.com](http://www.family.go.com)*