

## 9 MYTHS OF DROWNING

### 1. Is drowning really a problem?

A. Yes. Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional death among children ages 1-4 in California. A residential pool is 14 times more likely to cause a death than an automobile.

### 2. Don't more children die in open water than in pools?

A. No. 50% of deaths by drowning occur in residential pools.

### 3. Isn't it more important to have a locked gate to keep neighbors out?

A. No. 65% of the children were at their own home at the time of the incident. 46% of the children were last seen safe inside the house just before the drowning. 72% had direct access to the pool once they were outside the house.

### 4. Isn't it just parental neglect that causes drowning?

A. No. According to the U.S. CPSC Drowning Study, conscientious parents who understand the need for supervision were almost always present.

### 5. Won't swimming lessons protect a child from drowning?

A. No. Swimming lessons do not prepare a child for a drowning or a near drowning situation.

### 6. Isn't constant supervision enough to prevent drowning?

A. No. We recommended "layers" of protection which include a well maintained non-climbable fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate, alarm systems, powered safety pool covers, and self-closing, self-latching doors with automatic sliding door closers.

### 7. Is there any proof that fences or safety barriers work? Can't a child climb over a fence?

A. In studies conducted in Australia and New Zealand, the findings suggest that adequate, four sided pool fencing reduced drownings by 80%. Studies in Arizona demonstrated a 50% reduction.

### 8. Won't fences detract from the aesthetics of pools?

A. There are several kinds of fences to choose from which meet safety requirements and there are also alternatives such as an approved safety cover.

### 9. Do pool owners without young children need to install protective barriers??

A. 35% of residential drownings are not at the home of the victim.

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# KIDS AREN'T DROWN PROOF!



# SAVE A LIFE.

DROWNING IS THE LEADING CAUSE of death, disability, and injury for children under 5 years of age in California, and the second leading killer of youngsters nationwide.

The number of young, severely brain-damaged near-drowning victims has increased rapidly in recent years. Residential care of these victims averages \$220,000 annually per child, and is the leading cause of admission to state hospitals. Presently there are over 600 individuals maintained in state facilities.

## ABOUT THE DROWNING PREVENTION FOUNDATION (DPF)

DPF's mission is to prevent the tragedy of drownings through the use of public information, education and policy change. DPF is a non-profit, community-based organization which was established in 1984. It is recognized both locally and nationally as the leading expert in drowning prevention methods, technology, policy and activities.

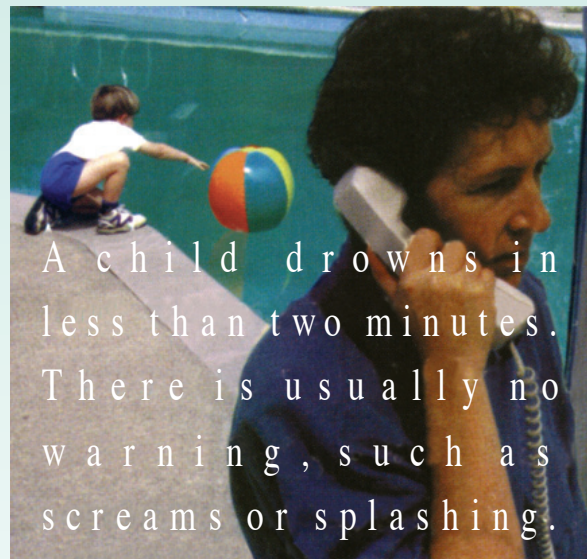
DPF's activities include working to strengthen local, state, and national legislation on pool fencing, providing technical assistance to other local, state, and national coalitions and agencies; producing and distributing educational materials on drowning prevention; and advising parents and caretakers on improving the safety of backyard pools, spas and hot tubs.

## A DROWNING HAPPENS IN SECONDS

It could happen to you! A diligent father switches his attention to the phone while his child sinks lifelessly to the bottom of the swimming pool. A normally attentive mother is cooking in the kitchen, her youngster falls into the neighbors pool. A conscientious babysitter is distracted by the needs of one of her many charges, another wanders off and drowns.

Obviously supervision is critically important, but it's virtually impossible to supervise small children every minute of every day. That is why parents and caretakers must provide multiple layers of protection—pool fencing, self-closing, and self-locking gates, automatic sliding door closers, pool alarms, automatic safety covers, as well as constant supervision.

## DROWNING IS PREVENTABLE!



## SAFETY GUIDELINES (PARTIAL LIST)

- ◆ Never leave a child alone near water to answer the phone, the doorbell, go to the bathroom, attend to another child or attend to household chores, even for a few seconds.
- ◆ Keep a constant eye on young children playing in or near any body of water, wading pool, public pool, bathtub or lake. At large gatherings, designate an adult to watch children at play, and while in pool.
- ◆ Fence your pool on all four sides with a barrier that is at least 5 feet high. Move lawn chairs, tables and other potential climbing aids away from the fence to help keep children out.
- ◆ Any gate or door leading to the pool area should be self-closing and self-latching, opening outward, with the latch placed on the pool side out of reach.
- ◆ Install panic alarms on all house doors and windows leading to the pool area, automatic sliding door closers and automatic safety cover over the pool. Completely remove cover before children are allowed in pool.
- ◆ Drain off water that accumulates on top of the pool cover. A child can drown in as little as two inches of water.
- ◆ Keep reaching and throwing aids, such as poles and life preservers, on both sides of the pool.
- ◆ All non-swimmers should always wear approved personal flotation devices when they are near water.
- ◆ Swimming lessons do not insure safety. About 25% of all young drowning victims have had swimming lessons. A child who falls into water unexpectedly will panic and forget his swimming skills.

It is crucial that you and all of your child's caretakers can swim and know how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) in an emergency. Immediate CPR could prevent death or massive brain damage.