



HOME STUDY

Water Addendum

NOTE: A swimming pool or other body of water in the yard can present a very dangerous area for children. Drowning is the number one cause of death for children under five in Florida, Arizona, and California with a ranking of number two for over a dozen other states. For every drowning, there are eleven near drowning incidents, according to government statistics, many of which result in totally disabling brain damage.

To protect your family from a potentially fatal accident, the following is recommended:

- Never leave your children alone in or near the bathtub, a pool, or any water, even for a moment. Do not be distracted by doorbells, phone calls, chores or conversations. If you must leave the bathroom, pool or water area, take the children with you, making sure the bathroom door is closed, and/or the pool or area gate latches securely when it closes. During social gatherings at or near water, appoint a "designated watcher" to protect children from water accidents. Adults may take turns being the "watcher." When adults become preoccupied, children are at risk around ANY containers of water or liquid, even toilets and bathtubs!
- Post rules such as: "No Running," "No dunking" and "Never swim alone." Enforce the rules!
- Instruct baby sitters about potential water hazards to children, even in the bathtub, and about the use of protective devices, such as door alarms and latches. Emphasize the need for contact supervision. Be sure the person watching your children knows how to swim, to get emergency help and to perform CPR.
- If a child is missing, check the pool, bathtub, or water area first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability. Go to the edge of the pool or water area and scan the entire area, bottom of pool and surface of pool or water area.
- Install a fence to separate your house from the water area. Most children who drown in water wander out of the house and fall into the water. The fence should be 5-feet high and completely surround the water area. The fence must completely separate the water area from the house and the play area of the yard.
- Use self-closing gates that self-latch, with latches higher than your children's reach. Never prop open the gate to a water area. After the children are done swimming, secure the water area so they can't get back into it.
- Never use a pool with its pool cover partially in place, since children may become entrapped under it. Remove the cover completely.



- Place tables, chairs and other objects well away from the water area fence to prevent children from using them to climb into the water area.
- Keep rescue equipment (such as shepherd's crook or rescue tube) and a telephone with emergency numbers noted by the water.
- Avoid air-filled "swimming aids" because they are not a substitute for approved life vests and can be dangerous should they deflate.
- Keep toys out of and away from water area when not in use. Children playing with or reaching for toys could accidentally fall in the water.
- Remember, teaching your children how to swim DOES NOT mean your children are safe in the water.
- Don't assume that drowning or a drowning accident couldn't happen to you or your family.

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Signature
Prospective Caregiver 1

Date

Signature
Prospective Caregiver 2

Date

Signature
Child Welfare Professional

Date

Signature
Supervisor

Date