



WATER SAFETY: SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

PROMOTE WATER SAFETY IN YOUR COMMUNITY ALL SEASON LONG!

In an effort to raise awareness about water safety in our communities, **CRPA has developed a Water Safety Social Media Toolkit** with graphics, statistics, and suggested social media messages. We hope you will find these resources helpful as you engage and educate your community throughout the summer season.

SHARE!

Use your department/organization's social media outlets to spread the important message of water safety. Use the sample social media messages, statistics, and graphics to educate your community on the importance of staying safe in and around the water.

HASHTAG!

Connect with CRPA and other towns promoting water safety by using #WaterSafety

TAG US!

Let us know that your community is promoting water safety! Tag us in your social media posts: **Facebook:** @CTRecreationandParksAssociation **Twitter:** @CT_Rec_and_Park

DROWNING MYTHS VS. FACTS

MYTH: DROWNING IS NOISY AND TAKES TIME. I'LL HEAR MY CHILD SPLASHING AND STRUGGLING IN TIME TO HELP. Childhood drowning is not like the movies. You will not hear your child splashing or calling for help. Most young children don't have the cognitive ability, physical strength or coordination to right themselves if they are submerged in water. Toddlers can very quickly swallow water, lose consciousness and sink – all in complete silence. Drowning is quick. Two minutes following submersion, a child will lose consciousness, and irreversible brain damage can occur after just four to six minutes. (*Royal Life Saving*)

MYTH: ONCE CHILDREN LEARN TO SWIM, THEY DON'T NEED LIFE VESTS. At swimming pools and supervised swimming areas, an older child who swims well may not need to wear a life vest. Around steep banks, rivers or docks, where the water is swift, dark and cold, the drowning risk increases and rescue becomes much harder. With those factors working against us, we need to use more caution. When boating, rafting or inner-tubing, or while swimming in open water like a lake or a river, adults and children should always wear properly fitted life vests. Water conditions change, boats capsize, and cold water makes life-saving and swimming skills difficult. Life vests improve chances of survival and rescue. But they only work if they are worn! (*Seattle Children's Hospital*)

MYTH: FLOATS AND WATER WINGS WILL KEEP CHILDREN SAFE. Pool toys may keep children afloat, but they also give a young child an illusion of safety, thinking they can jump in at any time, and they'll be fine. Pool toys, including floaties, are not life-saving devices. A Coast Guard-approved life jacket is the best water safety device for any swimmer, but none of these things should ever be used in place of direct adult supervision. (*StopDrowningNow.org*)

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

The messages below are intended for use with social media tools such as Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. These messages may be used as written or customized to address local or other specific needs.

- Drowning is fast and silent. It can happen in as little as 20-60 seconds. #WaterSafety
- There is no substitute for adult supervision. #WaterSafety
- Heading out on the boat? Wear a life jacket! Life jackets can reduce your risk of drowning. #WaterSafety
- Americans swim hundreds of millions of times each year in pools, oceans, lakes, rivers and hot tubs/spas. #WaterSafety
- Swimming is the most popular recreational activity for children & teens (ages 7-17). #WaterSafety
- Every day, about 10 people in the U.S. die from drowning. 2 of the 10 are under the age of 15 years. #WaterSafety
- Drowning kills more kids 1–4 years old than anything else except birth defects. #WaterSafety
- Drowning deaths have increased in recent years, with more than 4,500 people drowning annually from 2020–2022, compared to about 4,000 per year from 2011 to 2020.
- Always supervise children when they are in or around water. #WaterSafety
- Wear a life jacket! Half of all boating deaths could be prevented with the use of life jackets. #WaterSafety
- Don't use air-filled or foam toys, such as "water wings" or inner-tubes, instead of a life jacket. #WaterSafety
- A fence that completely separates the pool from house and yard can help protect young children from drowning. #WaterSafety
- No matter how strong of a swimmer you are, don't swim alone. #WaterSafety
- Pools aren't the only places we swim or play in the water! Swim safely in splash parks, lakes, rivers, and the ocean. #WaterSafety
- Each year, 91 million people swim at U.S. freshwater and marine beaches. #WaterSafety
- For each child <15 yrs. who dies from drowning in a pool, 10 more receive ED care for submersion-related injuries. #WaterSafety
- Practice #WaterSafety. Nonfatal drowning can cause brain damage including memory problems, learning disabilities, long-term disability.

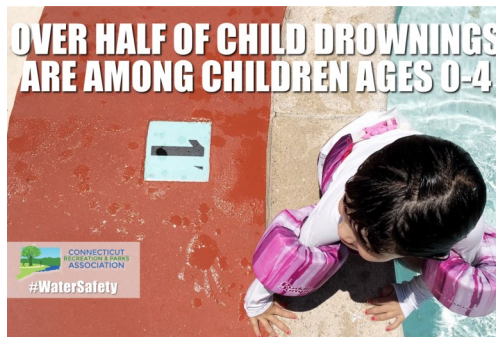
SUPPLEMENTAL STATISTICS & MESSAGES

Use the information below as optional, supplemental information to go along with your social media posts.

- Many of us will have our attention divided this summer as we work from home. Remember, flotation devices are not a substitute for adult supervision.
- Drowning is fast, silent, and can happen in as little as 20-60 seconds. (NDPA) If a child is missing, always check the pool first. Every second counts!
- Talk with teenagers about "risky behavior," including diving or swimming in unfamiliar water, and the dangers of alcohol or drug use when engaging in recreational water sports or swimming. (NDPA)
- Toys are tempting to children! Remove toys from in and around the pool when not in use.
- When installing a backyard pool, fencing is crucial to prevent drownings. Lack of barriers around water contribute to a majority of drowning deaths. (NDPA)
- If recreating in a body of water where there is no lifeguard present, make sure you know what to do in an emergency! Anyone who lives in a home with a pool should learn CPR and rescue breathing. Ensure that babysitters and caregivers have current CPR training and certification. (NDPA)
- Drowning is the #1 cause of injury-related death in children 4 and under (CDC)
- 75% of pool and spa related drowning deaths involved children under the age of 5 (US Consumer Product Safety Commission)
- Instruct babysitters and caregivers about potential pool hazards and emphasize the need for constant supervision. (NDPA)
- Babies can drown in just inches of water (Nationwide Children's Hospital)
- Drowning deaths have increased in recent years, with more than 4,500 people drowning annually from 2020–2022, compared to about 4,000 per year from 2011 to 2020.
- Over half (55%) of U.S. adults have never taken a swimming lesson.
- Between 2005 and 2014, an average of 343 annual drowning deaths occurred for children ages 0 - 17 - almost one per day (Safe Kids Worldwide)
- Children who swim with their family are 2.7 times more likely to be good swimmers (USA Swimming Foundation)
- Children who know how to be safer around water are 3.7 times more likely to have good swimming ability (USA Swimming Foundation)
- Every hour, every day, more than 40 people worldwide lose their lives to drowning (WHO)
- According to statistics, 77% of those involved in a home drowning accident had been missing for no more than five minutes when they were found in the swimming pool - and 70% weren't expected to be in or near the pool at that time. (CDC)
- Two-thirds of fatal drownings in 0 - 17 year olds occur between May and August (Safe Kids Worldwide)
- 62% of natural water drowning cases happened in the presence of an adult (Safe Kids Worldwide)
- For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries (CDC)

SAMPLE GRAPHICS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

All of the images below are available for download on the CRPA website: <http://crpa.com/advocacy/water-safety>



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