

Water Safety

Drowning claims the lives of nearly 3,000 people every year. It is surprising that in many instances, children tend not to splash or make noise when they get into trouble in the water and thus usually drown silently. An adult should always be watching children playing in or around water.

Tips for General Water Safety

You can greatly reduce the chances of your students becoming a drowning victim or being injured if you follow a few simple safety tips:

1. A certified lifeguard must be present at all times students are in the water.
2. Make sure an adult is constantly watching young children swimming, playing, or bathing in water. Do not read, talk on the phone, participate in the activity, or do any other distracting activity while supervising children around water.
3. Never swim alone or in unsupervised places. Teach children to always swim with a buddy.
4. To prevent choking, never allow students to chew gum or eat while swimming, diving, or playing in or near any water.
5. All staff and volunteers/chaperones should know CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation). This applies particularly to those overseeing students' while in the water.
6. Verify the skill level of those students who know how to swim. If there are students who do not know how to swim, an alternative supervised activity will need to be arranged for them.
7. Do NOT use air-filled swimming aids (such as "water wings") in place of lifejackets or life preservers with children. If a student does not know how to swim, they should not be allowed in the water.
8. Diving should not be allowed. It is important to know the water depth before students enter the water.

9. Field trips involving water activities should not be conducted at a private residence. These types of field trips are better held at public facilities.
10. Discuss appropriate behavior around beaches, lakes and rivers.
11. When allowing students to utilize human-powered watercraft, make sure all students are equipped with and wearing an appropriately rated life jacket.

Ensure all documentation is in place. Follow the suggestions for risk mitigation on RESIG's Activity Guide.