

NATIONAL DROWNING STATISTICS

DROWNING: THE SAD & STARTLING STATISTICS

- Every day, about ten people die from unintentional drowning. Of these, two are children aged 14 or younger. Drowning ranks fifth among the leading causes of unintentional injury death in the United States.
- **Children ages 1 to 4 have the highest drowning rates.** In 2009, among children 1 to 4 years old who died from an unintentional injury, more than 30% died from drowning.
- Among children ages 1 to 4, most drownings occur in home swimming pools.
- Drowning is responsible for more deaths among children 1-4 than any other cause except congenital anomalies (birth defects). Among those 1-14, fatal drowning remains the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death behind motor vehicle crashes.
- From 2005-2009, there were an average of 3,533 fatal unintentional drownings (non-boating related) annually in the United States — about ten deaths per day.
- **Of all preschoolers who drown, 70 percent are in the care of one or both parents at the time of the drowning** and 75 percent are missing from sight for five minutes or less.
- More than 50% of drowning victims treated in emergency departments require hospitalization or transfer for further care (compared with a hospitalization rate of about 6% for all unintentional injuries). These nonfatal drowning injuries can cause severe brain damage that may result in long-term disabilities such as memory problems, learning disabilities, and permanent loss of basic functioning.

- Between 2005 and 2009, the fatal unintentional drowning rate for African Americans was significantly higher than that of whites across all ages. The disparity is widest among children 5-14 years old. The fatal drowning rate of African American children ages 5 to 14 is almost three times that of white children in the same age range.
- **19 percent of drowning deaths involving children occur in public pools with certified lifeguards present.**
- About one in five people who die from drowning are children 14 and younger. For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries.

DROWNING PREVENTION



3 Layers of Defense Against Drowning: There is only one thing in the world that is a guarantee against drowning, and that is your effective supervision. Supervision is thus the first and most critical line of defense to

prevent drowning.

The second line of defense is proper fencing around your pool, locks to prevent access to the pool, and pool alarms. However, there is no device in existence that is guaranteed to keep any child out of the water, or that will prevent a child from drowning in any circumstance. The effectiveness of these devices is often dependent on our ability to remember to always use them. It is a simple fact of life that, on occasion, alarms get turned off or doors or gates don't get latched behind us.

The third line of defense, after the first two have failed, is a child's ability to solve an aquatic problem. At Infant Swimming Resource, we teach children ISR Self-Rescue™ skills such that a child would know what to do should she find herself in the water alone.