

# HOW TO PREVENT CHILDREN FROM DROWNING

## Parents and Caretakers

There are numerous water safety steps that can be adopted to significantly reduce the number of child drowning deaths and submersion injuries that occur each year in the United States.

### What You Can Do

- Always watch your child when he or she is in or near a pool or spa
- Have a portable telephone close by at all times when you or your family are using a pool or spa
- If a child is missing, look for him or her in the pool or spa first
- Learn to perform CPR on children and adults, and update those skills regularly

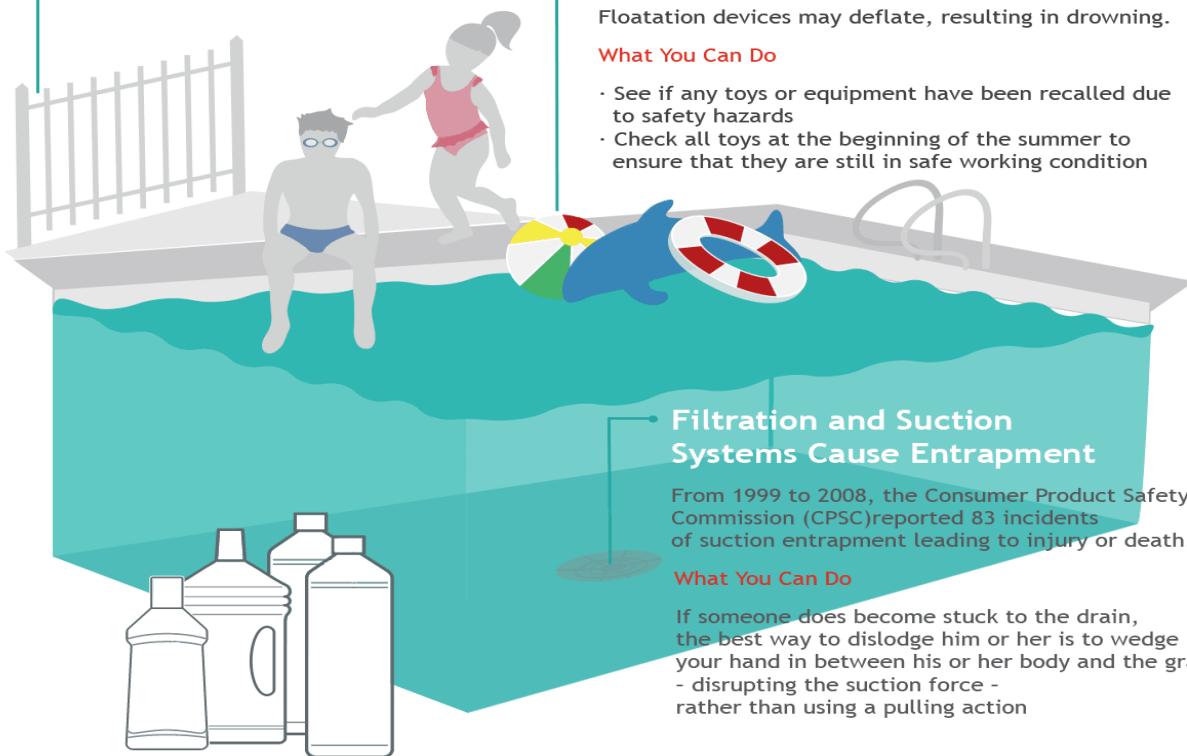


## Hazardous or Poorly Maintained Pool and Grounds

The risk of drowning is cut in half when there is a fence that completely surrounds the pool

### What You Can Do

- Parents and homeowners must minimize risk of injuries resulting from slip-and-fall incidents by maintaining pool grounds and banning dangerous behaviors. Install a 4-foot fence around the perimeter of the pool and make sure it has a gate that is self-closing and self-latching.



## Pool Equipment and Toys

Floataion devices may deflate, resulting in drowning.

### What You Can Do

- See if any toys or equipment have been recalled due to safety hazards
- Check all toys at the beginning of the summer to ensure that they are still in safe working condition

## Filtration and Suction Systems Cause Entrapment

From 1999 to 2008, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) reported 83 incidents of suction entrapment leading to injury or death.

### What You Can Do

If someone does become stuck to the drain, the best way to dislodge him or her is to wedge your hand in between his or her body and the grate - disrupting the suction force - rather than using a pulling action

## Pool Chemicals

In 2008, an estimated 4,574 people visited an emergency room for pool chemical-related injuries.

### What You Can Do

- Store pool chemicals out of the reach of children
- Add the pool chemicals correctly
- Avoid splashing chemicals into your eyes or onto your skin

## Incorrectly Preparing a Pool to Close or Reopen

72% of drowning deaths from 2006 to 2008 occurred in residential pools or spas.

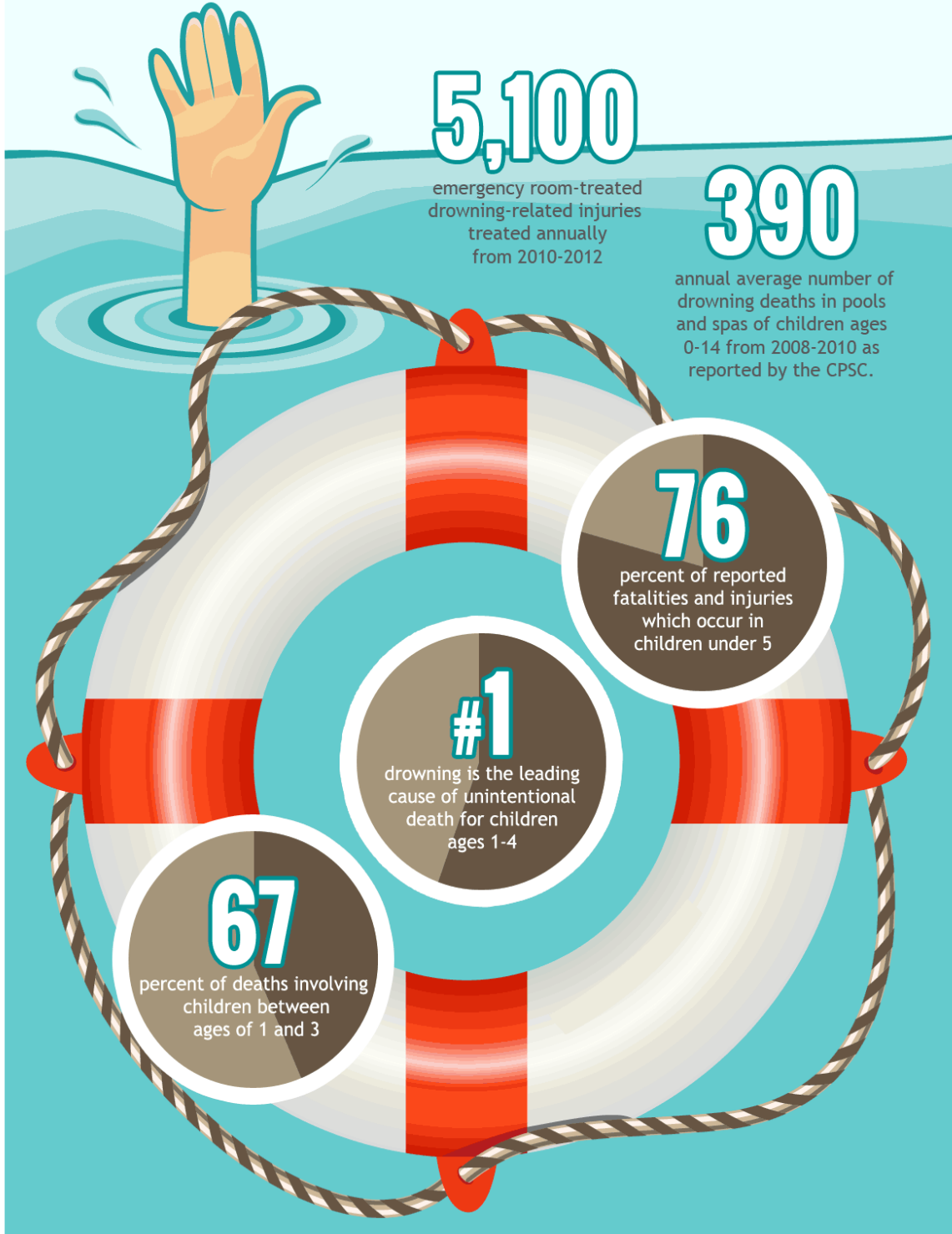
### What You Can Do

- Hire professionals for pool maintenance or seek professional's advice

# POOL SAFETY

## Drowning Accidents and How to Prevent Them

It's our job to protect children from unseen dangers, including those that disguise themselves as innocent summer fun. Every year, when spring brightens to summer, Washington residents of all ages eagerly take to swimming pools, often unaware of the dangers.



# Maryland State Firemen's Association

## Fire Prevention and Life Safety Committee

### TIP Sheet: POOL & SPA WATER SAFETY

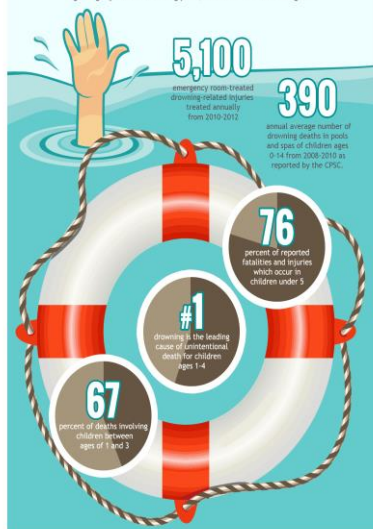


# POOL AND SPA WATER SAFETY

## POOL SAFETY

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## HOW TO PREVENT CHILDREN FROM DROWNING

*We want to remind everyone that swimming pools and spas are great places for family fun. BUT...It's important to ensure everyone follows these simple safety steps to stay safer in and around the water.*

- 1. Never leave a child unattended in or near water.** Always watch children when they're in or near water, and never leave them unattended. Designate an official Water Watcher, an adult tasked with supervising children in the water. That should be their only task – they shouldn't be reading, texting or playing games on their phone. Have a phone close by at all times in case you need to call for help, and if a child is missing, check the pool first. Even if a lifeguard is present, parents and caregivers should still take the responsibility of being a designated Water Watcher.
- 2. Teach children how to swim.** Swimming is not only fun, it's a lifesaving skill.
- 3. Teach children to stay away from drains.** Do not play or swim near drains or suction outlets, especially in spas and shallow pools, and never enter a pool or spa that has a loose, broken or missing drain cover. Children's hair, limbs, jewelry or bathing suits can get stuck in a drain or suction opening. When using a spa, be sure to locate the emergency vacuum shutoff before getting in the water.
- 4. Ensure all pools and spas** - both in your backyard and any public pool you may visit - have compliant drain covers. All public pools and spas must have drain grates or covers that meet safety standards to avoid incidents like the one that took Graeme's life. Powerful suction from a pool or spa drain can even trap an adult.
- 5. Install proper barriers, covers and alarms on and around your pool and spa.** Proper fences, barriers, alarms and covers can be lifesaving devices. A fence of at least four feet in height should surround the pool or spa on all sides and should not be climbable for children. The water should only be accessible through a self-closing, self-latching gate.
- 6. Know how to perform CPR on children and adults.** Often, bystanders are the first to aid a drowning victim, so learning CPR can help save a life. And once you're CPR certified, make sure to keep your certification current.
- 7. Take the Pledge!** Before heading to the pool or spa with your family, remember to take the Pool Safely Pledge. *"I Pledge and Promise to Stay Safe at all times."*