

# Keeping Children and Young People Safe Around Water

**In the UK hundreds of people die from drowning every year, many of them children and young people. Many more are left injured. This risk is much higher in the summer when the weather is warmer.**

Cold water shock – where the water is below 15 degrees centigrade—means even experienced swimmers can get in trouble. The average water temperature in the UK is 12 degrees. The Thames is colder, even in summer when the outside temperature is especially hot.

## **Drowning happens silently.**

People do not splash about and cry for help like in the movies.



## Help keep your children safe:

- DO supervise young children near water.
- DO supervise ALL children in or near swimming pools
- DO always supervise children (even older children ) in the bath including in bath seats. Drowning can happen in as little as 5cm (2 inches) of water.
- DO explain to older children that water in the sea, rivers or canals is not like that in a swimming pool.
- DO assess risk if on holiday. In the UK it is safest on lifeguarded beaches between red and yellow safety flags. When abroad ask what local safety signs and flags mean.



- DO check tide times (including for tidal rivers like the Thames) to ensure you are not cut off.
- DO teach children not to jump into water – canals and rivers may be shallower than they appear and there may be objects below the surface they cannot see.
- DO teach children to float and stay calm if they find themselves in deep water. The RNLI's Float to Live Campaign can be found at <https://rnli.org/safety/float>
- DO ensure children have life jackets if taking a boat out on water.
- DO call 999 in an emergency.



## For more information....

Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) <https://capt.org.uk>

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA ) <https://www.rospace.com/>

The Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK) <https://rlss.org.uk>

Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) - Saving Lives at Sea <https://rnli.org/>



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