



TEXAS
Health and Human
Services

**Texas Department of Family
and Protective Services**

Keep Kids Safe around Water this Memorial Day Weekend

29 children and teens have drowned in Texas this year

For Immediate Release—Friday, May 26, 2017

For More Information—Contact a [DFPS media specialist](#)

Memorial Day Weekend marks the beginning of summer, but also the start of the most dangerous period for child drownings – Memorial Day through Labor Day. Last year, 107 kids and teens drowned in Texas and 29 have already drowned so far this year. While the Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth areas have been trouble spots in the past, there is no dominant pattern this year.

The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) urges Texans to “watch kids around water” this holiday weekend and all summer long to prevent more tragedies.

"Drowning is totally preventable, but it is also silent and very quick," said Sasha Rasco, who leads DFPS prevention programs. "It only takes a few minutes for a child to drown. So, please be a lifeguard for every child around you by keeping a constant eye on them around water."

Swimming pools, especially backyard and apartment pools, are the most dangerous for children. More than half of the child drownings in Texas this year happened in pools. Other common locations include lakes, ponds, and rivers and other natural bodies of water. Hot tubs and bath tubs are also culprits and almost any water can be dangerous to a toddler, even a toilet. Children under the age of one most often drown inside the house, while older children most often drown outdoors. Most toddlers who drown are out of sight less than five minutes.

DFPS is working to get the word out to parents to “watch kids around water” as part of its Help for Parents, Hope for Kids campaign. DFPS is running a \$1,000,000 ad campaign aimed at parents. From April through August, some of those ads are water safety messages. As a result, Texans watched the campaign’s water safety video on Facebook 141,503 times in April alone.

For more statistics and information on water safety for kids, visit [WatchKidsAroundWater.org](#) or look for the Water Safety section on [HelpandHope.org](#).

Basic Water Safety Tips

Inside the house

- Never leave small children alone near any container of water.
- Keep bathroom doors closed and secure toilet lids with lid locks.
- Never leave a baby alone in a bath for any reason. Get the things you need before running water, and take the child with you if you must leave the room.
- Warn babysitters or caregivers about the dangers of water and stress the need to constantly supervise young children.
- Make sure small children cannot leave the house through pet doors or unlocked doors and reach pools or hot tubs.

Outside the house

- Never leave children alone around water whether it is in a pool, wading pool, drainage ditch, creek, pond, or lake.
- Constantly watch children who are swimming or playing in water. They need an adult or certified lifeguard watching and within reach.
- Secure access to swimming pools with fences, self-closing and latching gates, and water surface alarms.
- Completely remove the pool cover when the pool is in use.
- Store water toys away from the water, when not in use, so they don't attract a small child.
- Don't assume young children will use good judgment around water.
- Be ready for emergencies. Keep emergency telephone numbers handy and learn CPR.
- Find out if your child's friends or neighbors have pools.