



# SUPERVISION

## Q. What is Supervision

A. Supervision is constant visual contact with your child. You should be within arm's reach and be in a position to respond quickly. It is not an occasional glance while you nap, read or undertake household chores, and it is not looking out at your kids playing outside while you are inside.

## Q. Why do I need to supervise so actively?

A. The lack of direct adult supervision is the main factor in 70% of toddler drowning deaths. Indirect supervision has resulted in the loss of many young lives, proving that when a parent/carers attention is focused on something else, tragedies can occur.

## Q. Can older kids watch younger kids?

A. No. Parents leaving young children in the care of other siblings has been a factor in a number of toddler drowning deaths. Older children are not equipped with the skills to perceive and respond to an emergency situation, nor should they be given this responsibility.

## Q. How can I best supervise my child?

A. By being within arm's reach and engaged and interacting with your child when they are in, on or around water.

## Q. What is the best way to supervise children at parties?

A. If there is a small number of children, make an adult responsible for their care, if this person leaves they should ask someone else to take over. If there are a large number of children, leave an adult stationed at different places where the children will play to monitor the area.

**Organising your supervision is important; our life is full of many tasks and activities, including many distractions which can interrupt the supervision of our children. The doorbells, the kettle boils, a neighbour pops in for a chat – these are all everyday occurrences which can interrupt the supervision of children, and it is in these few minutes where tragedy can and does occur.**

## Supervision CHECKLIST:

- Have you brought all the clothes, towels, gear, etc? so you do not need to stop watching you child in, or near water.
- Are you prepared to get wet? Active supervision often means getting in the water with the child.
- Have you taken the phone with you? Better yet, turn on the answer machine and let it take the call.
- Are you are within arm's reach of your child at all times?
- Do you undertake other activities while your child is in, or near water? Remember that this lessens your attention from the child.

Royal Life Saving has developed the toddler drowning prevention campaign Keep Watch. Supervision is one of the key messages of the Keep Watch program, which also includes, Fencing, Water Familiarisation and Learning Resuscitation.

Royal Life Saving has developed a number of fact sheets on water safety issues in Australia. Contact Royal Life Saving on:

**1300 RESQ ME**  
(1300 7377 63)

Supported by

