

Parents Information Sheet: Drowning

July 2020

The Child Death Overview Panel for Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire has recently reviewed the death of a young child who drowned in open water during lockdown. Unfortunately, although there were a number of adults present, no one had a clear idea of who was supervising. This was a preventable tragedy.

Children need to be supervised in and around water constantly. Being in an environment where there are lots of adults or other children present, or adults are under the influence of drugs/alcohol can create a false sense of security when, in fact, children are at risk of not being supervised at all.

Drowning

...is the third highest cause of accidental death of children in the UK. The majority of drownings are preventable.

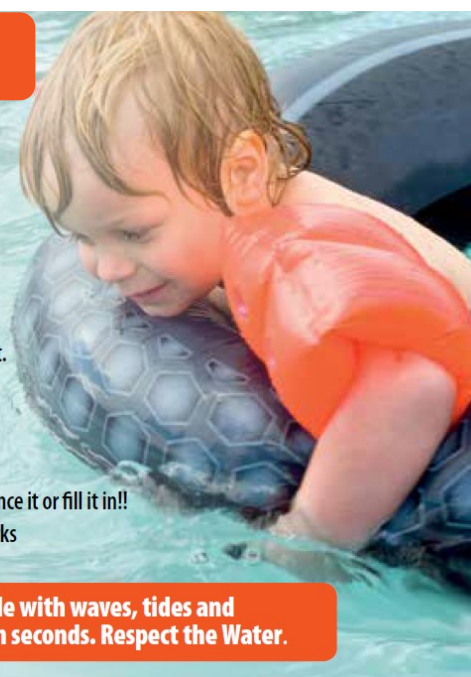


Babies can drown in as little as 25mm of water

25mm

- ✗** Never leave a baby or child in the bath unsupervised, not even for a minute.
- ✗** Never leave a baby or child alone in a bath seat.
- ✓** Constantly supervise and stay with children in swimming pools.
- ✓** Empty paddling pools and store them away when not in use.
- ✓** If you have a pond always supervise closely, fence it or fill it in!!
- ✓** Be careful when children visit gardens or parks that have ponds or lakes.

The sea and shorelines are unpredictable with waves, tides and hidden currents that can drag you out in seconds. Respect the Water.



For young children, there is a real risk of drowning in the home or garden. As they get older, children challenging themselves and as they grow in confidence they can overestimate their abilities. Younger children might understand instructions but are likely to forget if they are having fun or are excited.

Swimming lessons can help protect young children from drowning, although this should not replace supervision.

Teach older children to choose safe places to swim, such as public pools and beaches patrolled by lifeguards, rather than canals, gravel pits and rivers.