

Child Drowning – Fact or Fiction?

FICTION: Toddlers are naturally docile and do not like to explore around water.

FACT: Toddlers are a naturally inquisitive group and are attracted to water. Children under 5 years of age are especially at risk because of their natural curiosity about their environment.

FICTION: Children are aware of the dangers water poses to them and will take care around water.

FACT: Children do not understand or perceive the hazards that water presents to them. They have no real sense of danger and require a high level of supervision.

FICTION: It is possible to fence all water bodies on a farm to keep children safe from drowning.

FACT: It is not always possible to fence all bodies of water on a farm as they may be needed for stock to drink out of. They may also be empty at certain times of the year.

FICTION: When children are drowning they will make a lot of noise and cry and call for help.

FACT: This is a common misconception. Childhood drowning is a silent event as children do not usually cry out for help. A drowning child may not cough or splash. The child swallows water, sinks and loses consciousness in less than a minute.

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Drowning happens quickly and silently!

Would you like to know more about how you can prevent your child from drowning?

Visit the Keep Watch website at www.keepwatch.com.au

Or contact your local Royal Life Saving Branch:

Australian Capital Territory

Ph (02) 6260 5800 Email act@rlssa.org.au

New South Wales

Ph (02) 9634 3700 Email nsw@royalnsw.com.au

Northern Territory

Ph (08) 8981 5036 Email nt@rlssa.org.au

Queensland

Ph (07) 3823 2823 Email rlssqadmin@ozemail.com.au

South Australia

Ph (08) 8234 9244 Email sa@rlssa.org.au

Tasmania

Ph (03) 6243 7558 Email tas@rlssa.org.au

Victoria

Ph (03) 9676 6900 Email mail@lifesavingvictoria.com.au

Western Australia

Ph (08) 9383 8200 Email info@rlsswa.com.au

National

Ph (02) 8217 3111 Email info@rlssa.org.au



KEEP WATCH

@ THE FARM
PREVENT YOUR CHILD FROM DROWNING



Proudly supporting the Keep Watch @ The Farm Program



www.farmsafe.org.au



Australian Government

Department of Health and Ageing

EVERYONE CAN BE A LIFESAVER



Royal Life Saving
ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA



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Restrict Access @ The Farm
CREATE A CHILD SAFE PLAY AREA
ENSURE CHILD SAFE PLAY AREA IS SECURELY FENCED
FILL IN UNUSED DITCHES, DIPS AND POST HOLES
COVER WELLS AND TANKS

EVERYONE CAN BE A LIFESAVER



Royal Life Saving
ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA





What is Keep Watch?

For over 15 years the Keep Watch program has been educating Australian parents and carers on how to keep their children safe when in, on, or around the water in a variety of locations. We are now tailoring the approach to locations with specific hazards – like those found on a farm.

Keep Watch @ The Farm is aimed at preventing children under 5 years of age from drowning by getting parents and carers to undertake four simple actions:

Supervise

Ensure that when your child is in, on, or around water they are within arms' reach and have your undivided attention at all times. This may include holding their hand when walking near a dam.

Restrict Access

Ensure that where possible there is a barrier between your child and the water. This may be an effective and well maintained pool fence or a child safe play area on a farm.

Water Awareness

Enrol your child in a water familiarisation class such as Royal Life Saving's Swim and Survive Wonder Program. When new people arrive at your farm, ensure that they are made aware of the hazards and risks the farm environment may pose to children.

Resuscitate

Be prepared to respond in an emergency. Enrol in a resuscitation course and update your skills annually. If required, any response is better than nothing. Just push and blow, and as soon as possible call '000'.

For more Keep Watch information and useful resources visit www.keepwatch.com.au

Keep Watch @ The Farm

On average 4 children under the age of five drown in farm dams every year and there are approximately, 3 hospitalisations for every drowning death.

The farm environment has a range of water locations such as dams, troughs, irrigation channels, water tanks and swimming pools. Easy access to water and a lack of direct adult supervision by parents or carers have been the main factors in the farm drowning deaths of children.

What is a Child Safe Play Area?

A child safe play area is:

- Carefully planned
- In a designated location
- Close to the home if outside or easily supervised if inside the home
- Securely fenced – to prevent young children from entering the farm workplace without adult supervision
- Completely surrounded by a barrier (fence)
- Without water bodies within it
- Built with child resistant gates and latches
- Free of items that can be used to climb the fence
- A fun safe environment for children to play in
- Regularly maintained

For more information about child safe play areas on the farm please visit www.farmsafe.org.au

What is 'Active Supervision' @ The Farm?

Active supervision at the farm has four key elements:

- **Be Prepared** - Make sure the gate to the Child Safe Play Area is closed, that people on the farm are aware to look out for children around water and that you have set rules for your children about going near water
- **Be Close** - Always be within arms' reach of your child
- **All Of Your Attention** - Always keep focused attention on your child
- **All Of The Time** - You should never leave a child under five alone, particularly around water

Keep Watch @ The Farm Checklist

Actions to prevent your child from drowning on the farm include: (✓)

- Children supervised whenever in, on, or around water
- Securely fenced child safe play area created close to the house or inside the home
- Unused holes where water can gather such as ditches, dips and postholes filled in
- Water storage such as wells and tanks securely covered
- Keep Watch @ The Farm** 'Please Close The Gate' sign, on child safe play area to remind people to close the gate
- People on farms such as farm workers and visitors alert to 'Keep Watch' for children around water
- Children enrolled in a water awareness program such as the Swim and Survive Wonder Program
- Enrolled in a CPR course. Checked www.royallifesaving.com.au for course details
- CPR skills updated annually

Please Close The Gate Sign

This sign is to be placed on the gate of the child safe play area to remind you and visitors to the farm to close the gate.



For more information about Keep Watch please visit: www.keepwatch.com.au