

How Dangerous is My Pool?

The Medical Research Council (MRC) of South Africa consistently (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004) lists the following as the three leading causes of accidental death in children under the age of 5 years:

1. Motor vehicle accidents, where the child is a pedestrian
2. Fires, such as shack fires
3. **Drownings**

What this means for you is:

Since you drive your child around and you live in a middle- or upper-class home, the most likely way you will lose your child is through a drowning. 102 people died in home drownings in 2003 – most of them children aged 1 to 4 years.



Your pool is a luxury, making it safe for your child is an absolute necessity.

What Can I Do to Make My Pool Safer?

The good news is, it is relatively easy and inexpensive to make your pool safer, but you can ONLY achieve this by adding multiple **LAYERS OF SAFETY**, in combination, to make it almost impossible for your child to reach or enter your pool, Jacuzzi or spa without you knowing.

You should NEVER rely on only one barrier to safeguard your child. For example, studies in the USA show that children are twice as likely to drown in fenced pools because a fence creates a false sense of security. 70% of all child pool drownings occur in fenced pools.

Thinking that you can maintain safety by keeping an eye on your child around the pool is another dangerously common mistake – made by 90% of parents and guardians of drowning victims in the USA.

Even a good quality pool net is effective only if it is properly fitted and on! When the net is removed, other Layers of Safety must be in place to protect your child. NO semi-solid or solid cover is recommended for safety.

In order to make your pool safer, you must use TWO OR MORE of the following Layers of Safety:

- A good, subsurface pool alarm to alert you if your child enters your pool without you noticing.
- A well-maintained, SABS approved fence, with a lockable, self-latching, spring-loaded gate.
- A well-fitted, good quality net that can hold your child above water over the entire surface of the pool.
- Door and gate alarms at the entrances to your pool area.

You should also encourage safety-conscious behaviours, including:

- Never leave a child alone around your pool, even for a few minutes to answer the phone etc.
- Never allow yourself to be distracted while watching children around the pool.
- Learn to perform child CPR – lives can be saved by immediate, effective First Aid.
- As soon as your child is old enough, swimming lessons are a must.

Take responsibility for your child's life and add Layers of Safety to your pool today.



Visit www.layersofsafety.co.za for detailed tips, hints, strategies and more.