



SPRING 2016

WELCOME

Welcome to the first edition of Royal Life Saving's new national Swim and Survive Newsletter. This newsletter aims to provide you with practical and interesting information on learning to Swim and Survive, as well as water safety tips to help keep your family safer when recreating in and around water.

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WHAT IS SWIM AND SURVIVE?

Swim and Survive is a national swimming and water safety program developed by Royal Life Saving almost 35 years ago. Each year approximately 500,000 children participate in Swim and Survive. The Swim and Survive brand has become one that Australians trust as the program is built from Royal Life Saving's long history of drowning prevention and education expertise.

So what makes the Swim and Survive program highly regarded?

1. Water safety skills are the fundamental focus of the program and the survival skills such as survival sequence differentiate the program from others.
2. The program provides a progressive learning continuum across the key skill strands ensuring that children become competent in both swimming and water safety skills.
3. Water safety knowledge and developing an understanding of its application in an emergency situation underpins the learning of practical skills.

Swim and Survive seeks to increase the swimming and water safety skills of children living in Australia in order to prevent drowning and increase participation in healthy aquatic recreation.

SWIM AND SURVIVE FOR AT RISK CHILDREN

Did you know that in many communities a swimming and water safety education is simply not accessible and that children are missing out on learning to swim?

Children from low socio-economic areas, Indigenous communities, culturally and linguistically diverse (CaLD) backgrounds and those who live in regional and remote locations are most likely to miss out due to a lack of access and/or social or economic disadvantage.

The Royal Life Saving's Swim and Survive Fund provides grants to help reduce the barriers of participation such as lesson costs, transport, access to safe aquatic facilities and qualified instructors.

Together with Royal Life Saving State and Territory offices, aquatic partners, local government, organisations and schools, we have been able to provide a course of lessons free of charge to 7,942 participants since 2010.



[DONATE NOW TO HELP GIVE A CHILD SWIM LESSONS!](#)



EVERYONE CAN BE A LIFESAVER

Royal Life Saving
ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA

32 CHILDREN AGED 0-14 YEARS DROWNED IN AUSTRALIA

Royal Life Saving National Drowning
Report July 2015 to June 2016



**SUPERVISE
CHILDREN**



**RESTRICT
ACCESS**



**LEARN TO
SWIM & SURVIVE**



**LEARN CPR
& FIRST AID**



**LEARN
LIFESAVING SKILLS**

81%

of 0-4 years drowning
deaths occurred due to falls
into water

25%

of 0-14 years drowning
deaths occurred in inland
waterways

64%

of 5-14 years drowning
deaths occurred whilst
swimming and recreating

63%

of child drowning deaths
were male

14%

of 0-4 years drowning
deaths occurred in
bathtubs/spa baths

52%

of 0-4 years drowning
deaths occurred in
swimming pools

WHY DO CHILDREN DROWN?

There are a number of factors that may contribute to the drowning deaths of children; some that relate to parents and carers, some to the environment and some to the children themselves. Understanding these factors that may contribute will aid in increasing awareness and educating the community on drowning risks.

Factors related to parents and carers

- Absence or lack of supervision, even for what is thought to be short periods, is one of the main factors in the drowning incidents of children.
- Vulnerable periods during the day when parents and carers are juggling numerous children, activities and household chores can lead to distraction.
- Underestimating a young child's capacity to gain access into areas where water is available.
- False sense of security – "my child is having swimming lessons", "I don't have a backyard pool", or "my pool is fenced".
- Not used to having children around all the time, so safety measures may not always be in place or are forgotten.
- Lack of knowledge of CPR or what to do in an emergency.

Factors related to the environment

- An absence of a safety barrier is a common cause of drowning deaths in young children. Unfenced pools, propped open gates and open play areas near sources of water, all provide unrestricted access.
- Ineffective fences or gates are a key factor in drowning deaths. This may include fences that are not up to Australian Standards, meet Legislation, or are not maintained. Gates must be self-closing and self-latching and not propped open.
- Leaving water toys in and around pools can be tempting to young children.
- Climbable objects such as pot plants, table and chairs and tree branches can all provide a way for children to access water.
- Steep or slippery edges in inland waterways such as dams, lakes or rivers can result in unplanned entries and make exiting the water difficult.
- Cold water temperatures can cause children to panic and make movement in water difficult.

Factors related to children

- Children have limited strength and physical coordination so may tire easily, be unable to exit the water or get themselves to a point of safety.
- Young children do not have a concrete understanding of danger or the ability to make sound judgements about safety.
- Children are attracted to water and have a wonderful sense of curiosity that can lead to dangerous situations.
- Children like to test their boundaries and may disobey instructions.
- Even children who have some swimming ability may panic or simply 'forget' their swimming skills when they have unexpectedly fallen into water or are out of their comfort zone.
- Young children, namely toddlers, have disproportionate body structure in that they are 'top heavy' (with larger heads in comparison to the rest of their body). This makes it difficult to right themselves if they have fallen into the water.
- Drowning is often a silent event due to submersion under water or repeated bobbing up and down. Often the casualty's only concern is getting a breath.



NATIONAL DROWNING REPORT 2016

The Royal Life Saving National Drowning Report 2016 was officially launched by the Hon. Sussan Ley MP, Minister for Health and Aged Care, Minister for Sport at Parliament House in Canberra on Thursday 15th September 2016.

SNAPSHOT

280 people drowning in Australian waterways

231 (83%) of drowning deaths were male

58 (21%) occurred in people aged 65 years and over

52 (19%) occurred in people aged 25-34 years

96 (34%) occurred in New South Wales

58 (21%) occurred at rivers, creeks and streams

74 (26%) were swimming and recreating immediately prior to drowning

To read the full Drowning Report:

[CLICK HERE](#)



Watch this infographic video for a quick summary:
[youtube.com/RoyalLifeSavingAust](https://www.youtube.com/RoyalLifeSavingAust)

WATER SAFETY SKILLS - THE SURVIVAL SEQUENCE

Learning water safety and survival skills is an essential component of the Swim and Survive program. Learning competitive swimming strokes only is not sufficient to provide a level of protection against drowning. Competence in personal survival and basic rescue skills will help to children to have an understanding of the dangers and what to do if they find themselves in trouble in the water.

This edition's focus is on the Survival Sequence. The Survival Sequences are made up of a number of skills: floating, treading water, sculling, survival strokes such as breaststroke, sidestroke and survival backstroke, surface dives, floating with aids and signalling for help.

The Survival Sequences progressively become more challenging by increasing the time in the performance skills such as treading water, increasing distance to swim survival strokes, wearing more clothing and the addition of other survival skills such as swimming underwater or surface diving. Each of the components of a survival sequence may be taught and practised separately before attempting to put the sequence together. Teachers may use an emergency scenario to aid children's understanding of how to apply these practical skills.

Survival Sequences are taught in the Swim and Survive program from the Active 2 level. As skills progress, wearing clothing while performing the sequence is introduced to equip children with survival skills to help in real life scenarios. If practised regularly in swimming lessons, these skills will start to become second nature.

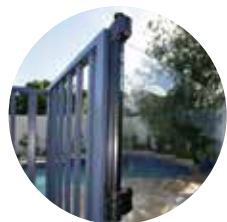
WATER SAFETY TIPS

Water safety signs and messages will help keep you and your family safer when enjoying our beautiful waterways and aquatic venues. Whether you are out and about or around the home, follow these tips.



SUPERVISE CHILDREN

Always actively supervise children when in and around water. Be within arm's reach for under 5's, weak or non-swimmers.



RESTRICT ACCESS

If you have a backyard pool, ensure it is fenced with a self-closing and self-latching gate in accordance with Australian Standards and State or Territory legislation.



LEARN LIFESAVING SKILLS

Learning lifesaving will provide you with the knowledge and skills in water safety, personal survival and basic rescue to be able to deal with an aquatic emergency should one arise.



STAY AFLOAT AND WAVE

If in trouble in the water, remain calm, float on your back, call for help and wave your arms to attract attention.

OUR PARTNERS

Across Australia there are over 500 aquatic facilities, swim schools, schools and organisations conducting Swim and Survive.

Swim and Survive Partners work together with Royal Life Saving to provide quality swimming and water safety education to their local communities. It is likely you have received this newsletter from one of our valued Swim and Survive Partners.

Partner Highlight

Splash 'N' Learn to Swim started 7 years ago, when owner Maree formed the swim school in a purpose built pool in her backyard in regional Victoria. They have students from 4 months of age to 'older' adults, including students with special needs, and the swim school now boasts nearly 500 students learning vital swimming and water safety skills each year.

Splash 'N' Learn to Swim are fantastic advocates for water safety, with students undertaking water safety education that includes clothed swims, rescues, basic CPR and even basic first aid. Splash 'N' Learn to Swim believes the Swim and Survive program gives great guidelines and support to organisations. It is well recognised in the industry and they love the opportunities to network, give feedback and to participate in a range of activities associated with swimming and water safety.

Maree and her Splash 'N' Learn to Swim team are passionate advocates for the Swim and Survive program and are a well-deserving recipient of the 2016 Life Saving Victoria Swim and Survive Licensee of the Year Award.



Contact Royal Life Saving in your State or Territory:

ACT 02 6260 5800 / act@rlssa.org.au
NSW 02 9634 3700 / nsw@royalnsw.com.au
NT 08 8981 5036 / nt@rlssa.org.au
QLD 07 3823 2823 / admin@rlssq.com.au
SA 08 8210 4500 / training@royallifesavingsa.com.au
TAS 03 6243 7558 / tas@rlssa.org.au
VIC 03 9676 6900 / mail@lifesavingvictoria.com.au
WA 08 9383 8200 / info@rlsswa.com.au