



Open Water Safety Tips

Follow these tips around open water:



- Actively supervise children in and around open bodies of water, giving them your undivided attention. Appoint a designated “water watcher,” taking turns with other adults.
- Enroll your child in swimming lessons after age 4 – typically the earliest age when they are likely to practice and retain information. Teach children how to tread water, float and stay by the shore.
- Make sure kids swim only in areas designated for swimming.
- Teach children that swimming in open water is not the same as swimming in a pool: they need to be aware of uneven surfaces, river currents, ocean undertow and changing weather.
- Do not let kids operate personal water crafts such as jet skis. These are intended for adults and require special training.
- Teach children not to dive into oceans, lakes or rivers because you never know how deep the water is or what might be hidden under the surface of the water.
- Learn infant and child CPR and keep a phone nearby in case of an emergency.

Protect your children while boating, by following these steps:

- Always have your children wear a life jacket approved by the U.S. Coast Guard while on boats or around open bodies of water or participating in water sports. The life jacket should fit snugly and not allow the child’s chin or ears to slip through the neck opening.
- Take a boating education course that will teach safe boating practices.

- Get a vessel safety check every year for free from the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary or U.S. Power Squadrons. For more information go to www.uscgboating.org and click “get a free safety check.”
- Never drink alcoholic beverages while boating.