

## Water Safety for Infants

If you have a swimming pool, now is the time to install a fence that separates the house from the pool. The pool should be fenced in on all sides. Most children drown because they fall into a pool that is not fenced off from the house. Be prepared — install a fence around your pool now, before your child begins to walk!

Infants and toddlers are not able to protect themselves from drowning, even in a few inches of water. Children this age are most at risk of drowning in bathtubs or by falling into large buckets found around the house. Many bathtub drowning happen when a parent leaves a small child alone or with another young child. Remember, never leave a young child alone in a bathtub—even for a few seconds. Even supporting devices, such as bath rings, are not enough to keep your child from drowning, children must be watched by an adult at all times while in the bathtub.

Toilets, 5-gallon buckets, and other large containers commonly found in the home (like large coolers with melted ice in them) are also very dangerous for a child of this age. Every year there are reports of children who have leaned forward while looking into an open toilet or large bucket, tipped into the toilet or bucket, and drowned. Since the head is the heaviest part of a small child's body, he or she can easily fall into these containers. Also, when large containers are filled with liquid, they weigh more than the child and will not tip over to allow the child to get out. Parents need to keep a close eye on their children, especially as they learn to crawl. Make sure to:

- Empty all buckets and any other large containers after each use.
- Keep bathroom doors closed at all times. Install a hook-and-eye latch, a doorknob cover on the outside of the door, or reverse the doorknob so that the lock is on the outside.
- Keep toilets closed or use toilet locks to keep small children from falling into them