
Safety First!

Most important roadblock to overcome to prevent drowning (Swim Angelfish)

1. Safe behaviors around all bodies of water
 - a. Rituals and routines
 - b. Social stories
 2. Safe Submersions
 3. Practice safe saves
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Unintentional Drowning

“Roughly half, or 48%, of children with an ASD attempt to elope from a safe environment, a rate nearly four times higher than their unaffected siblings”

- National Autism Association

“Every day, about ten people die from unintentional drowning. Of these, two are children aged 14 or younger.

Drowning ranks fifth among the leading causes of unintentional injury death in the United States”

- CDC

Rituals and Routines



- Always ask an adult before entering ANY body of water
- Create a waiting “spot” or ritual before going into the water
 - Head shoulders knees and toes, sit down
 - Active participant in putting on sunscreen
 - Create an end routine to leave the pool/body of water
- Prepare the child for any hidden rules and expected behaviors around water
 - Walking feet on pool deck
 - Social story
 - Provide visuals of the pool
 - Adult swim/whistle blowing
 - How deep the water is

Safe Submersions



- Practice, practice, practice blowing bubbles out through mouth and nose
- Going under without goggles
- Sensory seekers may hold their breath under to gain additional input.. This is risky and increases risk of drowning
- Slowly introduce the water on the face

Practice Safe Saves



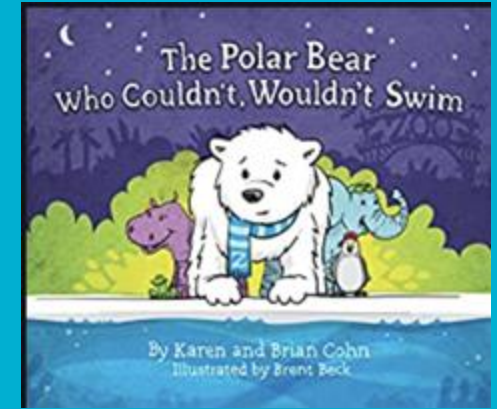
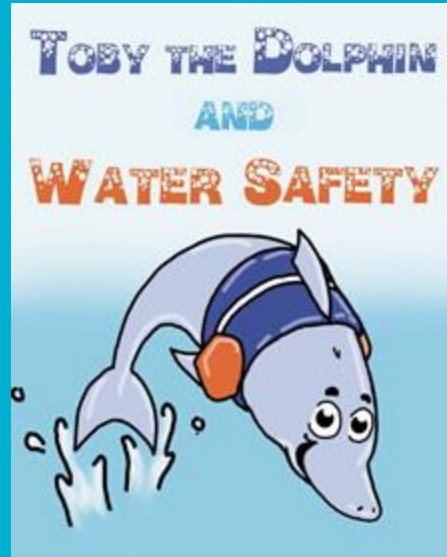
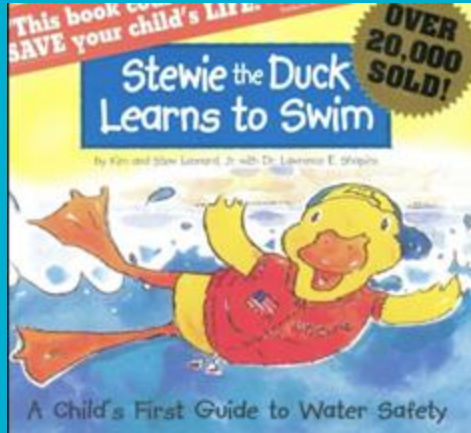
- Teach your child the job of a lifeguard and what a rescue tube does
- Practice holding on to the tube and “taking side”
- Practice safe saves
- Encourage take side rather than grab onto parent
- Educate staff and lifeguards

Steps to safe swimming!



- Learn to swim-- is it never too late to learn
- Take a CPR class
- Close supervision
- Coast guard approved personal flotation devices
- Understand the risks associated with various bodies of water
 - ocean, lakes
 - rip currents
 - unclear water
 - shallow/deep

Water Safety Reads



References

American Red Cross

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/water-safety/drowning-prevention-and-facts.html>

Swim Angelfish: Global Leaders in Adaptive Swim

<https://swimangelfish.com/>

National Autism Association

National drowning prevention alliance