

# Early Learning and Child Care Summer Safety Information

## WATER SAFETY

Drowning is the second leading cause of preventable death for children under 10 years of age. Among children, those under five are most at risk. Their natural curiosity, combined with a magnetic attraction to water, means they have a high risk of drowning anytime they are near water.

According to the 2023 addition of the Drowning Report, prepared for the Lifesaving Society by the Drowning Prevention Research Centre Canada:

- Few drownings occur in lifeguard-supervised settings
- 100% of drownings of children age 0 to 5 occurred due to distracted or absent supervision

<https://lifesaving.mb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/MB-Drowning-Infographic-2024.pdf>

### Remember

- Written parental approval must be obtained when children are to participate in water activities such as visiting public pools, wading pools, spray pads or the beach.
- Use recreational water facilities that are permitted under the *Swimming Pools and Other Water Recreational Facilities Regulation MR 132/97*. Unregulated recreational water facilities, including residential in-ground and above-ground swimming pools, portable pools, “kiddie” or inflatable wading pools, hydro-massage pools, hot tubs, and spas **do not** meet the minimum requirements of the Manitoba legislation for public use, therefore **cannot be used** for water activities for children attending licensed child care facilities.
- When a child care facility has a hot tub, in-ground or above-ground pool, the license holder must regularly check fencing, gates and locks to make sure the hot tub/pool is inaccessible to children at all times. Children must be directly supervised when playing outside in the yard.

### Keep water activities safe

- Consider offering water activities such as raised water tables, sprinklers, soaker hoses, and watering cans, instead of visiting public wading and swimming pools.
- Always provide direct supervision and keep children within arms’ reach whenever the children are involved in a water activity.
- Develop specific plans for supervision to protect the health and safety of each child, including where adults are located, their specific duties and the children assigned to them.
- If a spray pad is used, direct supervision is required and the park’s rules must be adhered to.
- If a public swimming pool, a municipal wading pool or beach is used, a qualified pool attendant, beach patrol or lifeguard must be on duty. Even with a beach patrol or a lifeguard on duty, child care facilities are strongly discouraged from taking children to the beach due to the additional safety risks and supervision challenges. Follow all of the rules and regulations for the site being visited and maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratios:

Age of Children	Adult to Child Ratio
Infant to 1 year	1 to 1
2 – 3 years	1 to 2
4 – 6 years	1 to 4
7 – 9 years	1 to 8
10 – 12 years	1 to 12