



## MEDIA RELEASE



RE:

### AUSTSWIM LIMITED

The Australasian Council for the Teaching of Swimming and Water Safety  
ACN 097 784 122

### HEAD OFFICE

8/21 Howleys Road  
Notting Hill, Victoria 3168

PO Box 139  
Mulgrave, Victoria 3170

### TOLL FREE 1300 885 529

T +61 3 9562 7900

F +61 3 9562 6450

E [info@austswim.com.au](mailto:info@austswim.com.au)

November 22<sup>nd</sup> 2016

## Become a Water Watcher this summer

Everyone can play a vital role in helping to ensure children are safer in and around water.

To coincide with the start of summer, AUSTSWIM is launching a new Water Watcher campaign.

The campaign encourages people to “**take the pledge**” to ensure there is always supervision of children in and around water.

### **The Water Watcher pledge:**

*I am a water watcher*

*I will be there, be aware and avoid distractions*

*I will appoint a replacement watcher to ensure constant supervision*

According to the Australian Water Safety Strategy launched earlier this year, an average of 30 children aged 0-4 years drown every year, with 78% of deaths occurring after a fall into water.

Raising awareness of the importance of adult supervision around water is one of the key objectives of the strategy to help reduce the incidence of drowning by 50% by 2020.

AUSTSWIM, the peak body for the training of swimming and water safety teachers, is a member of the Australian Water Safety Council which produced the strategy.

AUSTSWIM CEO Jennifer Schembri-Portelli said the Water Watcher campaign had the potential to make a huge difference to the number of children likely to drown in Australia in the coming warmer months.

“This is a simple initiative that any adult can commit to when they are near water and it will save lives,” Mrs Schembri-Portelli said.

“The self-appointed Water Watcher’s only job is to keep watch on what’s happening in and around the water. They need to let other people answer the doorbell or phone, cook the barbecue or get the drinks.

“Our kids are not waterproof but if an adult is keeping watch on them their safety is greatly improved.”

Although AUSTSWIM’s primary role is training in the aquatics industry, Mrs Schembri-Portelli said the organisation saw the campaign as a way for its 33,500 licensed and accredited teachers to “pay it forward” to the wider community.

Water Watcher packs will be available from AUSTSWIM and at its registered swim centres throughout the 2016/2017 summer.

For more information about the campaign and how to become a Water Watcher, go to [www.austswim.com.au](http://www.austswim.com.au) or visit the AUSTSWIM facebook for details.

**#waterwatcher #skillforlife #austswim**

### **For further Information please contact:**

Jennifer Schembri-Portelli  
AUSTSWIM Chief Executive Officer  
[ceo@austswim.com.au](mailto:ceo@austswim.com.au)  
Ph: 03 9562 7900



AUSTSWIM PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY **Australian Government**

[www.austswim.com.au](http://www.austswim.com.au)