

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, December 20, 2011



Supervision a Must!

Following the death of a toddler two weeks after he was found lying face down in a backyard pool in Airds in NSW AUSTSWIM Chief Executive Officer, Gordon Mallett urges Australian parents to ensure that children are constantly supervised in and around the water and that they receive regular learn to swim and water safety aquatic education in a fun, engaging and safe environment by appropriately accredited AUSTSWIM Teachers™. Learning to swim provides you and your children with important skills and the confidence to be able to enjoy water safely. Providing your child with the opportunity to learn to swim and water safety skills will give them the best chance of survival if an accident were ever to happen.

Sadly, more than 50 children aged between 1 and 15 drown each year in Australia, 28 of them are under the age of four. A quarter of the children who experience near drownings, suffer hypoxic brain injury due to the lack of oxygen which results in brain injury for life. Swimming pools and bathtubs recorded the highest number of drownings for toddlers. These are both areas where parental supervision is paramount.

This month alone has seen two toddlers drown in 'fenced' backyard pools and two be resuscitated by parents in bathtubs incidents. Drowning is silent and only takes a second. AUSTSWIM urges parents to constantly supervise children around water and limit access to water in and around the home. Don't let the second you look away, be the second you regret!

AUSTSWIM Chief Executive Officer; Gordon Mallett suggests that; When looking for a learn to swim and water safety program for your children, seek one with a positive and welcoming environment that includes parents as part of the learning process. Parents are an essential part of the learning process, and as the children learn so do the parents.

A well rounded program will also include all the essentials of water safety, water familiarisation, personal water safety, survival knowledge and steps towards stroke development. However, AUSTSWIM emphasizes that not all swim centres employ teachers with appropriate training and licensing to be teaching learn to swim and water safety programs and encourages parents to ensure their children are being taught by appropriately and currently licensed AUSTSWIM Teachers™.

"AUSTSWIM encourages parents to ensure their children are being taught by accredited AUSTSWIM Teachers™ and in doing so parents are urged to check their child's swimming teachers, AUSTSWIM photo license". Mr. Mallett said.

Start small by familiarising your child with water in the bath at home under careful supervision. This allows your child to experience the buoyancy effect of water, the movement and force of water, and the feeling of water splashing and showering over the body.

Furthermore, parents and carers can reduce the risk of drowning and provide their children valuable skills for life by following actions including:

- Active constant supervision
- Taking their child to learn to swim and water safety lessons
- Learning resuscitation and
- Gaining water safety knowledge and personal survival skills appropriate to the beach, river, lake, dam, creek and home pool environment.

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The following water safety tips are important for parents to remember:

AUSTSWIM 'WATER SAFETY' TIP 1

Water safety begins with you. Be within arm's reach when your family is in, on or around water.

AUSTSWIM 'WATER SAFETY' TIP 2

Regardless of swimming ability no person is drown proof. Ensure that there is adequate supervision **AT ALL TIMES** when your family is in or around water.

AUSTSWIM 'WATER SAFETY' TIP 3

Young children are fascinated by and attracted to water. Recognise or eliminate potential water dangers around your home; nappy buckets, fish ponds, bathtubs, toilets, wading or swimming pools.

AUSTSWIM 'WATER SAFETY' TIP 4

Water's everywhere and it's not always clear, clean and heated. Learn water safety knowledge and personal survival skills for the beach, river, lake and even your pool at home.

AUSTSWIM has over 200 AUSTSWIM Recognised Swim Schools in NSW who provide a range of learn to swim and water safety classes catering for ages six months through to adults. Classes are taught by accredited AUSTSWIM Teachers of Swimming and Water Safety™. To find a swim school in your area or if you are interested in becoming an accredited AUSTSWIM Teacher™ go to www.austswim.com.au

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