

# Think. Prevent. Live.



## Keep Our Children Safe

*A mother falls asleep. She wakes up and finds her two-year-old at the bottom of the family swimming pool...*

*A mother and father have a party. They leave their one-year-old with other parents at the party while they run to the store. The one-year-old is later found face down in the swimming pool...*

*A two-year-old staying with a relative is found floating in a Koi pond four houses from his home...*

*A one-year-old wanders away from his father who is clearing some brush in the yard. Father turns to check on the child. The child is upside down in a large bucket of water...*

Each of these tragedies happened to loving Oklahoma families. These parents and caregivers turned their back for a minute. They thought someone else was looking after their child. They didn't think a child could drown in a toilet, mop bucket, ice cooler, aquarium, a sink or a bath tub. They thought the pool or hot tub was secure.

"The loss of a child is such a tragedy," said Robert W. Block, M.D., chair of the department of pediatrics, University of Oklahoma College of Medicine - Tulsa. "A child can drown quickly and silently in even a small amount of water, often without any splashing or screaming. It can happen in just the moment it takes to answer the telephone."

Most children drown while taking a bath or in a swimming pool. The adult watching the child answers the phone, gets clothes or towels, does chores or talks to friends. The child is left alone...for just a second.

"Drowning can be prevented by having a responsible adult always looking after children. People drinking alcohol or using drugs should not be watching children because they cannot respond to an emergency situation," said Block.

"The adult should not be involved in any other distracting activity, such as reading, playing on the computer, sleeping, talking on the phone or working around the house while supervising children," added Block.

While a little one seems safe in a bathtub seat or with an older brother or sister, that child needs an adult's attention at all times.

"A responsible adult watching a child at all times is the best prevention to drowning and injuries," said Block.

Empty bathtubs, buckets, sinks and inflatable pools immediately after using them. Keep bathroom doors and toilet seats locked. Remove toys from the pool immediately after using them. Floats, balls and other toys might tempt children to lean over the pool and potentially fall in.

"Parents and caregivers should take just a moment to think before leaving children alone," said Block. "They can prevent injuries and help children live a long and healthy life."

[www.ThinkPreventLive.org](http://www.ThinkPreventLive.org)

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