



# Water Safety and Drowning Prevention





# OVERVIEW

In July 2023, the National Child Mortality Database (NCMD) published its thematic report Deaths of children and young people due to traumatic incidents, which highlighted evidence of an increase in the number of child drowning deaths in England, from 20 in 2019-20 to 37 in 2021-22

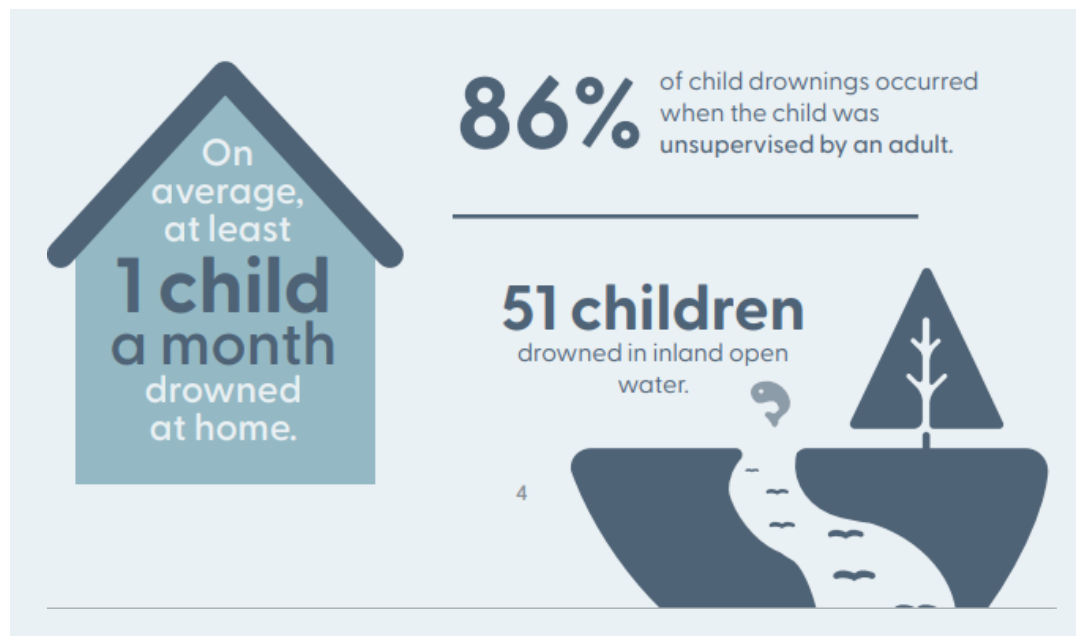
[Child Drowning Update September 2024: England | Royal Life Saving Society UK \( RLSS UK \)](#)

NHS Frimley are championing resources to reach all, with a focus on parents and carers of children under 5, and individuals aged between 13-17 years old.





# HEADLINE FACTS



In total, there were 125 child drowning deaths in England between 1 April 2019 and 31 March 2023.

**71%** of these were male children.

Of those that drowned...





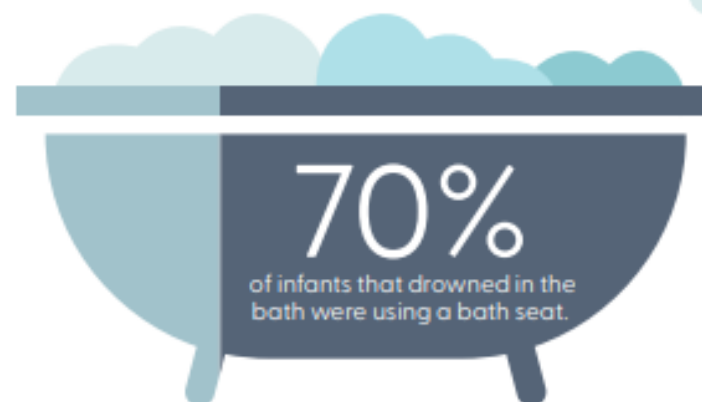
# SUPERVISION

A lack of supervision remains a contributory factor across all accidental child drownings, and where recorded, 86% occurred when the child was unsupervised by an adult.

**2 in 3 children that drowned at home, did so in the bath.**  
This totalled 35 deaths in four years.

25 out of the 35 children that drowned in the bath were under 5 years old, including 10 infants less than one year old. Of these, seven were using a bath seat at the time.

Whilst bath seats can be a useful tool in assisting parents at bath-time, they are not a safety device. **Never leave a child unattended in a bath seat, even if they are with a sibling.**



<sup>1</sup>National Drowning Report (RLSS UK), June 2023







# SUPERVISION

**1 in 3 children that drowned at home did so in places such as paddling pools, hot tubs and ponds.**

Across the four years, this totalled 16 drownings.



## RLSS UK TOP TIPS for enjoying water safely in the garden

### SECURELY COVER OR EMPTY ALL WATER VESSELS AFTER USE

- Including paddling pools, hot tubs, water play tables and storage containers

### STOP WATER VESSELS FROM RE-FILLING BY:

- Turning them over
- Turning off the hosepipe off at the tap, so children cannot fill vessels themselves

### STOP CHILDREN GAINING ACCESS TO PONDS AND POOLS BY:

- Installing secure fencing at least 4 feet high
- Adding a strong mesh or grill to the top of your pond - one that is strong enough to take the weight of a child
- Keeping your door locked to restrict access to outdoor areas that can pose risks
- Consider filling-in your pond until your child is older





# DROWNINGS IN INLAND OPEN WATER

Data in the National Drowning Report showed children aged 5 and over are more likely to drown in inland water, with those aged 13-17 years old most likely to be actively entering the water to swim.<sup>3</sup>



**51 children**  
have drowned in inland  
open water, such as  
rivers, lakes and canals in  
the last four years.  
This includes 20 children  
in 2022-23 when the UK  
recorded some record high  
air temperatures.<sup>2</sup>

## RLSS UK TOP TIPS for staying safe in inland water

### LEARN THE WATER SAFETY CODE

- With statutory swimming outcomes in decline, RLSS UK encourages all parents to talk to their child about water safety
- Ensure that your family are familiar with the [Water Safety Code](#)

### LOOK FOR A LIFEGUARD

- Always use lifeguarded venues where possible

### TAKE CARE NEAR THE EDGE

- When walking or running next to open water, stay well clear of bank edges







# DROWNING PREVENTION WEEK

Drowning Prevention Week is deliberately timed ahead of the school summer holidays when children spend more time outdoors and when vital water safety skills can help keep children safe.



Royal Life Saving Society UK's Drowning Prevention Week

Drowning Prevention Week (DPW) is one of the largest summer water safety campaigns across the UK and Ireland.

Save the date for 2025:  
14 - 21 June.





# SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS

Sharing a video made by local young people following a tragedy within their local area will help to resonate with younger people – reaching them on platforms they regularly engage with allows the opportunity to spread the message.

## FLOAT TO LIVE CAMPAIGN



[CLICK THROUGH TO VIDEO](#)





## VIDEO FLOAT TO LIVE

# FLOAT TO LIVE CAMPAIGN



# FLOAT TO LIVE CAMPAIGN





# SOCIAL MEDIA ASSETS

NEVER LEAVE  
A CHILD  
UNATTENDED  
IN THE BATH





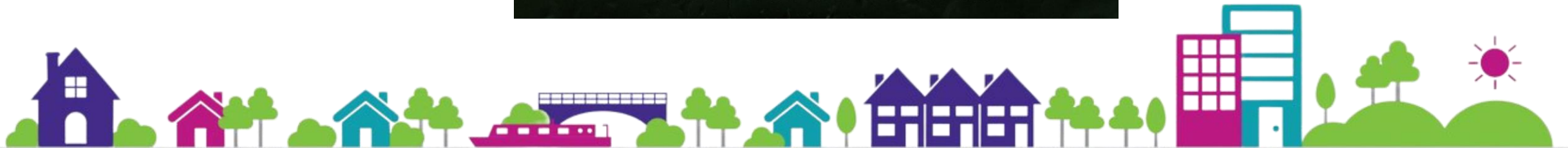


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NEVER LEAVE  
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IN THE BATH



# TEST THE WATER









# EMAIL SIGNATURE

## FLOAT TO LIVE CAMPAIGN

FOLLOWING THESE FIVE STEPS COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE IF YOU GET INTO DIFFICULTY IN THE WATER:

**TILT HEAD BACK**

WITH EARS SUBMERGED

**RELAX**

AND TRY TO BREATHE NORMALLY

**MOVE YOUR HANDS**

TO HELP STAY AFLOAT

**IT'S OK IF YOUR LEGS SINK**

WE ALL FLOAT DIFFERENTLY

**SPREAD YOUR ARMS AND LEGS**

TO IMPROVE STABILITY

