

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we approach summer and children spend more time in and around water, we want to remind you of the importance of water safety and to encourage you to have conversations with your children about the potential dangers.

Water safety is crucial for everyone, and it's particularly important for children who may not fully understand the risks involved. Drowning can happen quickly and silently, even in shallow water. We want to ensure our children have the knowledge and skills to stay safe in and around water.

Key Water Safety Messages:

- **Supervision:** Always supervise children closely when they are near water, even in their own home or garden.
- **Local Waterways:** Our local waterways can have strong currents, hidden hazards, polluted water, and cold water shock. Always be aware of these risks.
- **Stay SAFE.** Remind children to **STAY AWAY FROM the EDGE**
- **Water Safety Code:** Teach your children the Water Safety Code: **STOP & THINK, STAY TOGETHER, FLOAT, CALL 999**
- **Emergency Contacts:** In an emergency, call 999.
- **What3Words:** Get your children to download the 'what-3-words' app to their phone. If they see someone in trouble by the water, call 999 immediately. They can use the what3words address to help emergency services know exactly where to send help. The app is free to use and can be accessed on both Android and Apple devices.

Actionable Advice:

- Have open conversations with your children about water safety. Repeating safety messages regularly will help young children remember what to do
- Ensure your children are equipped with appropriate clothing and sun protection.

- Be honest about whether they are actually competent swimmers (Can they swim 100m in clothes, float to live and tread water?)
- Know where your children are at all times.
- Remind children not to be peer pressured into swimming where they aren't comfortable, especially if they are not strong swimmers.
- Remind children to stay together to look out for each other, and discourage stupid behaviour. **Be a mate before it's too late.**

The Canal and River Trust have produced some very good resources to help keep young people safe in and around water.

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/support-us/our-campaigns/safety-on-our-waterways/water-safety-tips-for-parents>

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/support-us/our-campaigns/safety-on-our-waterways/water-safety-for-teenagers-and-young-people>

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/support-us/our-campaigns/safety-on-our-waterways/summer-water-safety>

For more advice on enjoying the water safely go to www.rlss.org.uk or www.rnli.org