



PLAYGROUP WATER SAFETY MONTH

RESOURCE KIT



ROYAL LIFE SAVING
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WHAT IS WATER SAFETY MONTH?

WATER SAFETY MONTH is an initiative of Playgroup WA and the Royal Life Saving Society WA's Keep Watch program. This year Water Safety Month is in November and playgroup members can join in the fun by participating in water play activities whilst learning about being safe around water.

WATER PLAY AT PLAYGROUP

With summer just around the corner, there are many activities you can do at playgroup that involve water and keep the kids busy. Not only is it enjoyable, they can also learn about the environment, movement and science concepts.

To help get you started, we've provided some suggestions for water play during playgroup. You can pick one or several, it's entirely up to you! From water play tables, buckets or tubs to floating and sinking concepts you're sure to have lots of fun.

Don't forget to bring a towel and a change of dry clothes!

STAYING WATER SAFE AT PLAYGROUP

To help keep kids safe around water at playgroup here are some tips:

1. Close supervision is essential when kids are playing with water. Don't assume that another parent is supervising your kids.
2. Talk to kids about staying safe in the water and remind them of water safety rules. Some suggestions are:
 - What places do we find water at home?
 - What rules do we have around water? For example:
 - Never go swimming without Mum or Dad
 - The pool gate should always be shut
 - No running
 - What have we learnt at swimming lessons?
 - What are some dangers around water?
 - What do you do if you are in danger in the water?
3. Once finished empty out buckets, play tables and any other item containing water. It's a great idea to get the kids involved, they will love to pour out the water and watch as it splashes onto the garden or trickles down the drain.
4. If you're playing outside, don't forget to stay in the shade, wear a hat and put sunscreen on!



WATER PLAY ACTIVITY IDEAS



FILLING AND POURING

What you'll need:

Cups, pots, funnels, watering cans, colanders, plastic containers or bottles

Filling and pouring helps kids to develop their motor skills and understanding of concepts like size, volume, full and empty. By using items with holes they can create streams or showers of water. Use watering cans to water the garden or fill other containers – what happens when they pour water from different heights or angles?



FLOATING AND SINKING

What you'll need:

Variety of objects that will sink or float like corks, balls, plastic boats or toys

Kids can experiment with dropping different objects in water and seeing which sink and which float.

Older kids might like to guess whether items will sink or float based on their observations. Why not try filling an item that floats with water to see what happens!



WASHING

What you'll need:

Dishwashing liquid, sponges or toothbrushes, dolls, toy animals or kitchen items

Provide a tub full of soapy water for kids to wash items with sponges or toothbrushes. They can soak sponges and squeeze them to create showers for their toys.

Rinse the toys off with a tap or watering can so they can run their hands under the stream.

CREATE A WATER WORLD

What you'll need:

Toys like boats, sharks, fish or ducks, rocks, shells

Fill a clear tub with water and have them create an under the sea water world. Set the scene with rocks or shells and add water-themed toys.

PAINTING WITH WATER

What you'll need:

Old paint brushes or rollers, bucket or shallow tray

Let the kids loose on a blank wall, fence or paved area. They can make big or small brush strokes, splash water in different patterns or try painting lines, circles or swirls. Painting is great for developing gross motor skills and encouraging imaginative and artistic play.

WATER PLAY WITH NATURAL ITEMS

What you'll need:

Natural items like leaves, sticks, pine cones and rocks

Have the kids search the outdoor area for natural items and involve these in their play. They can explore sinking and floating and see what happens when these items get wet.

If you have a long trough or tray why not race sticks or leaves!



WATER PLAY ACTIVITY IDEAS



BUBBLES

What you'll need:

Bubble wands or blowers, shallow tray, dishwashing liquid or bubble mix

Babies will love watching bubbles float by and toddlers can blow their own bubbles or try to catch the ones you blow for them. Encourage them to try popping bubbles in different ways such as poking them with their finger, clapping and stamping on them.



GO FOR A PLAYGROUP OUTING

If your playgroup is near a park you might like to go on an outing for a fun change. Make sure the location is convenient for everyone to get there or walk together from playgroup. There's lots of fun to be had with a lake, pond or fountain.

Look for ducks, fish or other creatures around the water, make leaf boats or throw some stones. Remember that supervision around water at the park is extra important.



RAINY DAY WATER PLAY

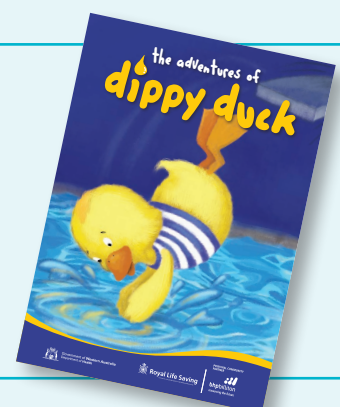
Don't let the rain dampen your enthusiasm for water play! Bring wet weather gear and boots and dedicate some time to playing outdoors. Kids can stomp, jump or splash in puddles, float leaves in puddles or trickles of water or make some mud pies. Don't forget to bring old towels and dry clothes for afterwards!

INDOOR ACTIVITIES

If you have access to a speaker or computer at playgroup you can find many water safety songs and animations on YouTube.

Play them in the background or perhaps have a song and dance time with the kids.

Email keepwatch@royallifesavingwa.com.au to request a free copy of Royal Life Saving WA's children's water safety story book 'The Adventures of Dippy Duck' for your playgroup.



KEEPING CHILDREN SAFE AROUND WATER

WATER SHOULD BE a fun and safe environment for children but sadly drowning remains the leading cause of preventable death in children aged 0 to 4 years in Australia. The good news is that there are simple steps you can take to keep your child safe and set them up for a lifetime of enjoying the water!

SUPERVISE

ALWAYS KEEP WATCH OF YOUR CHILD IN AND AROUND WATER

- Supervision is the single most important thing you can do to keep your children safe around water.
- When you're in or around water with your child, supervision should be 'eyes on' and 'hands on' at all times.
- Older children should never be left to supervise younger siblings around water.

For more information...

Drowning happens quickly and silently and the impact on families can be devastating. You can find [true stories](#) shared by parents on the Royal Life Saving WA website.

RESTRICT

RESTRICT YOUR CHILD'S ACCESS TO WATER AT ALL TIMES

- Having barriers around water can slow kids down and give you more time to respond if you lose sight of them.
- Never leave a pool gate propped open and ensure your gate is self-closing and self-latching.
- Prevent access to other water locations by emptying paddle pools, baths and buckets immediately after us.

For more information...

It's a great idea to do a thorough check of your pool fence before summer starts. Download the [Pool Safety Checklist](#) from the Royal Life Saving WA website for tips on what to look for.

TEACH

TEACH YOUR CHILD WATER SAFETY SKILLS

- Formal water familiarisation classes build confidence and introduce children to basic water safety and survival skills.
- Remember that even a child who can swim can still drown so there is no substitute for supervision.
- Teach children water safety rules and use them consistently in all water environments.

For more information...

Royal Life Saving WA is proud to endorse a number of swim schools that have committed to providing the absolute best in aquatic education and you can find your nearest [Endorsed Swim School](#) on their website.

RESPOND

LEARN CPR AND CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) IN AN EMERGENCY

- If your child is ever missing always check water locations both inside and outside before looking elsewhere.
- In many emergency situations involving children a parent will be the first person on the scene. Knowing how to respond could be the difference between life and death.
- Make the time to complete a CPR course and refresh your skills regularly.

For more information...

The [Heart Beat Club](#) is a 3 hour CPR and basic first aid course designed specifically for children of young children. The course costs only \$35 per person and if you have a group of ten or more people, a trainer can come to you!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Royal Life Saving Society WA

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Playgroup WA

T: (08) 9228 8088 or WA callers 1800 171 882

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