

09

EVERYONE CAN BE A LIFESAVER


Royal Life Saving
 ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA


FACT SHEET No.09

Pool Toys Safety



Q. What are pool toys?

A. Pool toys are any objects that are used for entertainment around water. They include inflatable balls, noodles, floaties, dive rings, kickboards, inflatable rafts, lilos, inflatable rings, dive rings and other inflatable and non-inflatable toys that can be used in the water. Inflatable wading pools are not toys and are discussed in Fact Sheet No. 10. Life jackets are not pool toys but can be used to provide buoyancy for children in the water. See Fact Sheet No. 19 for more information.

Q. What are the dangers they pose?

A. Pool toys, when left in and around the pool can attract the attention of children and draw them towards the pool. Other pool toys, such as floaties and noodles can also provide parents with a false sense of their child's swimming ability. This can mean parents do not actively supervise their children or leave the pool area to do something else.

Q. What should you look for when purchasing pool toys?

A. When purchasing pool toys you should check the age and weight ranges recommended, ensuring your child is not too old or too heavy. You should also ensure that children do not use pool toys for purposes other than those which are recommended. Pool toys that are inflatable, should be deflated when not in use, checked for leaks before use and all pool toys regardless of if they are inflatable or not, should be stored securely, out of the sight and reach of young children. Never leave pool toys in the pool when they are not in use.

Q. How should I be supervising my child when they are using pool toys?

A. Children should always be actively supervised within arms' reach by a responsible adult when in, on, or around the water, regardless of whether they are using pool toys or not.

Q. Can I use pool toys to rescue someone in trouble?

A. If you see someone in trouble in the water, Royal Life Saving recommends you perform a reach or throw rescue which means you do not enter the water yourself. The ideal objects to use are a reach pole or a personal flotation device. You should make sure you store one of these items around the pool for use in emergencies. Pool toys should be used only as a last resort.

Real Life Story - Pool toys involved in child drowning

A child under five has drowned after making his way into the backyard swimming pool. The child had been missing for about 5 minutes when the parents realised and found the child face-down in the family's swimming pool. It appeared the child made his way through a faulty fence panel after being drawn to a brightly coloured pool noodle and beach ball floating in the pool. Royal Life Saving is again urging people to ensure pool toys are stored securely away from the pool area, out of sight and reach of small children.

ROYAL LIFE SAVING HAS DEVELOPED A NUMBER OF FACT SHEETS ON WATER SAFETY ISSUES IN AUSTRALIA.

Contact Royal Life Saving on: **1300 737 763**
 or download them from: **www.keepwatch.com.au**

Pool Toys Safety Checklist

When purchasing and using pool toys you should remember to check:

- The age of child the product is recommended for
- The weight of child the product is recommended for
- The instructions for use
- That floaties have three inflatable chambers and fit snugly against the child's arms
- Pool toys used for recommended purposes only
- Inflatable toys are checked before use for any wear and tear such as leaks
- Pool toys are stored securely and deflated if necessary after use
- Children always actively supervised when in, on, or around the water

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