

# DROWNING PREVENTION WEEK

We're  
supporting



## STAY WATER-SAFE THIS SUMMER

As the weather warms up and we look forward to the summer holidays, our children naturally head outdoors to enjoy the water. To ensure they stay safe while having fun, we are proud to support RLSS UK's Drowning Prevention Week.

This annual nationwide campaign is specifically designed to equip children and young adults (aged 5-17) with the essential water safety and lifesaving skills they need. By providing this crucial advice every June, we aim to prepare them for the summer months when they are most likely to be near open water.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP

While our educators and coaches do incredible work in the classroom and at the pool, the most impactful lessons often happen at home. We are calling on all parents and carers to help extend this learning. By discussing water safety together, you can help ensure that every child has the knowledge to enjoy the water safely and confidently.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS FOR THE FAMILY

- Awareness: Knowing the hidden dangers of open water (like cold water shock or hidden currents).
- Preparedness: Understanding what to do if they, or someone else, get into trouble.
- Confidence: Ensuring the "Water Safety Code" is second nature before the school gates close for July.



47% of UK accidental drownings occur between May and August. We also see a heightened risk of drowning when air temperatures are higher.

When UK average maximum air temperatures reach or exceed 25°C...

- There is a fivefold increase in accidental drowning risk, when compared to days with an average temperature of 10°C
- Over half (57%) of those who drowned were swimming, reflecting more people actively entering the water
- Teenagers (aged 13-17 years) and young adults are proportionately more likely to lose their lives

## UNDERSTANDING COLD WATER SHOCK

As we approach the summer months, we want to ensure our students and their families stay safe near the water. While the sun might be warm, the water in our seas, rivers, and lakes remains dangerously cold.

### WHAT IS COLD WATER SHOCK?

"Cold water shock" is the body's natural, involuntary reaction to being submerged in water typically 15 or lower—which is significantly colder than a heated swimming pool. Even on a hot day, British waters can trigger this physical crisis.

### THE 3 STAGES OF RISK

When someone enters cold water unexpectedly, the body goes through a series of reactions that can quickly become life-threatening:

1. The Initial Gasp: Your body's first reaction is an uncontrollable gasp for breath, followed by rapid breathing (hyperventilation). At the same time, your blood pressure spikes as your body rushes blood to your core to protect your organs.
2. The Window of Opportunity: Once your breathing settles, you have a very short "window" to get out of the water. This is the most critical moment to reach safety.
3. Swim Failure: As your limbs cool, you lose strength, coordination, and endurance. Eventually, your muscles will stop responding, making it impossible to swim or rescue yourself. This is known as swim failure, and without a flotation aid, it is the primary cause of drowning.



*Summer*  
**WATER SAFETY**

To enjoy the water safely and make the right call...

-  **ENTER SLOWLY AND CAREFULLY**
-  **STAY WITHIN REACH**
-  **ALWAYS BE SUPERVISED**

**In an emergency...**

-  **CALL 999**
-  **IF YOU'RE IN TROUBLE FLOAT AND CALL FOR HELP**





# Summer

## WATER SAFETY

### BEACH FLAGS

The beach flags are displayed by the Beach Lifeguards in patrolled areas to provide guidance on the water and the wind conditions. The flags also inform beach users where the swimming and water sports zones are located.



#### RED AND YELLOW LIFEGUARDS ON DUTY

Between the flags is the safest place to swim.



#### RED

#### DANGEROUS AREA

Lifeguards are not watching this area. Do not swim here.



#### BLACK AND WHITE

#### WATERSPORTS AREA

Do not swim here.



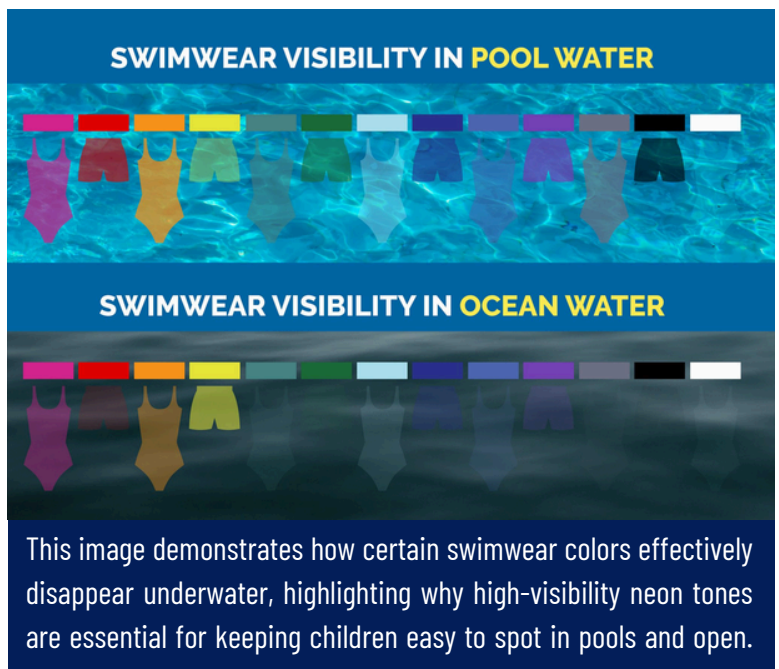
#### ORANGE WINDSOCK

#### SHOWS THE DIRECTION AND STRENGTH OF THE WIND

Beware of winds blowing out to sea

#ENJOYWATERSAFELY

For more information visit [rlss.org.uk](http://rlss.org.uk)



This image demonstrates how certain swimwear colors effectively disappear underwater, highlighting why high-visibility neon tones are essential for keeping children easy to spot in pools and open.

### WATER SAFETY STARTS AT HOME

Whilst schools are working hard to equip students with the skills they need to stay safe, the most effective way to prevent accidents is for these messages to be reinforced at home. Water safety isn't just a lesson for the pool—it's a life skill that requires regular conversation and practice.

As children spend more time outdoors during the summer, they need to know that open water—like rivers, lakes, and beaches—behaves very differently than a swimming pool. By discussing the Water Safety Code with your children, you can ensure they have the confidence to make the right decisions when it matters most.

#### How You Can Get Involved

The Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK) provides a fantastic range of free resources specifically for parents and carers. These are designed to make learning about water safety fun and engaging for the whole family.

- Educational Cartoons: Perfect for younger children to help them understand the risks.
- Activity Sheets: Interactive ways to learn the Water Safety Code together.
- Splash Safely at Home: Tips for keeping safe around garden ponds, paddling pools, and even bath time.

We encourage all families to visit the [RLSS UK Water Safety Resources for Families](http://rlss.org.uk) page to download these free materials.



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[www.bssp.org.uk](http://www.bssp.org.uk)



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