## Good practice for child water safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evidence statement</th>
<th>Transfer and Implementation points</th>
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| Expert opinion states that the use of a personal floatation device (PFD) for boating and other water recreational activities is a recommended preventive strategy in the prevention of drowning. | - It is estimated that 85% of annual boating-related drowning incidents could be prevented if the victim had been wearing a personal floatation device.  
- Level of enforcement will impact effectiveness.  
- Legislation is most effective when supported by educational activities. |
| Expert opinion states that signs regarding safe behaviours displayed in clear and simple signage are an important preventive strategy in the prevention of drowning. | - Signage is most effective when supported by educational activities.  
- International standardisation of symbols used on signs should help reduce tourist drowning incidents. |
| Legislation requiring isolation fencing with secure, self-latching gates for all pools, public, semi-public and private including both newly constructed and existing pools leads to a reduction in drowning when enforcement provisions are included. | - Private pools that are fenced provide 95% more protection against a drowning event.  
- Level of enforcement will impact effectiveness.  
- Legislation is most effective when supported by educational activities.  
- It is highly recommended that parents be strongly encouraged to continue close supervision of their children around pools; no protection system can replace parent supervision. |
| Safety standards for swimming pools may lead to a reduction in drowning. | - Level of enforcement will impact effectiveness.  
- Safety standards will be more effective when supported by educational activities. |
### Good practice for child water safety, continued

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| **Enforcement** Lifeguards, when adequately staffed, qualified, trained and equipped, seem to be an effective strategy to prevent drowning. | - The presence of lifeguards may deter behaviours that could put swimmers at risk for drowning, such as horseplay or venturing into rough or deep water.48  
- Lifeguards should have appropriate training and hold a suitable current qualification. Re-qualification should be undertaken at regular intervals, and practical rescue and resuscitation skills should be practiced frequently.48 It has been noted that initial introduction of lifeguard certification may impact availability of qualified lifeguards.53  
- Lifeguard observation points must have a clear and unobstructed view of the area of supervision including both the water and surrounding area.48  
- Lifeguards on duty should be easily identifiable at a distance and in a manner that sets them apart from others at the beach or water recreational facility.48  
- Lifeguard organisations should develop written “standard operating procedures” that include supervision requirements.48 |
| **Education** Community-based education / advocacy around PFD use leads to increased use.14 | - It is estimated that 85% of annual boating-related drownings could be prevented if the victim had been wearing a personal life jacket.49  
- Important elements of community-based approaches are long-term strategy, effective focused leadership, multi-agency collaboration, involvement of the local community, appropriate targeting and time to develop a range of local networks and programmes.15 |
| Water safety skills training (including swimming lessons) improve swimming performance.14 | - It is highly recommended that parents be strongly encouraged to continue close supervision of their children around water; ability to swim does not replace the need for close parent supervision.52  
- The earliest age at which swimming lessons show improvement in swimming ability is 24 months.14  
- Children are highly sensitive to training, are able to retain most skills if lessons are continued, and can use acquired skills in mastering more advanced swimming skills (e.g., diving).14 |

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48 Case Example: Drowning Prevention, Iceland, Page 60
53 Case Example: Drowning Prevention Campaign, Greece, Page 63
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