



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
FOR THE NORFOLK DISTRICT

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June 15, 2022

Dear Norfolk County Parents & Caregivers,

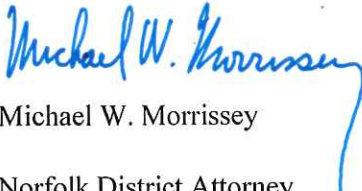
As we approach the end of the school year and the start of summer vacation, I want to take this opportunity share important information to prevent drowning tragedies. As District Attorney, I have seen how quickly a special celebration, family cookout or relaxing weekend by the water can turn into the tragic loss of a child by drowning. Safety latches, fences and gates, approved flotation devices and swimming lessons are all essential precautions, but they should never replace adult supervision around water.

Please join me in doing all we can to prevent child drowning this summer by reviewing this guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- All children and adults should **learn to swim**. If swim lessons are suspended in your area due to coronavirus, it is important to add other layers of protection until your child can access lessons.
- **Close, constant, attentive supervision** around water is important. Assign an adult 'water watcher,' who should not be distracted by work, socializing, or chores.
- **Around the house, empty all buckets, bathtubs and wading pools immediately after use**. If you have young children, keep the bathroom door closed, and use toilet locks to prevent access.
- **Pools should be surrounded by a four-sided fence**, with a self-closing and self-latching gate. Research shows pool fencing can reduce drowning risk by 50%. Additional barriers can include door locks, window locks, pool covers and pool alarms.
- Adults and older children should **learn CPR**.
- Everyone, children and adults, should wear **US Coast Guard-approved life jackets** whenever they are in open water, or on watercraft.
- Parents and teens should **understand how using alcohol and drugs increases the risk of drowning while swimming or boating**.

Additional information on water safety can be found at [Drowning Prevention Campaign Toolkit \(aap.org\)](http://DrowningPreventionCampaignToolkit.aap.org).

Wishing you and your family a safe summer,


Michael W. Morrissey

Norfolk District Attorney