

Charity urgently seeks practitioner support

as new data shows 1 in 3 children who drowned at home did so in the garden¹.

The Royal Life Saving Society UK (RLSS UK) is a leading charity in water safety, and following recent findings², is urging healthcare professionals and others working with families to help raise awareness of the risks associated with water at home, with a current focus on safety in gardens and outdoor spaces.

The charity's warning comes as its survey revealed that almost 90% of parents of under 5s had at least one potential water hazard in their outdoor space at home.

The survey also highlighted a common misconception among parents of young children, as 55% believe that children would thrash about and make lots of noise if struggling in the water when in fact, drowning is often silent.

Analysis of the drowning cases identified in RLSS UK's Charity Drowning Report identified several factors as contributing to these deaths. The most common was a lack of adult supervision, **where in 86% of cases, the child was unsupervised at the time of the incident.**

What are the messages we need your help to deliver?

- 1. Always keep young children within arm's reach.** Almost 1 in 4 parents believe it is okay to leave a child on their own in the water, as long as they're wearing arm bands or a swim vest. Help us remind parents that you should never leave their child unattended when in or around water, including in outdoor spaces at home. Constant, competent adult supervision is vital to keep children safe in and around water, and parents should never leave their child under the supervision of child siblings.
- 2. Secure your spaces to limit access.** Urge parents to lock doors and gates to outdoor spaces to prevent unsupervised access and turn off the hosepipe at the tap to limit access for young children.
- 3. Empty it out, cover it up, clear it away.** Encourage parents to tidy up when their children have finished playing. Emptying the paddling pool immediately and turning it over or clearing it away can prevent it from unexpectedly refilling when it rains. Help instil the importance of securely replacing covers of larger pools, hot tubs and ice baths to prevent children from accidentally falling in.

What can you do to promote our campaign in your local healthcare setting?

You can access campaign materials, including posters and pull-up banners [here](#) that can be flexibly utilised across healthcare settings.

Where can parents seek advice?

In response to the report findings, RLSS UK has launched a fun and engaging water safety awareness campaign named Splash Safety at your Pad. The campaign offers hints, tips and advice for families, to help parents and carers alike learn more about the risks posed by water in outdoor spaces, and how to stay safe.

Families can access the free resources here: www.rlss.org.uk/splash-safety



¹RLSS UK Child Drowning Update (September 2024)

²Royal Life Saving Society UK, Parents Survey, n=1,004 parents of children under 5 (September 2024)

Do you have ideas on how we can spread our message even further? Please get in touch.

Professionals can get in touch via marketing@rlss.org.uk
Parents and carers can visit the website at www.rlss.org.uk