Pool Party Safety Checklist

A one-page checklist for hosting a pool party: a Water Watcher schedule, sober supervision, life jackets, rescue gear, and ending swim time safely.

Letter page · For parents, caregivers, faith communities

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Parties are when it's easiest to get distracted, so the AAP says to assign a Water Watcher and pass the card every 15-20 minutes. Set it up before guests arrive.

Before guests arrive

- [ ] A Water Watcher schedule: one adult on duty at a time, 15-20 minute shifts, no alcohol, phone away.
- [ ] Life jackets ready for weak swimmers and children who can't swim (water wings don't count).
- [ ] A reaching pole, something to throw, a phone and a first aid kit are by the pool.
- [ ] The pool gate closes and latches by itself.

During the party and after

- [ ] The Water Watcher holds the card and watches only the water, even if a lifeguard is there.
- [ ] An adult stays within arm's reach of babies, toddlers and weak swimmers, in the water with them.
- [ ] No breath-holding contests: they can make swimmers pass out underwater.
- [ ] Stay alert as swimming ends: many children who drown in home pools do so when all seem out.
- [ ] Latch the gate when you're done. If a child is missing, check the pool first.

What you can do today: print a Water Watcher Card, read how to host a safe pool party, or plan it with Pool party safety plan.

Sources

1. Drowning Prevention for Curious Toddlers, American Academy of Pediatrics (HealthyChildren.org). https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Water-Safety-And-Young-Children.aspx
2. Swim Lessons for Children: When to Start & What to Consider, American Academy of Pediatrics (HealthyChildren.org). https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-play/Pages/Swim-Lessons.aspx
3. Swimming Safety, American Red Cross. https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/water-safety/swim-safety.html
4. Preventing Drowning, CDC. https://www.cdc.gov/drowning/prevention/index.html

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