



Kingston and Richmond LSCBs would like to promote some local learning regarding water safety to help families stay safe this summer.

Nationally, drowning has been identified as a leading cause of accidental death, with 62 deaths of children under 5 between 2008-2012 resulting from drowning. Babies and toddlers can drown quickly and silently in as little as 5cm of water. Older children and young people are also at risk of drowning.

The following key messages have been highlighted from local case reviews by which future deaths can be prevented:

- ❖ **Supervision** – Parents and carers must ensure children of any age are adequately supervised by an adult in or near water including for example the bath, garden ponds and swimming places.
- ❖ **Bath Aids** – Bath seats are intended as an aid to bath-time and must not be relied upon as a substitute to adult supervision. It is not safe to leave a baby unattended by an adult in a bath seat at any time.
- ❖ **Reduce Risks** – Parents and carers should consider reducing the risks presented by all sources of water, for example ensuring ponds are covered/fenced off as well as coverage of drains and water storage devices, ensuring baths, paddling pools and buckets are emptied immediately after use, and securing access to garden areas and similar. It is important that these risks are taken account of not only at their own home, but when visiting and on holiday.
- ❖ **Swimming** – Children and young people should be encouraged to learn to swim and to understand the risks posed by water including making appropriate assessments of the swimming location and their own swimming ability. Swimming should be undertaken in lifeguarded facilities, for example pools, beaches. The rules of the swimming area should be adhered to.
- ❖ **Safety Promotion** – Professionals should promote the above messages when speaking to families about accident prevention as well as using the resources outlined below to help reduce the risk of accidental drowning.

The following organisations' websites provide further resources for families and professionals to help keep safe in and around water including RNLI's water safety events for all ages -

Drowning Prevention Week:

<http://drowningpreventionweek.org.uk/>

RNLI

<https://rnli.org/>

Child Accident Prevention Trust:

<http://www.capt.org.uk/safety-advice/keeping-your-child-safe-drowning>

The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents:

<http://www.rospa.com/leisuresafety/adviceandinformation/watersafety/>

