



A Few Tips For Safe Summer Swimming



By Rontario "Ron" Hicks, Pool Scouts of Huntsville

What better way to keep your family safe than to learn a few tips? Just know that your friends at Pool Scouts have your safety in mind. Pool Scouts of Huntsville understand the importance of safety for family and fun. Rocket City has welcomed Pool Scouts of Huntsville for over three years, and we have performed over 730 services

to families within the Tennessee Valley to maintain a safe and clean pool all year round. One way to keep our families and communities safe is by educating families on pool and water safety. Here at Pool Scouts of Huntsville, May is all about water safety. We start the month with our commitment to providing money for every service we perform to Hope Floats who give out swimming scholarships to children to help to decrease kid drowning within the community. Here are few pool and water safety tips to keep in your toolbox:

According to Upper Valley Aquatic Center, there are ten essential tips to keep your family safe this summer. (www.uvacswim.org)

- **Never swim alone.** - Swimming should only happen when a lifeguard is on duty. Lifeguards don't just watch the people in the pool, lake, or ocean. Their job is also to watch the water and advise swimmers on any safety concerns and questionable conditions that might arise. Lifeguards respond to those in need very quickly.
- **Swimming lessons reduce a child's risk of drowning by 88%.** - A study from the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development found that children who participated in swim lessons had an 88% reduced risk of drowning.
- **Never take your eyes off your child while they are in the water.** Drowning is silent and takes two minutes. A child can drown in less than one inch of water. - **PUT AWAY YOUR PHONE.** We understand that parents need to relax, too. But when your children are in the water, it's time to be alert. As a rule of thumb, a parent should always be within arm's reach of a young child. This rule is valid whether they're swimming in a pool, lake, ocean, or bathtub. Parents of older children should stay close and always keep an eye on their children. Even ones who are strong swimmers need supervision because they're prone to trying tricks, flips, and dives — all things that can be dangerous in the water.

The best way to remain vigilant when your children swim is to put your phone away and enjoy hanging out with each other! If other adults are present, you can take turns watching the pool, so everyone gets an equal chance to relax. Working together to protect your children is the best way to prevent an accident.

- **Only 56% of adults can perform all five basic swimming skills.** A report from the American Red Cross shows that many Americans believe they are better swimmers than they actually are. While 80 percent of Americans said they could swim, only 56% can perform all five basic skills needed to swim safely.
- **The safest place in the water is on your back, floating so you can breathe and call for help.** Floating allows you to stay near the water's surface, where you can rest and take a breath while waiting for help to arrive in an emergency. Floating on your back is one of the first things you learn in swimming lessons.
- **Drowning is the number one cause of accidental death for children between the ages of 1-4.** To reduce the number of drowning deaths and eliminate this statistic, Pool Scouts partnered with Hope Floats Foundation to raise money to assist in providing swim lessons for underprivileged children who may not have an opportunity to learn how to swim.

Pool Scouts has donated over \$58k to the Hope Floats Foundation which provides scholarships to children for swim lessons in our communities, we are honored to partner with Hope Floats and believe we can help save lives in our community.

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- **Floatation devices are never a substitute for supervision.**
- **Learn CPR in case of emergency.** - Contact the Red Cross of Huntsville, Alabama, to learn more about a CPR class, or visit <https://www.redcross.org/take-a-class/scientific-advisory-council> for more details.
- **Don't play breath-holding games.** While swimming, children shouldn't hold their breath for a long time, as this can cause drowning and several other severe risks. Ensure children understand that competing to see who can hold their breath underwater and similar games can be dangerous. They should not be part of any water-related activities if a swimmer holds their breath too long or hyperventilates before going underwater. They are at a 0. higher risk of passing out underwater. Children who swim competitively should learn proper breathing techniques to avoid problems during practices or meets.
- **Don't jump in the water to save a friend: Reach Throw, Don't Go.** - If a child sees their friend struggling to keep their head above water, their first instinct may be to help. However, doing so could lead to both people drowning. The reach, throw, and don't go technique involves using a long object to pull a struggling swimmer to safety. By using this technique, children can help their friends without putting themselves at risk.

Pool Scouts of Huntsville want to ensure you are fully equipped and ready for all your summer activities. Our technicians are happy to provide pool owners with a basic overview of their equipment and upkeep. The scout's team is also available to teach classes about water safety to HOAs and other recreational organizations to decrease childhood drowning within Alabama. Our education highlights that drowning is one of the leading causes of death for children; over 4,000 fatal unintentional drownings across the United States annually (Avg. of 11 drownings per day). Fencing around household pools at home reduces childhood drowning by 83%.

Safety can include year-round pool cleaning, maintenance, pool school 101, and chemical water balancing. You must maintain a cleaning regimen to prepare your pool for belly flops and toe-dipping events. Cleaning your pool is highly recommended at least once a week. Having your pool walls, steps, and floors brushed periodically will remove dirt and debris from your system. Skim your pool surface to remove leaves and other items regularly. It is essential to have your filters checked to ensure the water is circulating correctly. Verifying if your pool chemical balance and PH levels are safe will allow you to enjoy your pool on those sunny days.

Focusing on these tips will decrease bacteria and algae growth for those days of relaxation. Incorporating these simple practices will keep your pool in great shape all year round. Your family will be ready for fun, fun, fun! Your friends at Pool Scouts of Huntsville are here to help you keep your family safe while bathing in the sun.

Pool Scouts is the #1 industry leader in cleaning and equipment maintenance for commercial and residential pools along with specialization in HOA Pools. We provide ongoing, recurring pool cleaning and maintenance to residential and commercial pool owners, giving them back their precious time to enjoy family and friends while leaving the arduous work to us. The principles of Pool Scouts as an industry leader are their certifications, quality of service, advanced technology, text notifications, pre/post service photos & reports, and the Scout's Guarantee. Pool Scouts offer multiple packages that include kick-start services, opening and closing, and weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly services vital to ensuring your pool is swim-ready throughout the summer.

Contact Rontario Hicks with Pool Scouts by phone at the office: 256-863-3727, or on his cell: 256-907-7888

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