

## **DROWNING DEATHS DOUBLE IN SUMMER SPIKE**

While the country melted in our baking spring/summer heat, aquatic spaces turned to packed wonderlands across the country, in an attempt for many Aussies to escape the sunny onslaught.

But unlike other seasons, this one came at a cost to so many more families ...

In the six weeks between December 1 to January 15, there were reportedly 57 drowning fatalities in Australia – 78 per cent of the victims aged under four; that's twice the usual number.

Nearly every day it seemed the news bulletins included a drowning tragedy. On social media, toddler videos scaling pool fences became a regular viral thread, and countless reports of other aquatic accidents where medical care was sought, was just horrifying.

As ASSA CEO, it's evident more than ever, Australians understand the importance of regular swimming lessons; and we applaud that active response. However sadly, we feel some parents may rely on swim skills alone when it comes to water safety. While it's a vital LAYER of Protection, it's only one layer.

Constant adult supervision, having secure fences and gates, and an emergency plan in place - in addition to swimming lessons - will all help in creating a safer swimming environment.

However, while the peak swimming season is now over,

there are many weeks ahead of swimming opportunities, which ill-managed, could further impact the safety of your family.



ASSA urge adults to:

- ✓ **remain alert** and attentive to any swimming children – DO NOT be distracted by smartphones or tablets;
- ✓ **continually check** the integrity of pool fences and gates, and;
- ✓ **ensure furniture** near pool barriers, are removed.

Another safety priority is the continuation of year-round swimming lessons.

ASSA congratulates parents for making this invaluable commitment; an investment towards a lifetime of safer aquatic activity and enjoyment.



Ross Gage - CEO  
Australian Swim  
Schools Association  
(ASSA)

## **SAFER steps for SAFER swimmers**

You may have seen them, but do you know them - do you follow them?

They're called the **SAFER 'Layers of Protection'**; they're ASSA's top-line effective water safety checklist, which we insist should be applied when children are in and around all aquatic environments, to help reduce the risk of drowning tragedies.

SAFER – it's our acronym, and it's also our aim ... while accidents can and do happen, by ensuring you apply the LAYERS, you're helping to reduce the risk.

“  
Swimming skills  
Adult supervision  
Fences and gates  
Emergency Plan  
Reduce the risk.... for  
SAFER swimming.  
”

**Remember the acronym, remember the Layers  
and help build a SAFER nation of swimmers.**



## Top 10 Tips Why Adults Should Swim & Join A Masters Swim Club

By Professor Peter Reaburn

Professor and Head, Exercise and Sports Science Bond Institute of Health and Sport



1. It counts as BOTH cardio and strength training
2. It uses a lot of muscles
3. It doesn't impact our joints
4. It helps our lungs
5. It reduces stress in an ever-increasingly complex world
6. It increases blood flow to the brain
7. It builds self-esteem when we master a stroke
8. It keeps us young
9. It prevents and helps manage age-related chronic disease
10. It gets us outside and meeting people

## Real Stories > Lessons save lives

Jack was four when he walked off a spa step, and plummeted into deep water. He couldn't swim.

Fortunately Jack's Mum - along with his sister - had been supervising. Yet despite being pulled from the pool immediately, Jack was left traumatised; so too was his mother, so they sought immediate swimming lessons.

Several months later, Jack and the family were at a friend's place for a BBQ; in the backyard, was an unfenced, in-ground spa. Jack was immediately concerned over his last spa encounter. However, his mother reassured him of his swimming lesson progression, showed him where the steps and edge were, and said they'd be supervising. Although Jack didn't leave the spa stairs, he had a good time.

Later, everyone left the pool area to clean up. Jack continued kicking the



ball in the backyard - momentarily unsupervised near the spa. Inevitably, the ball bounced into the pool. Suddenly, one of the children yelled out, that Jack had fallen into the spa. Panic stricken, Jack's mum started to run, only to be greeted by Jack, soaked and standing in the lounge room.

"How did you get out?" she asked.

"I held my breath, I opened my eyes and swam to the edge!" Jack said in between sobs. He stopped crying and started to smile ... "I saved myself!"

Sydney, January 2017.

## Make The Most Of Your Family's Swimming Experience



LIKE the ASSA Facebook page [facebook.com/AustralianSwimSchoolsAssociation/](https://www.facebook.com/AustralianSwimSchoolsAssociation/)



DOWNLOAD the ASSA App from the App Store. Search for Australian Swim Schools Association.



SIGN UP FREE for the Swimming Family Membership. Click here <https://australianswimschools.org.au/sign-up/>

## Early Years Swimming Makes Smarter Kids



By Professor Robyn Jorgensen

Head of Education - Equity and Pedagogy University of Canberra.

The four-year 'Early Years Swimming Research' Project, which I headed, showed children achieving many milestones much earlier than the normal population - across areas of physical, cognitive and language development. Such enhanced development has the child better prepared for the transition to school. Key considerations are the quality of teaching and maintaining lessons.

## Hot Tips

**GOGGLEY GOO** - It's not hard to choose the right goggles every time!  
<https://australianswimschools.org.au/swim-schools/vorgee/>

**HOT SUMMER** - Home pool chlorinator advice.  
<http://aiswater.com.au/news/five-top-tips-help-pool-chlorinator-survive-heatwave-conditions>

**BRUCE SULLIVAN - TIPS on Money & Happiness ... is it possible?**  
<https://australianswimschools.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Bruce-Sullivan.pdf>

**THE BUB HUB** - Birthday party advice on bag fillers, entertainment, games & more!  
<https://www.bubhub.com.au/hubbub-blog/tag/kids-parties-knowledge-vault/>

AUSTRALIAN  
**Swim**  
SCHOOLS ASSOCIATION

**NO  
DROWN  
TOWN**