



LIFESAVING SOCIETY

The Lifeguarding Experts

Water Safety Can Be As Easy As “1-2-3”

Summer in Canada is synonymous with water play. Families often spend weekends near waterways in Canada’s many lakes, rivers and beaches. While water season can be enjoyable, it is important to note that each year almost 500 Canadians die in water-related incidents. Many of these victims are young children.

The Lifesaving Society believes that minimum swimming ability is a required skill for survival in Canada’s water-rich environment, and that all Canadians should be able to achieve the Society’s Swim to Survive® Standard.

The Lifesaving Society’s **Swim to Survive** initiative is aimed at providing children with the skills needed to survive an unexpected fall into water. The program focuses on achieving a single skill sequence: roll into deep water, tread water for one minute and swim 50 metres.

1. **Roll into deep water:** The deep-water roll teaches learners to orient themselves at the surface after an unexpected fall.
2. **Tread water for 1 minute:** Canadian waters are generally cold enough year-round to trigger a gasping reflex on unexpected immersion. Treading water teaches learners to support themselves at the surface and protect the airway.
3. **Swim 50 metres:** Lifesaving Society research shows that most drownings occur within three to 15 metres of safety. Because the ability of the learner may be impaired by cold water, clothing etc., there is a 50-metre standard to compensate.

Learning these basic life skills can help prevent tragedies this summer. But this is just the beginning. The Lifesaving Society encourages all parents to enroll their children in lessons at their local pool. All children should learn to swim. Visit <http://www.lifesaving.ca> for more tips on how to stay safe around water.

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