

LIL' IGUANA'S WATER SAFETY 101

A SUMMER PREP GUIDE FOR PARENTS



Featured In:



©Lil' Iguana | "A Safe & Happy Childhood Lasts a Lifetime!"®



KEEPING KIDS SAFE, STRONG & KIND FOR OVER 30 YEARS

Since 1994, the Lil' Iguana's Children's Safety Foundation has been a trusted leader in child safety, well-being, and injury prevention with a mission is to empower children ages 2-10+ with the knowledge and skills they need to make safe, smart, and kind choices in their everyday lives.

Our award-winning prevention programs for home, classroom, and community use a unique music-driven, play-based learning approach to teach children critical life lessons in an engaging and memorable way.

With the help of Lil' Iguana, our friendly and relatable mascot, we break down complex safety topics into fun, interactive, and easy-to-understand lessons that kids can apply in real-life situations.

Covering over 20 essential safety and well-being topics—from Stranger Danger and Helmet Safety to Kindness and Social-Emotional Learning—Lil' Iguana instills life-saving lessons that help kids stay safe, happy, healthy, and kind.

Our interactive programs, digital resources, educational materials have impacted millions of children, parents, educators, and caregivers worldwide.



Award-Winning

Recognized in magazines, TV specials, and awarded for contributions to child safety, Lil' Iguana's success is rooted in proactive education. Lil' Iguana has received numerous awards and accolades for its innovative approach and effectiveness.



Life-Saving

Lil' Iguana's programs & resources have been credited with saving countless children. The lasting impact speaks for itself, from a 3-year-old sharing their "Harm Alarm" to a 16-year-old escaping an offender using "Run, Run, Run, Yell & Tell."



Positive Reviews

Lil' Iguana's award-winning, comprehensive programs and resources have been used by and presented in front of millions of people worldwide.

WELCOME

let's do this!

There's something magical about summer. The days get longer, the sun shines brighter, and kids seem to have endless energy to run, jump, and—most of all—splash.

Whether it's a kiddie pool in the backyard, a community swimming hole, or a family trip to the beach, water play is a huge part of summertime fun.

But with all that fun comes a serious responsibility: **keeping our kids safe around water.**

Drowning is one of the leading causes of accidental injury-related deaths in children—and it can happen in just seconds, even in shallow water.

That's why water safety is more than just a “nice to know”—*it's a need to know.*

For children ages 2 to 10, learning water safety isn't about sitting them down for a lecture. It's about engaging their curious minds and active bodies with repetition, simple language, and hands-on activities that feel like play—not pressure.

At the Lil' Iguana's Children's Safety Foundation, that's exactly how we approach all of our safety and well-being lessons.

Through music, interactive role-play, movement, and positive reinforcement, we make it easy—and fun—for families to talk about tough topics like safety in ways that actually stick.

When kids are part of the learning process, they feel more confident, more empowered, and more likely to remember what to do when it counts.

This summer prep guide is designed to give you a strong starting point. You'll find easy-to-follow tips, conversation starters, and helpful reminders to keep safety front of mind without turning it into a chore.

Whether you're parenting toddlers or tweens, this guide helps you teach the essential skills and habits your child needs to enjoy water safely.

We're so glad you're here. Because when parents feel prepared, kids feel safe—and that's the real magic of summer.

TAKE IT *Step by Step*

**L****T****D****R****L**

THE LESSON

Review the lesson topic and message themes with your child. This step will help you introduce the topic and set the stage for learning. You can use the language provided in the lesson topic or adjust it for your child's needs. Your excitement and enthusiasm for learning will make the lesson engaging and enjoyable for your child.

T

TALK & LISTEN

Once you've introduced the topic, it's essential to talk about it with your child and listen to their thoughts and questions. Encourage your child to share their experiences and feelings related to the topic. This step will help your child understand the lesson's meaning and connect it to their own life. Then, use Lil' Iguana's educational music to reinforce the message and make it more memorable.

D

DEMONSTRATE

Demonstrate the lesson by showing your child "how to," then practice it together. You can use role-playing, demonstrations, or real-life examples to teach your child the skills they need to stay safe and healthy.

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REINFORCE

Reinforce the lesson with worksheets, games, and activities. These materials will help your child practice and apply the skills they've learned. You can find a wide range of resources to download and use on the Lil' Iguana website (liliguanausa.org/water-safety).



Lesson Topic:
WATER SAFETY

EVALUATE YOUR CHILD

Before you begin teaching your child, it's essential to evaluate their current knowledge and understanding of the lesson topic. This pre-evaluation will help you identify areas where your child needs more support and guide your teaching approach.

Place a checkmark in the appropriate evaluation box.

My child...

	NEVER	SOMETIMES	ALWAYS
goes into the water without permission from the adult in charge			
gets permission from the adult in charge before getting into the water. Remember, permission is EYEBALLS, ASK, YES!			
makes a plan with the adult in charge about where they can swim and what they can do			
sticks to the plan that was made and follows to the rules that were set			
listens to the adult in charge around the water, especially when it is time to get out of the water			
wears a life jacket or floaties if needed and always wears sunscreen			



Lesson Topic:
WATER SAFETY

EVALUATE THE LESSON

As part of your child's educational journey, it is important to regularly evaluate their progress and assess their understanding of various lessons and concepts. This evaluation can help you determine if your child has not yet been introduced to a particular lesson, if they need to review and practice a lesson again, or if they have mastered the lesson and are ready to move on to more advanced material. Place a checkmark in the appropriate evaluation box.

Evaluate the importance of...	I haven't talked about this yet	I need to teach this again	My child does this well
getting permission from the adult in charge before going near or in the water			
looking the adult in charge in the eyeballs when asking for permission to get into the water			
making a plan with the adult in charge about where they can swim and what they can do			
sticking to the plan that was made and following to the rules that were set			
listening to the adult in charge around the water, especially when it is time to get out of the water			
wearing a life jacket or floaties if needed and always wearing sunscreen			

Water Safety

THE LESSON



GET PERMISSION

Lil' Iguana says you always need to get permission from the adult in charge before going near or in any kind of water like a lake or a pool. Remember, permission is EYEBALLS, ASK, YES!

TAKE A BUDDY

Once your child gets permission, it is important to take a buddy with them. It is safer to swim with a buddy or in a group. Even the best swimmers need help sometimes so it is good to have a buddy with you.

READ THE RULES

Read the rules together and make sure your child understands what they can and cannot do. Encourage your child to repeat some of the rules back to you in their own words to make sure they understand.

WALK THE AREA

Talk to your child about how deep the water is and where that comes up on their body.

Take a few minutes to walk the perimeter with your child.

Point out:

- Where it's safe to play
- Where it's off-limits or dangerous
- Where you'll be watching from
- Who the lifeguard is, if there is one

SET BOUNDARIES

Set physical boundaries of where and where not they can swim and jump. Also, talk to your child about setting limits for themselves and not pushing their bodies to do something they are too tired to do or shouldn't do.

They should never give into pressure from their peers to do something they aren't ready to do or know they should not do.

WEAR THE GEAR

Practice putting on the lifejacket or floaties before arriving at the water. Help your child get comfortable wearing them. Even if the sun is not out, sunscreen is needed and sun protection like a rash guard and a hat are a good idea.

Water Safety

TALK & LISTEN

**L****T****D****R**

Teaching your child how to be safe near the water and in the water is essential for their safety and well-being.

- Explain to your child that it's important to always get permission from the adult in charge before going near or in the water. This includes the pool, river, lake, ocean, etc.
- Emphasize that your child needs to get permission every time they want to go in the water, even if they have received permission in the past. Each time they get permission, your child needs to make a plan with the adult in charge on where they can swim and what they can do. Children should always play and swim where the adult in charge can see them.
- Explain the buddy system. It is safer to swim with a buddy or in a group. A buddy can be a friend or a family member. Be sure to talk about setting their own limits and listening to their bodies. They should never push themselves to do something they are too tired to do, aren't ready to do, or know is against the rules.
- When you arrive, read the posted rules and make sure your child understands what they can and cannot do. Talk to your child and see if they have any questions.
- Emphasize the importance of wearing the proper gear like a life jacket, sunscreen, rash guard, and hat.

Talk about the lesson and what it means, then scan to listen to Lil' Iguana's song
OUT & ABOUT



Talk about the lesson and what it means, then scan to watch Lil' Iguana's video
GET PERMISSION



Water Safety

DEMONSTRATE



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When it comes to water safety, practicing ahead of time can make all the difference. Children learn best when they see the steps modeled and get the chance to practice them with you.

Start by showing your child how to **get permission** before going near or into the water. Use the simple reminder: *eyeballs, ask, yes!*—look at the adult in charge and make eye contact, ask clearly, and wait for a yes before moving toward the water. Reinforce that they should never go near water or in the water without this step.

Next, involve your child in the prep. Together, make a checklist of what you'll need for the day: a life jacket or floaties, sunscreen, a sunhat, a rash guard or swim shirt, and water shoes if needed. Let your child help pack the bag, and then take a few minutes to practice putting on their safety gear before you even leave home. This helps children get comfortable and confident with using these important tools.

Once you arrive at the water, walk around the area together. Point out safe zones where they can swim or play and clearly identify areas that are off-limits. If there's a lifeguard on duty, introduce them and explain their role. Then, find the posted safety rules and read them aloud together. Pause to ask your child if they have any questions or if anything feels confusing.

This hands-on approach helps children understand boundaries and expectations before they're in the excitement of the moment.

By walking through these steps together, you're helping your child feel more confident, prepared, and safe around water.

Water Safety

DEMONSTRATE



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Examples:

- It's a beautiful sunny day at the beach, and Sarah and Ben are excited to have fun in the sand and water. Sarah and Ben's parents encourage them to play in shaded areas whenever possible, like under beach umbrellas or trees.
 - What should Sarah and Ben be wearing? How often should they reapply sunscreen?
 - They should be wearing sunscreen and sun-protective covers. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours, or sooner after swimming or sweating.
- Your child's friend, Emma, is hosting a pool party for all her friends. Your child is dropped off and you are not there.
 - Who do they get permission from to get in the pool? Do they still need to follow the rules when you are not there?
 - Yes, they should always follow the pool rules to be safe! They need to get permission and make a plan with the adult in charge, like Emma's mom. Even though it might be tempting to "show off," your child should never push themselves to do something they are too tired to do or they know is not right.
- There is a class field trip to the lake. The lifeguard on duty instructs the kids not to run or jump past the dock because it is too deep. All of the other classmates are running off the dock when the lifeguard isn't looking.
 - What should your child do? Does your child join in?
 - Your child knows running on the dock can be wet and slippery. They should try to remind their classmates the rules to help them be safe. If they are uncomfortable, they can talk to a teacher about what is happening.

Water Safety

REINFORCE



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In what ways will I reinforce this lesson?

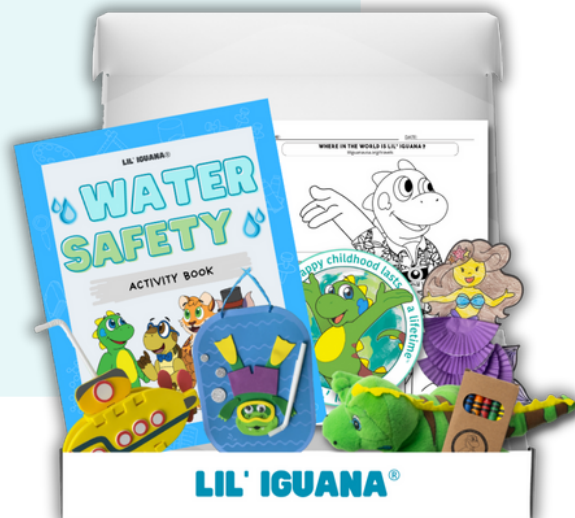
- ☐ Printable Worksheets
- ☐ Lil' Iguana's Music
- ☐ Lil' Iguana's Water Safety Activity Box
- ☐ Lil' Iguana's Lesson Videos
- ☐ Lil' Iguana's Water Safety Workbook

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Visit www.liliguana.org/water-safety to download additional printable activities, crafts, worksheets, and more related to this lesson.

HUNDREDS OF PRINTABLES. ZERO PREP TIME.

Empower Confident & Safe Kids!

With new, ready to use activities added every month and over 500 ready-to-download printables already available, you will have everything you need to **empower safe, healthy, and kind kiddos.**



WORKSHEETS & ACTIVITIES



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PODCAST



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LESSON HUB COVERING OVER
20 SAFETY & WELL-BEING TOPICS

FIRST MONTH
JUST \$1



TO REDEEM

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2. Choose any membership tier
3. Select **Monthly Plan**
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Keep the conversation going

RAISING SAFE KIDS FACEBOOK GROUP

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