# Pool Safely Partner Toolkit

## Messaging

**Please feel free to use these campaign messages when writing about or discussing Pool Safely:**

* *Pool Safely* is a national public education campaign from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC).
* Drowning is the number one cause of unintentional death among children ages 1-4.
* Drownings happen quickly and are often silent – It’s not like in the movies, where children are portrayed as splashing and yelling for help.
* Fatal drownings are preventable, but to prevent these tragedies, we need everyone to always follow simple water safety steps.
* In particular, installing more and even stronger layers of protection is key to prevention.
* One layer of protection is 4-sided fencing with a self-closing, self-latching gate around all pools and spas.
* We must prevent young children from being able to get near the water if an adult isn’t nearby.

## Simple Steps

**Simple steps can save lives and parents and kids should follow these additional simple safety steps:**

* **Designate a Water Watcher:** Watch children every time they are in or around water – supervision is one of the most important things you can do to keep children safe. Designate a Water Watcher – this is an adult whose only job is to watch children when they’re in the pool. It’s important that they’re not distracted by texting or phone calls.
* **Teach Kids to Swim:** While supervision is critical, it’s also important for children to learn how to swim. Kids who can’t swim face a much higher risk of drowning, so sign your children up for swimming lessons. Your local YMCA or parks and rec department are great places to go for information on swimming lessons – many even offer them for free or at a reduced cost.
* **Learn CPR:** While you’re children are learning how to swim, it’s important for you to learn CPR. In the case of an emergency, bystander CPR can often make a real difference while you’re waiting for emergency first responders to arrive at the scene.
* **Check Drain Covers:** Finally, regardless of whether you’re swimming in your home pool or visiting a public pool, be sure that the drain covers are not lose or broken. Drains should be what we call “VGB compliant,” which means they meet safety standards. If you own a pool and you’re not sure if your covers are safe, a pool technician can let you know.

## 2017 Drowning Data & Messaging

* The number of reported fatal child drownings in swimming pools involving children younger than 5 has decreased 17 percent nationwide since 2010, the year that the *Pool Safely* campaign launched.
* Between 2012 and 2014, the majority (77 percent) of reported fatal drowning victims younger than 15 were younger than 5.
* For children younger than 15 years old, more than two-thirds (68 percent) of the reported fatal drowning victims were boys.
* For 2014 through 2016, an estimated average of 5,900 children younger than 15 years old were reported as being treated in hospital emergency rooms for non-fatal drowning injuries in pools or spas.
* Between 2014 and 2016, the majority (74 percent) of children treated in emergency departments for pool- or spa-related, non-fatal drowning injuries were younger than 5 years of age.
* Between 2014 and 2016, residential locations made up 86 percent of fatal reported incidents and at least 55 percent of non-fatal reported drowning incidents for children younger than 5.
* From 2012 through 2016, there were 17 victims of entrapment in 16 incidents, with 82 percent of the incidents involving children younger than 15 years of age (14 victims).
* From those 16 incidents, there were two fatalities, both in residential spas.
* Since the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety went into effect in Dec. 2008, there have been zero entrapment-related deaths involving children in public pools and spas.

## The *Pool Safely* Pledge

* We’re asking every adult and child in America to take the Pool Safely Pledge every year.
* The Pledge is a call-to-action for everyone to commit to specific steps to be safer in and around the water.
  + Kids will pledge to never swim alone, ask for swim lessons and stay away from drains.
  + Adults will pledge to always designate a water watcher, learn CPR, make their kids know how to swim, remove portable pool ladders when not in use and ensure their pools have proper fencing, gates and drain covers.
  + Visit PoolSafely.gov/pledge to electronically sign the Pledge or to request a hard copy.
* We have collected more than 50,000 Pool Safely Pledges from adults and kids nationwide to date, including 14 Olympians!

## Outreach

* The Pool Safely campaign is reaching out to African-American and Hispanic children and their families.
  + Research shows that 64 percent of African American children and 45 percent of Hispanic children have no/low swimming ability.