Bath safety advice for carers of babies and young children

Extensive research suggests baths aids provide false assurance that children are safe.

Key facts about child drowning and bath seats

Unintentional drowning remains an important and avoidable cause of child injury and death.

**In this country:**
- About 13 child deaths (under 5yrs) each year are due to drowning
- 1 in 4 of these drowning deaths occurred in a bath
- For each drowning death there are 8 drowning events serious enough to require hospitalisation
- A child can drown in as little as a few centimetres of water and in as little as two minutes.

Between 2008-12, 9x more child deaths (under 5yrs) occurred while in a bath than in natural (sea, rivers or lakes)

**Babies in infant bath seats have drowned when the:**
- suction cups became loose and the seat tipped over
- baby slipped through a leg opening of the seat
- baby tried to climb out of the bath

A bath seat is **NOT** a safety device.

When giving advice to those with responsibility for caring for infants and young children, avoid assumptions regarding health and safety knowledge. Review basic advice that is given routinely and ensure this includes all areas of known misconception/poor consistency around advice.

**Actions to prevent drowning in baths:**
- never leave young children alone in a bath even for a minute
- keep your baby in sight and within arms reach at all times
- empty the bath after use
- learn simple resuscitation skills

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