

WATER SAFETY

Introduction

There are different types of hazards that young children are exposed to, especially the school going age. Children are mostly affected by hazards such as drowning, flooding, storms and hail storms, bilharzias, lightning and epidemic diseases.

Today we are going to share information on water safety and we concentrating on causes of drowning, preventive measures, and basic rescue methods.



Question: What can happen to these young children?

The common causes of drowning are as follows;

- Crossing flooded rivers/ streams eg by school children, general public and motorists,
- Fishing whilst in water or on loose stones,
- Gold panning done in water,
- Boating
- Attempting to swim in deep waters
- Canoeing without life jackets,
- Attempting to rescue a drowning person can cause multiple drowning,
- Searching for fishing hooks lost in water.

Preventive measures

Some of the preventive measures of drowning are as follows;

- Complete avoidance of getting into dangerous situations,
- Training our children how to swim
- Protection of school children by escorting them to and from school during flooding events. Both teachers and parents were said to be responsible,
- Avoiding crossing flooded rivers and wait until the water subsides,
- Use of life saving equipment eg simple life jackets such as empty plastic containers,
- Use of stick to check the depth of the river / stream instead of using one's feet
- People are encouraged to do fishing in pairs / groups
- Avoid fishing or panning whilst standing in water,

Some tips on drowning

- Do not panic,
- Follow the water current diagonally,
- Head out,
- Shout for help,
- Remove heavy material,
- Wave your shirt or hand so that you are identified,

Rescuing techniques

Rescuing a drowning person is the last resort and you should do everything possible to avoid getting into a dangerous situation in the first place. If you have to make a rescue attempt, think of your own safety first and never put yourself in danger. If the rescue is too dangerous, wait until the emergency services arrive. People are encouraged not to attempt a rescue that is beyond their level of training.

The first step in rescuing a drowning victim is to bring the victim's mouth and nose above the water surface. We have different methods of rescuing drowning victims which are illustrated below.

1. Reach Method

With a long stick, a scarf, clothes or anything else. Crouch or lie down to avoid being pulled in. (Your safety first)



2. Wade

Test the depth with a long stick before wading in and then use the stick to reach out. Hold on to someone else or the bank.



3. Extended Method and Throw

A rope is best - you can then pull the person. Otherwise throw something that will float - a ball, a plastic bottle, this will keep the person afloat until help comes.

