

**On average, 29 child residents of North Carolina die each year.**

**In 2011, 22 child residents of NC died from drowning.**

**The majority of children who drown are between the ages of 1 and 4 years.**

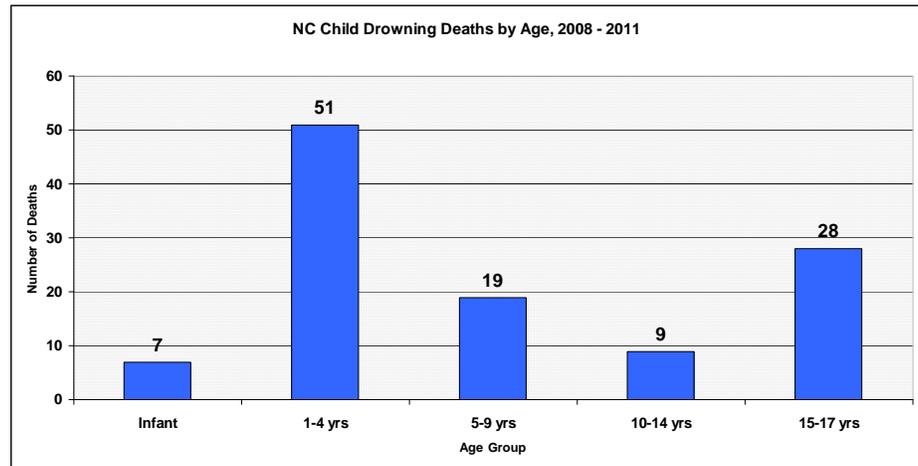
**The three most common locations for drowning deaths of children are pools, lakes/ivers and ponds.**

**T**he North Carolina Child Fatality Prevention Team examines child deaths in order to recognize trends, find gaps in services and identify additional needs that will improve programs, policies and laws to prevent child death. Questions or for more information, contact:

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## Accidental Drowning Deaths of Children in North Carolina: 2011

With a Brief Overview of 2008 – 2011 Data



### An Overview of Drowning Deaths of Children in North Carolina, 2008 – 2011

In the 4 years since 2008, 114 child residents under 18 years of age died from accidental drowning in North Carolina:

- Average 29 deaths each year
- Most deaths between April and August with more than 10 deaths each month; peaking in June with 19 deaths
- Pools (43%), lake and river-type bodies of water (24%) and ponds (17%) accounted for the most drowning deaths
- Majority of children between the ages of 1 and 4 years (45%) followed by teenagers between the ages of 15 and 17 years.
- Males made up the largest number of deaths (79%).
- White children accounted for 52% of the deaths, Black children 25% and children with an unidentified race accounted for 16% of the deaths. Other races accounted for 3 or less deaths each. Thirteen percent were Hispanic.

### 2011 Drowning Deaths

There were 22 drowning deaths of child residents in 2011. This is a decrease from 2010 (35) and the lowest number of drowning deaths in the past four years. As seen in overall data, the 1 to 4 years age group accounted for the majority of deaths followed by the older teenagers. Drowning deaths in pools equaled those of deaths in lakes and rivers.

## 2011 Accidental Drowning Deaths of Children in North Carolina

	Bathtub	Pond	River/Lake	Pool	Total
Infant	0	0	0	1	1
1-4 years	1	2	1	6	10
5-9 years	0	1	0	0	1
10-14 years	0	0	3	0	3
15 - 17 years	1	1	4	1	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22</b>

Table 1. NC Child Drowning Deaths by Age & Location, 2011.

### Pool Drowning Deaths

Six of the 8 pool deaths occurred at residential pools (4 at own home) and 1 death each occurred in a hotel pool and a community pool. Five pools were aboveground and 3 pools were in-ground. Only 1 child was older than 4 years of age. Six children were not participating in a pool-related activity and fell into the pool at the time of the drowning. Fencing, when present, was around the property and not just the pool.

### Drowning Deaths in Other Bodies of Water

Areas that were accessible to people in the community accounted for the majority of deaths in lakes, rivers, ponds and similar bodies of water (8). There were 2 deaths that occurred in bodies of water at the child's residence and 2 deaths which occurred at another residence. Three children were swimming, 2 were fishing and 1 was on a jet ski (1). Two children were trying to cross bodies of water and 2 children were playing near water. Two children were last seen in a residence and found in nearby ponds.

### Swimming Ability, Safety & Supervision

In children 5 years of age and older, 5 children were documented to have little or no swimming ability. The 1 child who was noted to be a good swimmer had a contributing medical condition. When use would have been appropriate, only 1 child was wearing a Personal Flotation Device (PFD). No safety devices were used in any drowning deaths. Both bathtub deaths had contributing medical factors. Older children tended to be with peers (6) while most young children had indirect (2) or had no supervision/wandered away (10) at the time of the drowning.

### Drowning Deaths of Non-Resident Children in NC

State data do not include non-residents. However, it is important to note that there were three children who died from drowning while visiting North Carolina. Two of the children died in pools and one child died in a bathtub as a result of a contributing medical condition.

\*Averages are rounded to the nearest whole number.

\*\*There was one death of a child resident of North Carolina that was excluded from this data due to the injury occurring out of state and the death being a result of an event that occurred several years prior.

The majority of pool deaths occurred in residential pools.

Most of the drowning deaths in pools occurred when the child fell into the pool when unsupervised.

Consistent with previous years, younger children were more likely to drown in pools while older children were more likely to die in lakes and rivers.

Half of the children over the age of 5 who drowned had little or no swimming ability yet were in or around water.

Only 1 child was wearing a PFD while in/around water.

Two of the three drowning deaths of Non-NC residents in 2011 occurred in pools.



State of North Carolina • Department of Health and Human Services • Division of Public Health

NC Child Fatality Prevention Team

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