



Residential Pool Fencing

OVERVIEW

Drowning is the 4th leading cause of injury death for children ages 1 to 19. The majority of drowning deaths of children younger than 5 years-old occur in pools. The installation of 4-sided fencing, that is at least 4-feet tall, with self-closing and self-latching gates to completely isolate the pool from a house and yard is the most studied and effective drowning prevention strategy for the young child. Research shows that 4-sided pool fencing has been proven to prevent 50% of pool drownings for young children. But 3-sided fences, which use a house or other dwelling as a 4th barrier, provide less protection for young children.

Though pool fencing requirements are most often established via local ordinance or building code, some states have enacted legislation setting requirements for homes with residential pools.

AAP POSITION

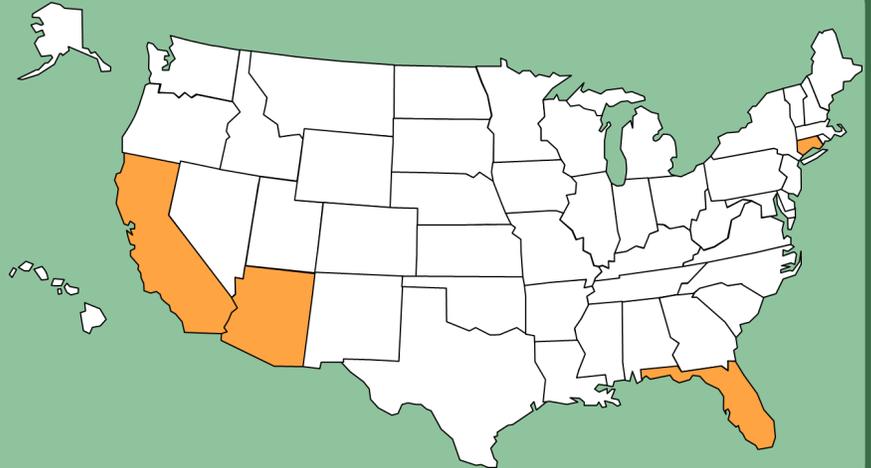
- State and local policymakers should enact legislation or building codes to mandate 4-sided isolation pool fencing for all new and existing residential pools. The 4-sided pool fencing should be at least 4-feet tall, with self-closing and self-latching gates and isolate pools from houses and yards.
- Local governments should inspect and strictly enforce pool fencing requirements.
- Pediatricians should partner with public health and policy leaders to address the issue of childhood drowning by implementing evidence-based interventions.

FACTS

- Drowning is the leading cause of injury death for children ages 1-4. Children ages 12 to 36 months are at the highest risk of drowning.
- More than 4,400 children younger than 5 years old suffered nonfatal drowning injuries and required emergency department treatment.
- The majority of fatal drowning incidents and nonfatal drowning injuries involving victims younger than 5 years of age occur in pools owned by family, friends, or relatives.
- The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) found that 69% of children younger than 5 years old were not expected to be at or in the pool at the time of a drowning incident
- A study from Australia found that the risk of drowning in a pool with a 3-sided fence was almost twice that seen in pools with a 4-sided fence.

PROGRESS

- 4 states—laws requiring that residential pools be enclosed by a 4-sided fence which is at least 4-feet tall and have a self-closing/self-latching gate



For information on current law or pending legislation in your state, please contact AAP State Advocacy at stgov@aap.org

MORE

- [AAP Policy Statement: Prevention of Drowning](https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2019/03/13/peds.2019-0850.full-text.pdf) — <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2019/03/13/peds.2019-0850.full-text.pdf>
- [AAP Technical Report: Prevention of Drowning](https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2010/05/24/peds.2010-1265.full.pdf) — <https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/early/2010/05/24/peds.2010-1265.full.pdf>
- [Consumer Product Safety Commission \(CPSC\): Safety Barrier Guidelines for Residential Pools](https://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/122222/362%20Safety%20Barrier%20Guidelines%20for%20Pools.pdf) — <https://www.cpsc.gov/PageFiles/122222/362%20Safety%20Barrier%20Guidelines%20for%20Pools.pdf>
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\): Drowning Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/safechild/drowning/) — <https://www.cdc.gov/safechild/drowning/>
- [AAP Resources: Water Safety](https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/child_death_review/Pages/Water-Safety.aspx) — https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/child_death_review/Pages/Water-Safety.aspx