

# Safety

NEAR THE

# Water

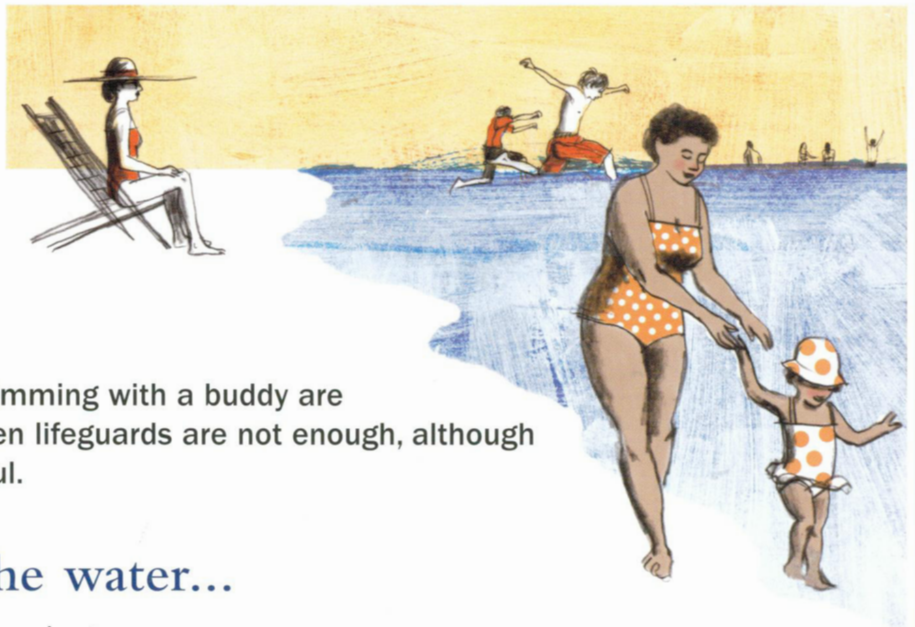
## How children drown — And how to prevent it!

For children ages 1 to 8, drowning is the second most common cause of death from injury.

### When a child drowns, it is quick and silent:

- The child passes out in 2 minutes.
- The child gets permanent brain damage in 4 to 6 minutes.
- The child dies in 10 minutes.

Water wings, swimming lessons, and swimming with a buddy are not enough to protect small children. Even lifeguards are not enough, although all these things are important and helpful.



### So if your child is near the water...

- Never leave them alone, not even for a minute.
- Make sure there is an adult who is a “water watcher” and has nothing else to do except watch the child.
- The water watcher should stay close to the child in case of an emergency.
- The water watcher should just watch: no talking on the cell phone or with friends who are nearby; no reading; no searching for things in their bags.
- Think about how many children one adult can safely watch. If there is more than one child, if the children are toddlers, or if the water area is large – like a lake or the ocean – add more watchers. If you cannot find another adult to be a watcher, make the kids swim in shifts. Do not take risks if you are not sure.
- If your child is going on a swimming field trip, make sure the adults going along know how to be water watchers. Kids over age 5 need to be carefully watched, too!
- Finally, kids who cannot swim should be within an arm’s reach of an adult all the time. It does not matter how old they are.