



Top 10 Beach and Ocean Safety Tips For Kids (and Their Families!)

There's nothing better than a day at the beach. The sun, the surf...what could be more fun? However, no environment is risk free. The ocean is powerful and unpredictable, and without the proper safety precautions our local beaches can be dangerous. All of us at Aloha Beach Camp Summer Day Camp want you and your family to enjoy the beach this summer, but always with the utmost safety and caution. Our camp counselors specialize in facilitating safe summer beach camp experiences for kids and teens throughout the Los Angeles area. If you are a parent, please review this info with your kids before you visit the beach this summer.

1. LEARN TO SWIM

The ocean is powerful and can be difficult to navigate. Do not enter the ocean unless you know how to swim. Similarly, never rely on flotation devices like rafts or boogie boards in place of actual swimming ability. If you fall off the flotation device, but you don't know how to swim, you could panic and have difficulty retrieving your flotation device. Drownings can happen this way.

2. SWIM NEAR A LIFEGUARD

The numbers don't lie. According to the United States Lifeguarding Association (USLA), the odds of drowning at a public beach are nearly five times as great without lifeguard supervision. The risk of drowning at a lifeguard-protected beach is nearly nonexistent – 18,000,000 to 1 – with lifeguard protection. Always swim near an open lifeguard tower. No lifeguard? No swimming!

3. PROTECT YOUR HEAD AND NECK

Never dive into the ocean headfirst – it's a leading cause of head and neck injuries. Always enter the ocean feet first, and when you are boogie/body boarding, keep your hands out in front to protect your head and neck.

4. NEVER SWIM ALONE

Safety in numbers? You bet! Always swim with a buddy and never swim alone, because many drownings involve single swimmers. If you ever get lost or separated from your buddy, tell the lifeguard immediately.

5. NEVER TURN YOUR BACK ON THE OCEAN

Even the smallest wave can knock you over and cause injury, especially if you are caught by surprise. Always face forward and never turn your back on the ocean.

6. LEARN ABOUT RIP CURRENTS AND HOW TO GET OUT OF THEM

Ever notice that "muddy" ocean water appearance flowing away from the shore? Chances are, that's a rip current. Most lifeguard rescues are due to people getting caught in rip currents. Even the strongest swimmers get caught in them. They are dangerous because they pull you away from the beach into deeper water. To get out of a rip current, do not fight the current by trying to swim to shore. Instead, swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the current. Then you can swim safely back to the beach.

7. AVOID DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Alcohol and drugs can impair your judgment. Under their influence you might take unnecessary risks you otherwise would not. Alcohol, which can lower your body temperature and weaken your swimming ability, plays a significant role in many drownings.

8. OBEY ALL POSTED WARNING SIGNS AND FLAGS

Signs and flags alert you to ocean safety conditions. For clarification about what they mean, ask a lifeguard.

9. BEWARE OF TRASH AND BROKEN GLASS

Your bare feet are perfect targets for broken glass and other trash all over the beach. Walk gingerly and beware of these and other hazards. It is best to keep your shoes on while walking between your car and the area of the beach you set up.

10. DON'T FORGET THE SUNSCREEN!

Sunscreen protects you and your family from harmful UVA and UVB rays that can lead to sunburn and skin cancer. It should be applied several times during your day at the beach, especially after spending time in the water.

