TOP 10 BEACH & 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? But no environment is risk free. The ocean is powerful and unpredictable, and without proper safety precautions our local beaches can be dangerous. All of us at Aloha Beach Camp want you and your family to enjoy the beach this summer, but with the utmost safety and caution. Our camp specializes in facilitating safe and fun summer beach camp experiences for kids and teens throughout Los Angeles. If you're a parent, please review this info with your kids before visiting the beach this summer.

1. Learn to Swim. The ocean is powerful and can be difficult to navigate. Never enter the ocean unless you know how to swim, and don't rely on flotation devices like rafts or boogie boards instead of actual swimming ability. If you fall off the floatation device but can't swim, you might panic and have trouble finding it. Drownings can happen this way.

2. Swim Near a Lifeguard. According to the United States Lifeguarding Association, the odds of drowning at a public beach are nearly 5 times greater without lifeguard supervision. But the risk of drowning at a lifeguard-supervised beach is nearly nonexistent – 18,000,000 to 1. 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 boogie/bodyboarding keep your hands out in front to protect your head/neck.

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

5. 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.

6. Never Turn Your Back on the Ocean. Even the smallest wave can knock you over and cause injury, especially if caught by surprise. Always face forward and never turn your back on the ocean.

7. 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 them. Rips are dangerous because they pull you away from the beach into deeper water. To get out of a rip current, don't fight the current by trying to swim to shore. Instead, swim parallel to the shore until you're out of the current. Then you can swim safely back to shore.

8. Avoid Drugs and Alcohol. Alcohol and drugs can impair your judgment. Under their influence you might take unnecessary risks you otherwise wouldn't. Alcohol can lower your body temperature, weaken your swimming ability, and plays a big role in many drownings.

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's best to keep your shoes on while walking between your car and the beach area you set up.

10. Don't Forget the Sunscreen! Sunscreen protects you from harmful ultraviolet 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.