

# Teach your child how to float with a PFD!

Floating in a calm, “face-up” position is not something that comes naturally to children. Before going boating, teach your child how to float safely in a pool or shallow water where the child cannot touch bottom. Specifically, you should:

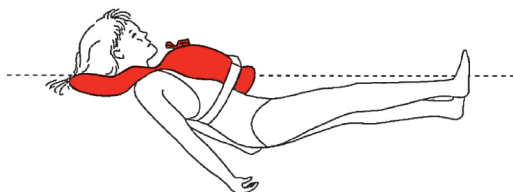
- 1** Teach your child to be calm in the water. Children sometimes panic when they enter the water. This causes them to move their arms and legs frantically, making it difficult for them to float safely with a PFD.
- 2** Teach your child to float on his/her back with arms and legs in the water and head back, face out of the water (see the figure below). The height and weight distribution of some young children makes them “top-heavy,” causing them to tip in the water until they learn to float in a calm, “face-up” position.
- 3** Teach your child to turn to a “face-up” position from a “face-down” position. Have your child practice turning himself/herself until you are certain that he/she can turn to a “face-up” position consistently and reliably.

If your child cannot turn to and maintain a relaxed, “face-up” floating position after getting used to wearing a PFD, try another style or type of PFD.

*Floating “face-up” using  
a Type III-style PFD*



*Floating “face-up” using  
a Type I- or Type II-style  
PFD*



## MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD WEARS A PFD AT ALL TIMES!

Federal law requires that children under the age of 13 wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved PFD when boating. Make sure your child always wears a PFD when on a boat or near the water. Check state and local laws for other requirements. Children often imitate their parents’ behavior, so it is a good idea to set an example for your child by wearing your own PFD.

**You can help prevent child drownings by having your child wear the right PFD and teaching them to use it properly. A PFD is not a substitute for adult supervision — NEVER leave a child unattended in or near the water.**

# IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT CHILDREN'S PFDs

**⚠️ WARNING** To reduce the risk of drowning, read and follow the information **1** in this tag, **2** in the label on your Personal Flotation Device (PFD), **3** in the "Think Safe" pamphlet.

## Select the Right PFD for your Child!

When choosing a PFD for your child, understand that different types of PFDs have various strengths and limitations, including:

TYPE	FIT	USE CONDITIONS
Type I PFDs	Unless a hybrid*, more bulky and less comfortable than either Type II or Type III PFDs.	Type I PFDs have the <u>greatest ability</u> to turn a child "face-up".
Type II PFDs	Typically comfortable, but more bulky than Type III PFDs.	Type II PFDs will turn only <u>some</u> children to a "face-up" position.
Type III PFDs	Least bulky and most comfortable for continuous wear.	Type III PFDs are NOT designed to turn a child "face-up" in the water. They provide good support to children with some swimming skills.
Type V PFDs	May be a substitute for a Type I, II or III (as marked on PFD Label).	Examples are Type V swimwear PFDs with Type III performance that provide enhanced wearability.

*\*Hybrid devices may combine improved comfort with enhanced in-water performance*

A "face-up" position is one where the child is floating calmly on his/her back with arms and legs in the water and head back, with face out of the water (see the other side of this tag for more information about teaching your child to float safely in water). The ability of a PFD to turn a child "face-up" is affected by:

- your child's height and weight distribution,
- the type of PFD you select,
- the ability of your child to remain calm in the water, and
- the ability of your conscious child to turn himself/herself face-up.

## Make sure your child's PFD fits properly!

Select a PFD that fits your child based on his/her weight, and any other sizing on the PFD, such as chest size. Make sure your child's weight is within the range marked on the PFD. The PFD should fit snugly, but not too tightly. Do not buy a PFD that your child will "grow into".

Have your child try on the PFD and test its fit by lifting the child up by the shoulders of the PFD - the PFD is too large if it slips up over the child's chin or ears. Always use leg straps, if provided, to keep PFD securely in place.

PFD SIZE	WEIGHT RANGE	APPROXIMATE CHEST SIZE
Youth	50 to 90 lbs. (23 to 41 kg)	26" - 29" (66 - 74 cm)
Child	30 to 50 lbs. (14 to 23 kg)	20" - 25" (51 - 64 cm)
Infant	Less than 30 lbs. (14 kg)	16" - 20" (41 - 51 cm)