

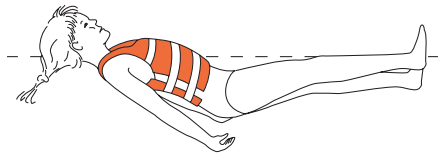
Teach your child how to float with a PFD!

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:

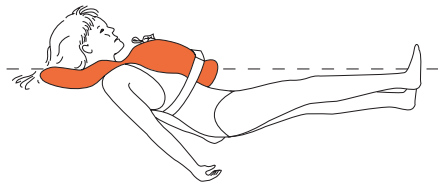
- 1** Teach your child to be calm in the water. Children sometimes panic when they enter the water. This causes them to move their arms and legs frantically, making it difficult for them to float safely with a PFD.
- 2** Teach your child to float on his/her back with arms and legs in the water and head 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.