

**Background** Effective pool fencing legislation is a cornerstone of child drowning prevention, but can Australia improve further?

**Aims/Objective/Purpose**

- A) Estimate the prevalence of swimming pools per 100 households and children under 5 years per household swimming pool in Queensland.
- B) Explore perceptions regarding effectiveness of updated pool fencing legislation in Queensland.

**Methods** Data from the 2011 Queensland Social Survey (QSS)—were used and additional questions asked were: ‘How many children under the age of 5 years reside at your residence?’; ‘Do you have a swimming pool at your residence?’; ‘How effective do you think that tightening the pool fencing legislation will be in reducing child drowning deaths?’

**Results/Outcome** There were 1265 respondents (response rate=32%). 26 per 100 households had a swimming pool. 11.4% of households with a pool also had children under 5 years. 57% of respondents believed tightening pool fencing legislation would be effective in reducing child drowning deaths (22% ‘very effective’ 35% ‘effective’), 40% of respondents were either unsure or doubtful. Pool owners were significantly more likely to doubt the effectiveness of tightening the legislation. Perceptions of effectiveness of the legislation did not differ as a function of the presence of children under 5 years ( $p>0.5$ ).

**Significance/Contribution to the Field** Between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2011 there were fourteen children who drowned in home swimming pools in Queensland, a rate of 1.7 per 10 000 home swimming pools per annum. Pool owners were less likely to think that tightening the legislation would be effective.