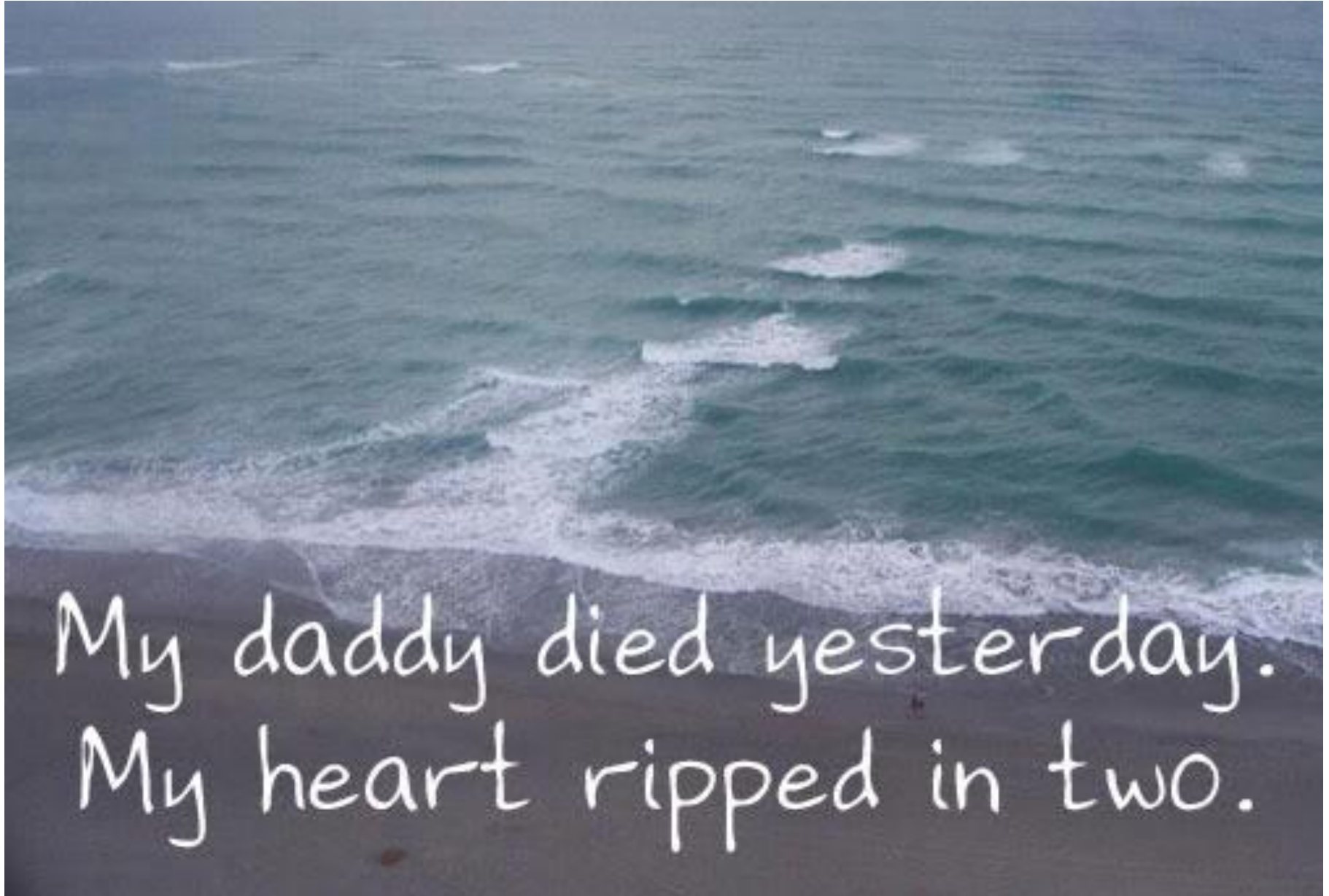


# Break the Grip of the Rip!



# Deadlier than a Tsunami



My daddy died yesterday.  
My heart ripped in two.

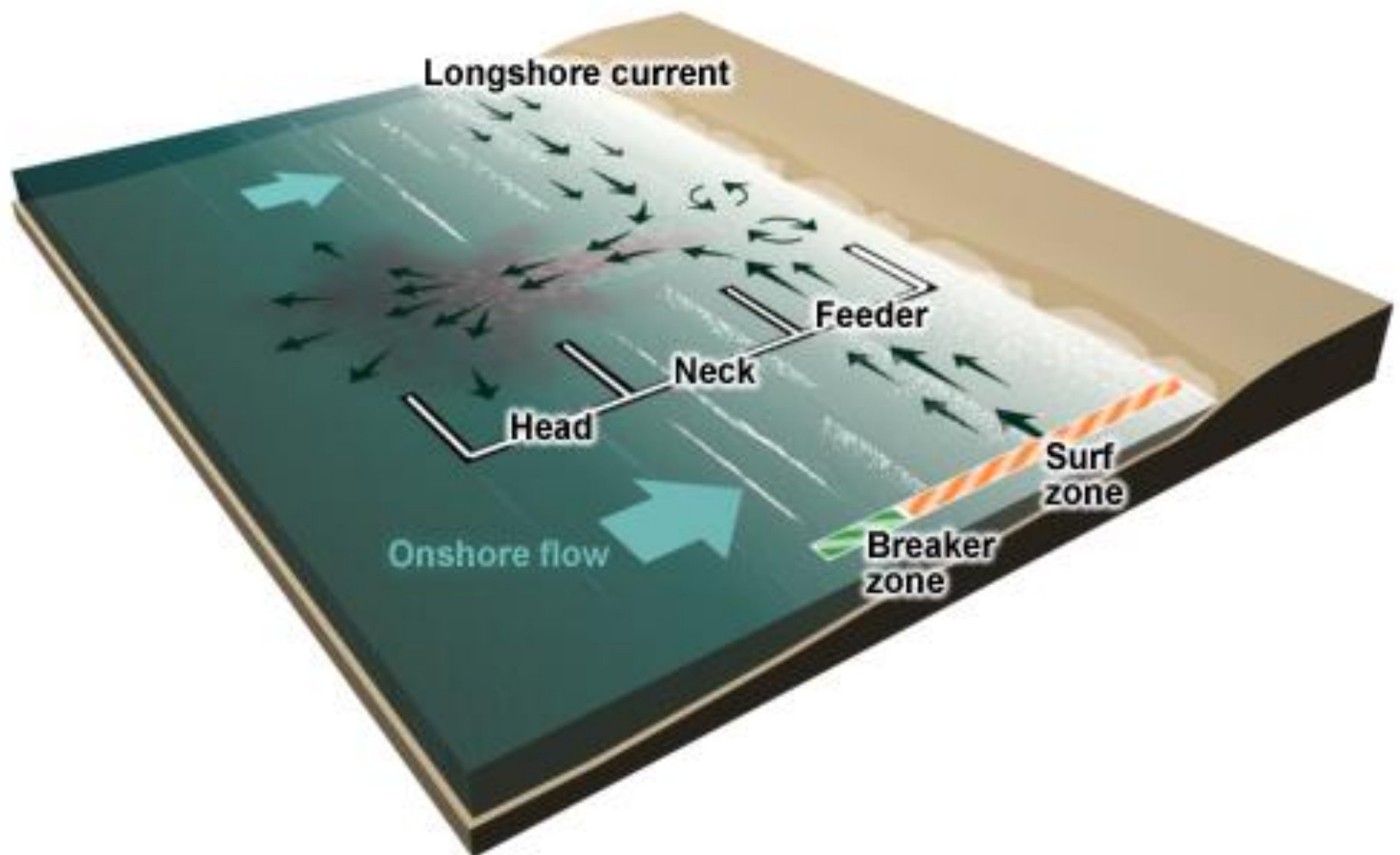
**One minute here next minute gone**

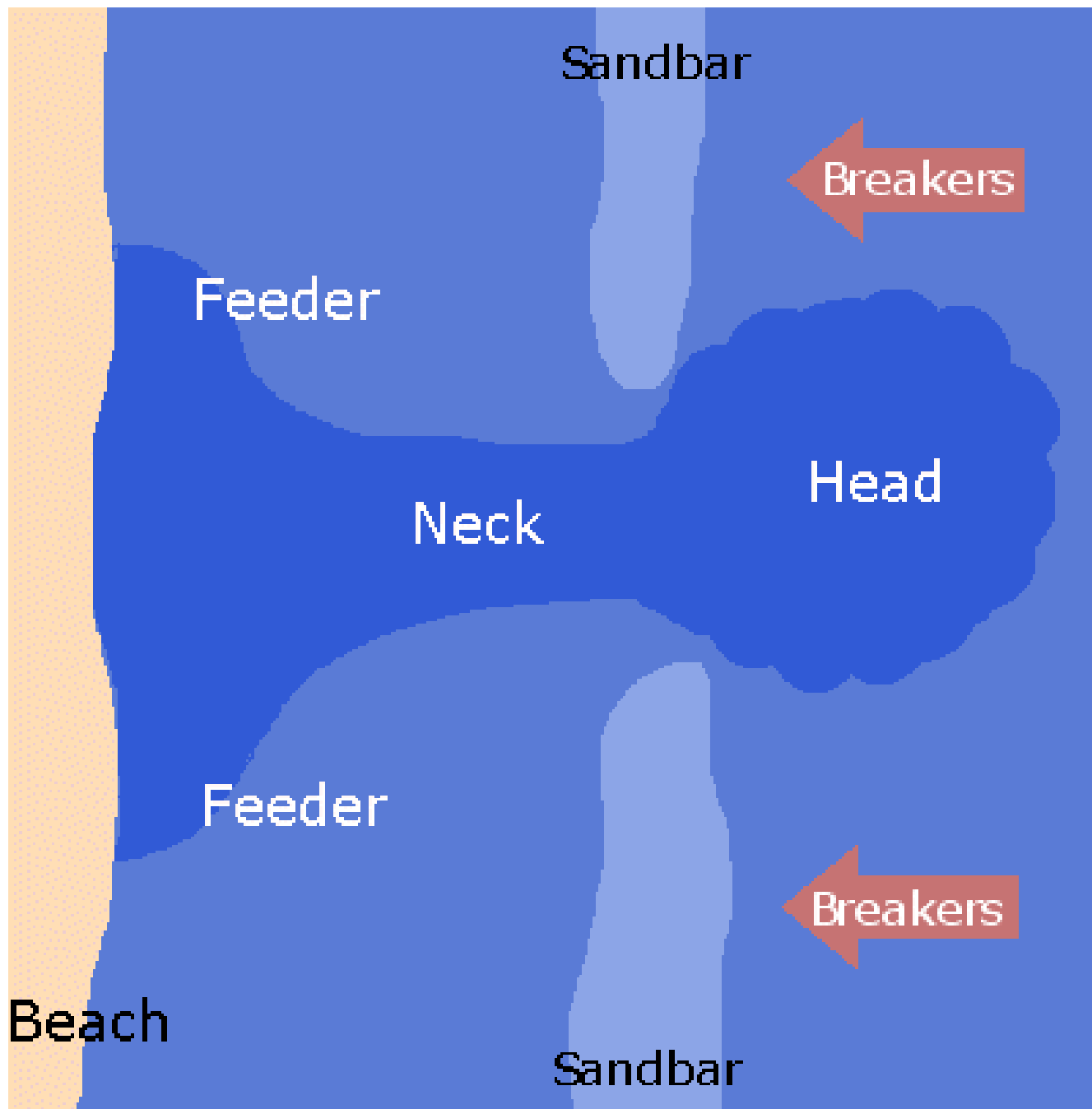


# What is a Rip Current?

- Rips are able to develop anywhere there are breaking waves, these “rivers” of current produced by water draining from the beach and back out to sea happen all the time.
- Often rips move slow enough to barely be detected. But given the right circumstances of waves and beach profile, they can develop into currents moving at speeds of up to 2 metres per second – faster than any of us can swim. Ranging in size from just a few feet to hundreds of yards, their pull can be to just outside the breaking waves to over two hundred metres from shore.

## Rip Current Structure





# Worldwide 500,000 Drowning Incidents a Year





Rip currents typically occupy deep channels between sandbars. Wave breaking is therefore reduced and the water appears calm.

A lack of knowledge regarding rip currents and identification appear to be risk factors for coastal drowning.

Consequently, people unfamiliar with rip currents often choose to enter the water where there is a rip current, unaware of the danger, citing that “calm water means it is safe to swim”.

*Ballantyne R, Carr N, Hughes K. Between the flags; an assessment of domestic and international university students knowledge of beach safety in Australia, Tourism Man 2005; 26(4): 617-22*



# What do rip currents look like?

- The picture on the next slide shows very clearly what rip currents look like. The water flows in towards the beach over shallow water or sandbanks (The water is a lighter colour and waves break evenly over these areas) and to get back out to sea it often forms a rip or “river” of water between two sand banks (waves seldom break in a rip and the water is darker green because it is deeper).
- Rip currents claim the lives of many people each year.



# Rip Current at Nature's Valley



# Rip Current and Surfer



Delaware Sea Grant

# How to spot a rip current

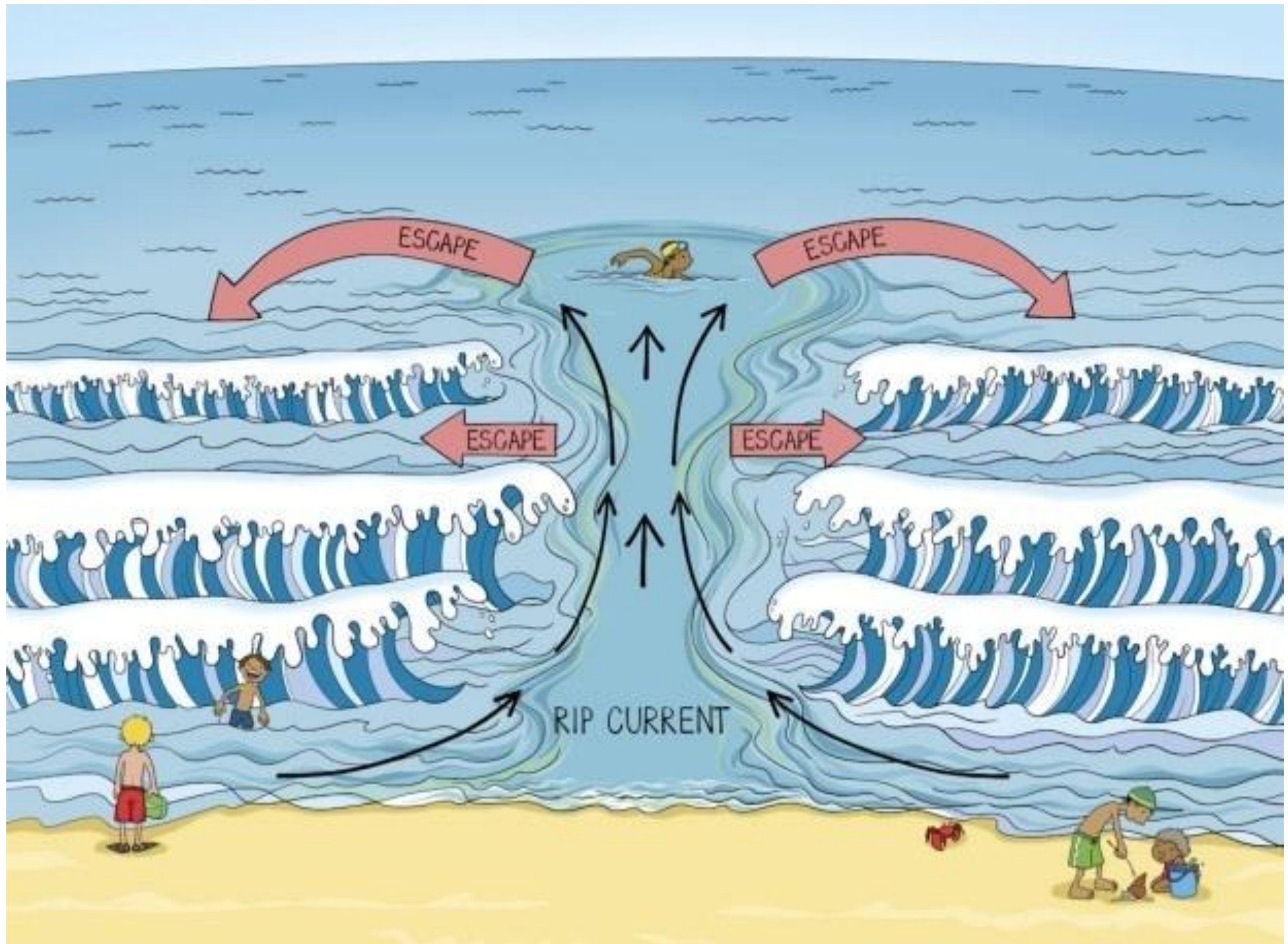
- As with all risks, avoiding rips altogether is safest. Though not always visually detectable – stronger rip currents can give off some telltale signs.
- Water through a surf zone that is a different colour than the surrounding water
- A break in the incoming pattern of waves
- Seaweed or debris moving out through the surf zone
- Isolated turbulent and choppy water in the surf zone
- Often the best resource to help you avoid rip currents, not surprisingly, are the lifesavers.
- Swim only where lifesavers are on duty, and if they are not on duty do not go deeper than your knee.

# Darker colours are rip currents



# If avoidance fails

- If you are caught in a rip current the primary thing to do is to stay calm and relax. You are not going to win a fight with the ocean. Swim slowly and conservatively parallel to the shoreline or relax and let it carry you out past the breakers until it slacks.
- Contrary to myth rip currents are not “undertow,” which a misleading term. They will not pull you under the water. So long as you can tread water or float you will be safe until you can escape the flow and head back to the beach. When you head back in, do so at an angle to the shoreline. Again, maintain a slow and relaxed pace until you reach the shore or assistance arrives. If you are swimming at a beach where lifesavers are on duty, and you should be, they will most likely have seen you and will be on their way out to help (or be watching carefully).



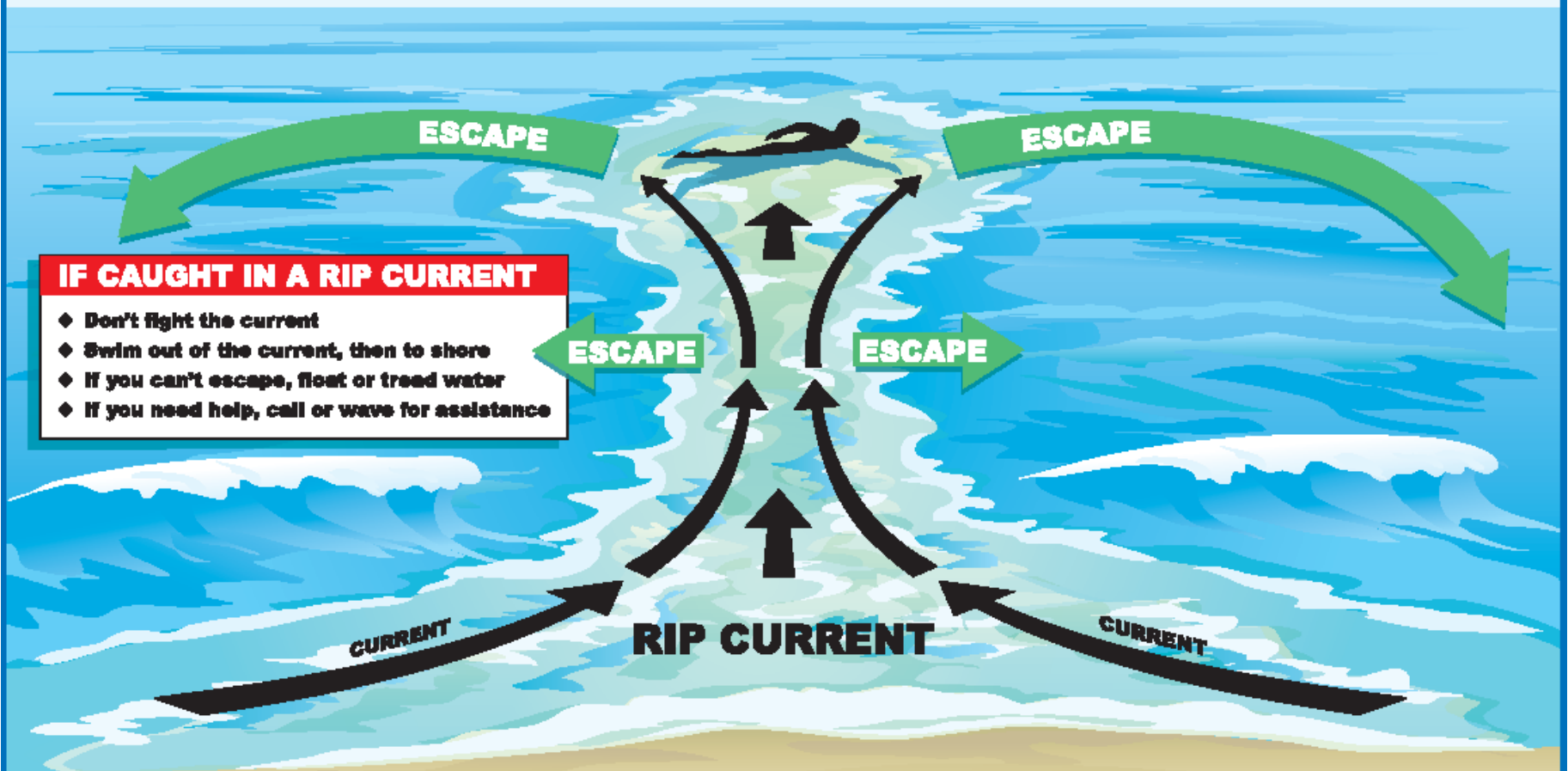


# Safety Tips

- **NEVER** swim alone
- Discuss rip currents and how to deal with them with your children
- Swim only on beaches where lifesavers are on duty
- Make sure that your local Sea Rescue telephone number is on your phone
- Wherever there are rip currents encourage your local municipality to put up warning signs

# Rip Current Poster

## RIP CURRENTS Break the Grip of the Rip!



### IF CAUGHT IN A RIP CURRENT

- ◆ Don't fight the current
- ◆ Swim out of the current, then to shore
- ◆ If you can't escape, float or tread water
- ◆ If you need help, call or wave for assistance

Rip currents are powerful currents of water moving away from shore. They can sweep even the strongest swimmer out to sea.



**DANGER**



**RIP  
CURRENTS**

危险的 逐潮流  
*Corrientes Peligrosas*  
Опасно! Опасные течения!

**PEOPLE SWIMMING  
AND WADING HAVE  
DROWNED HERE**

**EMERGENCY: 911**

**NO  
SWIMMING  
HERE**