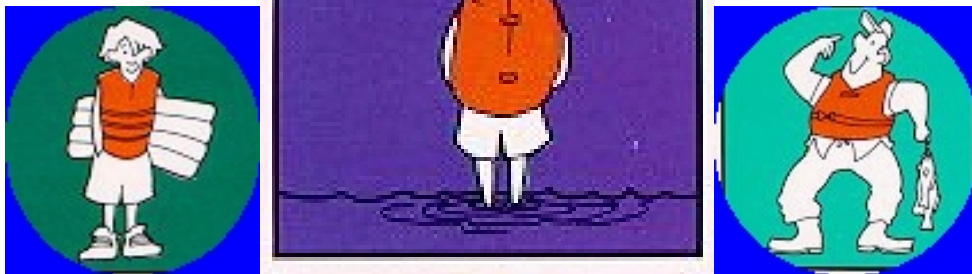




**US Army Corps  
of Engineers®**

# **WATER SAFETY RESOURCE GUIDE**



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# **Interpretive Activities**

## **“Captain Alcohol”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Alcohol and water safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 3rd Grade – Adult

**TIME:** Approximately 20 minutes

**THEME:** Alcohol and boating can be a deadly combination.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Members of the audience will understand that they should never consume alcoholic beverages or do drugs when partaking in water-based recreational activities.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** To make the visitor aware of the fact that alcohol can affect their thought process, reaction time, and coordination.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Remind the audience that alcohol was involved in at least half of the boating related fatalities nationally.
- B. Tell the audience that alcohol consumption slows down reaction time, affects vision and dexterity, and dulls the thinking process. Also remind the audience of any statistics on the local level that relates to the use of alcohol and drowning.
- C. Set up 1-2 chairs representing the boat.
- D. Select a good natured volunteer from the audience. It is recommended that you request a volunteer that does not have any health problems such as asthma, as they will be portraying several simulated effects of drinking too much alcohol. You could also select a second volunteer who will remain sober throughout the demonstration. They can assist you with the props for the other person.
- E. Hand the one volunteer a can of beer (soda can marked as beer), and have them sit down in the “boat.” Start explaining the effects that alcohol has on a person as they continue to “drink.”
- F. Place a hat on the volunteer’s head to represent the effect on the thought process/judgement. The person no longer has the ability to think clearly, and may take chances they would not take when sober. Anticipation, sense of judgement, and caution slowly slip away.
- G. Next, place a pair of sunglasses, tinted safety goggles, goggles, or a diver’s mask over the volunteer’s eyes. Explain that alcohol consumption can affect vision by reducing the person’s ability to see to his or her sides (peripheral vision), which leads to tunnel vision.
- H. If using a diver’s mask, place a piece of clear lamination over the front of the mask. Then mark the lamination with red and green magic markers. This is done to represent how alcohol can actually take away the person’s ability to clearly distinguish colors. The colors red and green are very important on the lake, as they are on the highways. When boating at night or during times of reduced visibility, the running lights on the boat should be turned on. The

front (or bow) of the boat has a red and green light on. The red light marks the port or left side of the boat, and the green light marks the right or starboard side of the boat. These lights tell you from which direction another boat may be approaching your boat. This is very important to know, so as to avoid collisions. At night, red can easily be mistaken for green when under the influence of alcohol.

- I. You will then place headphones over the volunteer's ears, thus restricting his or her hearing ability. When under the influence of alcohol, a person may not hear what is going on around them, they are not paying attention - they are off in their own little world.
- J. Next place a pair of gloves on the volunteer's hands to represent the loss of dexterity.
- K. This is followed with weights that are placed on the volunteer's wrists to show not only loss of coordination or dexterity, but also how ones movements and reactions are slowed down; they begin to feel tired.
- L. The presenter and the second volunteer (the one that remained sober) can assist the "drunk" volunteer into the all-in-one suit and the pair of boots (optional), which represents how the consumption of alcohol can affect coordination. When coordination suffers, the brain's commands cannot be properly executed.
- M. At this point, explain once again that the various items have been placed on the volunteer to demonstrate through a step-by-step process how alcohol can effect a person as he or she continues to drink. The combination of the sun, wind, water, and motion of the boat intensifies the effects of alcohol. Place two life jackets on the floor near the volunteers. Create a story of how they ended up in the water, and instruct the volunteers to put their life jackets on. Give the volunteers sixty seconds to do this. Very rarely is the "drunk" person successful in getting the life jacket on correctly.
- N. Explain that an intoxicated person is usually disoriented and may actually swim towards the lake bottom, instead of towards the top and possible safety. Also, they actually have less than sixty seconds to survive after falling overboard-becoming a statistic.
- O. Compare the two volunteers to one another. How much time did it take the sober volunteer to put his/her life jacket on as opposed to the "drunk" volunteer? Did both of them survive? Involve the audience in this discussion.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Two chairs, hat, pair of sun glasses (goggles, safety glasses, or diving mask will also work), gloves, wrist weights, all-in-one-suit (coveralls, Coast Guard approved work suit), 2 life jackets, and boots. Lamination and red and green markers are optional, as are the boots.

## “Cold Hand Luke”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Dangers of cold water/ice

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 3rd-6th Grades

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**THEME:** Cold water can kill you faster than you may realize

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To make the students aware of the dangers of cold water.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. To teach the audience what to do if they find themselves in a cold water situation.
- B. Create an awareness of just how important it is to wear a life jacket or personal flotation device (PFD) when around cold water, but that alone will not save your life.
- C. The audience will be able to name two methods of conserving body heat when in a cold water situation.

**DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Fill a large bucket or clear, plastic, watertight container with cold water and ice. Place the bucket or container on a table.
- B. Remind the audience that cold water conducts heat away from the body 25-30 times faster than air at the same temperature.
- C. Stearns Manufacturing Company “rule of fifty” states that “in water of 50 degrees Fahrenheit, you have a 50-50 chance of surviving beyond 50 minutes without a protective life jacket or PFD.
- D. Remind the audience that movement, such as swimming, will cause their body to cool down faster. The movement is causing the victim’s heart to work faster in order to pump blood into the extremities. This causes the internal organs to cool down, which speeds up the effects of hypothermia. It is best to stay with the boat.
- E. Tell the audience about the H.E.L.P. (Heat Escape Lessening Posture) and huddle positions that can be used to conserve body heat.
- F. Drop loose change or washers into the bucket of water.
- G. Select a volunteer from the audience to participate in the activity.
- H. Ask the volunteer to remove any jewelry (rings, watches, bracelets) he or she may be wearing on their hands or wrists. The volunteer will then place either one or both of their hand(s) in the water. Instruct the volunteer to hold their hand(s) in the water for a period of time (no longer than three minutes), and then try to pick up the loose change from the bottom of the bucket. They should do so without removing their hands from the bucket each time they pick up a piece of change.

- I. The presenter can point out the decreased dexterity, white or red skin, numbness, and weak pulse of the exposed arm(s) caused by only a few minutes in cold water.
- J. Point out how difficult it would be to try to put on a life jacket if your entire body was immersed in water this cold. It would be nearly impossible due to the loss of dexterity, among other things.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Bucket or a clear plastic watertight container, ice, change or washers, towel, and table.

## **“Color Me Safe”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Safety while swimming

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Grades K - 5

**TIME:** 30 -40 minutes

**THEME:** It's important that you play it safe while swimming.

**GOAL:** Participants will be motivated to practice water safety principles while swimming.

**OBJECTIVE:** Participants will only swim in safe areas and will never swim alone.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

A. Have the participants draw a picture and color it.

1. Start out by having them draw a picture of a beach.

2. Then have them draw things that they would find on a beach.

3. Then have them draw themselves and how they play it safe while swimming.

4. After they are all done ask if everyone is swimming with a buddy in their picture. If not, have them add a buddy to their picture.

5. You can ask other things also like if someone is in trouble in the water how can you help them. Explain reach, throw, row, don't go. Then ask if anyone has things on their beach that could be used to reach with, throw, or row. If they don't have anything to reach with, throw, or row then have them add something to their picture.

### **SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:**

Paper

Something to draw and color with; crayons, markers, pencils, etc.



## “Cry For Help”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Drowning profile demonstrating crying for help

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Elementary students (1st-5th), Adults

**TIME:** 10-15 minutes

**THEME:** The actions of a drowning person may surprise you.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will realize a drowning person cannot call for help.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to identify the four signs of a drowning victim

**DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Choose a willing volunteer from the audience.
- B. Using the volunteer, begin the simulation by showing the “instinctive drowning response.” Extend the arms laterally or to the front pushing down on the water. Gently extend the victims head and neck back, with the mouth wide open.
- C. Ask the volunteer to open their mouth as wide as possible (like they are going to swallow an apple!), and take in a big breath of air, while still flapping their arms laterally.
- D. **AT THE SAME TIME THAT THEY ARE BREATHING IN AIR**, and while continually moving their arms up and down, ask that they shout, “HELP.”
- E. If done properly, the volunteer will only register a weak call, barely audible to someone in the back of the classroom. **PROGRAM NOTE:** About this time in the simulation, laughter breaks out and usually the whole class tries to do it.
- F. Explain to the class that it is practically impossible for a true drowning victim to shout for help, because there is not a sufficient air supply to do so!
- G. Review the four signs of a drowning victim 1. Head back 2. Mouth open 3. Arms moving up and down slapping the water 4. No sound

**SUGGESTED MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT:** View Frank Pia’s video “The Reasons People Drown,” could be viewed prior to doing the drowning profile simulation.

## “Find a Float”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Safe methods of water rescue

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 3rd Grade – Adult

**TIME:** 10-20 minutes

**THEME:** You may become a drowning victim if you enter the water to rescue someone

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To make the audience aware of the various methods of water rescue they can use without placing themselves in danger.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. The audience will be able to identify methods they can use to safely rescue someone.
- B. The audience will realize they should not attempt to rescue a person, unless they are a certified lifeguard, properly trained and equipped.

**DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Remind members of the audience that drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death for people 0-44 years of age, and that most drowning victims knew how to swim. Inform them that a significant number of people drown within ten feet of safety.
- B. Establish a small area as a body of water.
- C. Select a volunteer from the audience, and have him/her lay or sit down in the “body of water,” and act like he/she is having problems and cannot make it back to shore.
- D. Lay several potential rescue items on the floor near the “water.” Items could include a cooler, boat paddle or oar, towel, water ski, fishing rod, tree branch, type IV throwable device, etc.
- E. Select enough volunteers from the audience to equal the props being used.
- F. Have some of them demonstrate how they can safely rescue the person by reaching one of the items out to them (towel, water ski, etc.).
- G. Next have the volunteers demonstrate how they can rescue the victim by throwing an item to them (clarify that the item they use should float!).
- H. The presenter should then discuss the next step - “Reach, throw, **row...**” Ask or have a volunteer demonstrate how the victim could be safely rescued by rowing.
- I. Reach, throw, **Don’t Go!** Explain why a person should never actually go in the water to rescue a person in trouble. Tell them that several double and triple drownings have occurred because a would be rescuer entered the water to execute a rescue that should only be performed when that person has the proper training and rescue equipment available. The best thing an untrained person can do is call for help.

- J. At the conclusion of the simulation, discuss the different rescue techniques that were used. Emphasize that a drowning victim could be rescued using ordinary items that are usually present at a picnic or beach setting. Once again point out that they should never place themselves in danger, as they will be no help to the victim and they also may end up in trouble!

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** A piece of carpet, paper or plastic representing water, food cooler, water jug, paddle or oar, fishing rod, beach towel, Type IV throwable device, beach ball, water ski, and tree branch.

## **“Flotation Fashion Show”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Life Jackets and Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 3rd - 6th Grades

**TIME:** 15-20 minutes

**THEME:** Life jackets come in many different sizes, styles and colors. Choose the one that is right for you and wear it.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** The participants and audience will understand why it is important to wear a life jacket when taking part in water/boating related activities.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. The audience will be able to identify the different types of life jackets, and why they should fit properly.
- B. The audience will be aware that life jackets are required for certain activities (personal watercraft, water skiing, and board sailing).

**DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Remind the audience that drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death for people 0-44 years of age. Most drowning victims know how to swim and the number who drown wearing a life jacket is minimal.
- B. Select volunteers to model each of the life jackets (5-10 volunteers).
- C. The presenter should assume the role of an enthusiastic “master of ceremonies.” As you are narrating, have the volunteers make an entrance, turn around, and generally act like a model in a fashion show. Be creative in your narrative - “The latest style, seen here today in high visibility orange, is available at your local sporting goods store. Notice the freedom of movement for casting your favorite lure, and the wrap around design to keep you warm on those blustery days.” With a little creativity, the various disadvantages and advantages of certain life jackets can be molded into a couple of sentences.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** At least one example of Type I - Type V life jackets.

## **“The Great Relay Race”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Life jackets and how to wear/use them (includes correct size, etc.)

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 5th - 8th Grades

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**THEME:** If you want your life jacket to save your life, you must wear it correctly.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** At the conclusion of the race, participants will understand why it is important that a life jacket is the correct size, how to wear, and how to use a life jacket or personal flotation device.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. Participants will know how to correctly wear and use a life jacket.
  
- B. Participants will know why life jackets should be the correct size for the person wearing it.

**DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Locate a relatively flat area that would be good for the race.
  
- B. Lay out a start/finish line, and a second line for the participants to sprint to, touch and return to the finish line. Ropes or old throw/rescue line bags can be used for this purpose. There should be approximately 50 yards between the finish line and the other rope.
  
- C. Place four life jackets at the start line. The four jackets should all be the same style.
  
- D. Divide the group into four teams. Have the four teams of participants line up behind each of the four life jackets.
  
- E. Inform participants that over half of the people that drowned nation-wide never intended on being in the water. Tell them that drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death in the United States between the ages of 0-44 years, and that a struggling non-swimmer is not likely to last over 60 seconds before going under.
  
- F. Instruct the participants to put the life jackets on, fasten them, run to the far line, touch it with one foot and return to the finish line. They should then pass the life jacket to the next teammate, continuing until all members have completed the race. First team to finish wins the race.
  
- G. Make sure the participants put the life jackets on correctly, instead of slipping it over their heads without opening or closing it. Tell the students they will be disqualified if they do.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Two ropes or throw/rescue bags, four life jackets (Type III's work well for the race).

## **“Hurry to the Rescue!”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Throw Bags in Water Rescue

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 4th Grade – Adult

**TIME:** 10-15 minutes

**THEME:** If you place something that floats in the reach of a drowning person, you could save their life!

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will learn that they can help a drowning person by knowing how to properly and accurately throw a throw bag or other floating device to a person in distress.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will know different items they can throw to a drowning person. Participants will know how to correctly toss a throw bag.

**DESCRIPTION:** This activity is used as one station at a water safety program.

- A. Set up a silhouette of a drowning person as a target. Set targets at various distances.
- B. Gather individuals in a group, talk to them about rescue techniques with various items, ie. milk jug, fishing pole, throw bag, tree branch, etc...
- C. Let all participants try to toss the throw bag at the silhouette. Accuracy is rated by tossing the throw bag over the object so the rope strikes the target. Practice with other items, also.
- D. This activity can be used with children as the target to simulate pulling them in from the water or for an adult or teen class, volunteers in the water adds to the experience tremendously.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Silhouette of drowning person, throw bags, fishing poles, milk jugs with lids, life jackets, tree branches, etc.

## **“Life Jugs”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Life Jugs

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** K – Adult

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**THEME:** Life Jugs are easy to assemble and may save someone's life if used properly.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To show the participants how to assemble Life Jugs.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will know how to make and use Life Jugs.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Life Jugs are inexpensive throwable flotation devices that can save a life in a water emergency.
- B. Securely tie a jug to each end of the cord.
- C. Hold cord in center between jugs and tie to a 6-inch loop, making a handle for throwing.
- D. Place 1/2 inch of water OR 1 cup of sand in each jug to add weight for throwing.
- E. Glue tops on jugs with neoprene cement.
- F. Hang Life Jugs on pole, stand or other convenient place near a swimming area. For example, place them near backyard pools, swimming beaches, farm ponds, docks, creek swimming holes, city pools, and swimming areas at lakes. Life Jugs are easily tossed to persons in water by holding the loop in the cord.
- G. Place a sign above the Life Jugs.
- H. An example of the sign may show a person throwing the jugs and reading, "Throw To Drowning Person -- Do Not Play With These-They May Save A Life."

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** 2 - 1 gallon plastic jugs, 1 - 4 foot piece of 3/8 inch nylon cord, neoprene rubber cement, and small quantity of water or sand (if desired for weight in jugs).

## “Life Ring Wooden Puzzle”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety basics

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to adult

**TIME:** 15-20 minutes

**THEME:** Knowing these basic water safety tips could save your life.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** The participants will know the basic measures to take when around the water.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to recall different water safety techniques that could be used to prevent a disaster.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. The life ring wooden puzzle has water safety messages painted on the top of each piece.
- B. The children can be put into pairs and each pair can have one puzzle piece.
- C. As each puzzle piece is laid in place the children can read what their piece says and discuss what it means.
- D. Here is what each puzzle piece says:

#### **1. Learn how to swim.**

2. **Don't dive into unknown waters.** There could be a shallow bottom, a rock or log that you don't see that you could hit your head on.

3. **Learn safe rescue reaches.** Reach--use something to reach out to the drowning person, such as an oar, a towel, your pants or a belt. Be sure to brace yourself so you are not pulled into the water.

4. **Never swim alone.** Always use the buddy system.

5. **Always wear your life jacket when boating.** If you are thrown from the boat and hit your head, you could become unconscious. You would not have time to put on your life jacket.

6. **Call for help only when you need it.**

7. **Inflatable toys shouldn't be used as life jackets.** Inflatables are plastic blow-up toys. They work in a pinch but can easily get holes in them.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** A wooden puzzle shaped as a life ring in 7 pieces.



## **“Rescue Bag Relay Race”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Rescue Skills

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 4th - 9th Grades

**TIME:** 10-20 minutes

**THEME:** If you use a rescue bag properly it can help you save someone's life.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** At the conclusion of the race, the participants will know how to safely rescue a drowning person from a shoreline, a dock, or a boat.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. Participants will be aware of safe rescue procedures that can be used from a boat, dock, or a shoreline.
- B. Participants will know they should never enter the water to rescue a drowning person unless they are a certified lifeguard.

**DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Locate a relatively flat area that would be good for the race.
- B. Lay out a start/finish line (could use rope or throw bags) for the participants to stand at, and lay four throw bags along the rope.
- C. Remind participants that drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death for people 0-44 years of age, and that most drowning victims knew how to swim. Inform them that a significant number of people drown within ten feet of safety.
- D. Ask them how they would rescue somebody in trouble in the water. Discuss methods of reaching or extending something out to the victim that they could grab and be pulled in to safety (water ski, tree branch, towel, fishing rod, etc.). Next you should discuss throwing something out to the victim that they could hold onto for support/flotation (throw/rescue bag, life jacket or Type IV throwable device, etc.). The third step would be to row or take a boat out to rescue the victim. Emphasize that they should never enter the water to try to rescue a drowning person, unless they are a certified lifeguard.
- E. Divide the group into four teams, and have each group stand by a throw bag.
- F. Tell the students what exactly a throw bag is, and the proper methods of throwing and stuffing the bags. Demonstrate how to coil the line when using it (and not the bag) to execute a rescue. Make sure to tell them to hold onto the line when throwing the bag, and not to throw the whole thing to the victim - since the purpose of the bag is to extend/throw it to the victim and pull them to safety. The line/rescue bag can be thrown from boats and shoreline, whether in a lake or moving water situation.
- G. Have one team member (portraying the drowning victim) from each team stand about 25-30

feet in front of their team. When told to start they should throw the bag within arms reach of the “victim,” pull their victim to safety, and stuff their bag using the **proper method**. This procedure should continue until all team members have thrown the bag, and the bag has been properly stuffed for one last time. The team members may assist in stuffing the bag.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Rope/line for the starting line and 4 throw/rescue bags.

## "Ring Buoy Relay"

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Ring Buoys

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 6<sup>th</sup> grade to adult

**TIME:** 10-20 minutes

**THEME:** You can rescue a drowning victim if you know how to properly throw a ring buoy.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To demonstrate the use of ring buoys (throwable Type PFDs).

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will know how to properly throw a ring buoy.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. The object of the game is to throw the ring buoys to the drowning victims, who will then hold onto the rings and be pulled back to safety by the rescue team.
- B. Place the flags at one end approximately 15 feet apart, and about 25 feet from the RESCUE flags. This is the playing field.
- C. Divide the children into two teams.
- D. Now divide the two teams in half. Now you will have 4 groups: the “drowning victims” and the “rescuers.”
- E. At the sound of “GO,” the rescuers will throw their ring buoys to the drowning victims on the other side. The first team to rescue all their victims wins.
- F. The victims then switch sides with the rescuers, and play again.
- G. If this is done as a beach program you may want to explore ways to involve younger kids in this activity (that cannot throw large ring buoys) i.e. cheerleaders

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** A large grassy playing field that is flat and free from debris or hazards such as stones, glass, metal, sticks, etc., two sturdy ring buoys, with 25-30 feet of heavy rope attached securely to the buoys, and 4-6 survey-type flags to indicate RESCUE and VICTIM sides.

## “Safety Relay”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety relay

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Elementary School

**TIME:** 45 minutes

**THEME:** You have to be safe around water to have fun!

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Playing around water is fun but safety has to be taken seriously.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Children will be able to identify how to respond in the event of a person drowning or needing help in the water.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Begin the activity by telling children about the things that can be done to save some one in the water. Show them the reach poles and life rings that are already at the beach and the way they are used. Also show them other items that could be used, such as a cooler, beach ball, gas can, etc. (NOTE: Always stress that reach poles and life rings are not toys to be played with).
- B. Set up an obstacle course. At each station there is an activity related to water safety that must be completed before you can proceed to the next station.
- C. *Station One:* Participants must put on a life jacket properly using the proper size, (Already have a variety of life jackets in a pile).
- D. *Station Two:* Set up a traffic cone about 15 feet away from a life ring. The participant must throw the ring around the cone to proceed. (NOTE: For smaller children, the Ranger usually will help them).
- E. *Station Three:* Mark an area out, about a four foot circle. (NOTE: A large hoola hoop works well). Have participants try to throw a throw bag, ball, small cooler, gas can (empty!), or anything else that floats, inside the marked area.
- F. Afterwards participants must go back to the line and take off their life jacket then tag the next person in line to proceed. This activity is set up to run two teams through. The team that makes it through first wins. The winners are given small prizes usually donated from other businesses or agencies (like a Smokey or Woodsy sticker or a DARE pencil). All participants receive the Corps of Engineers Water Safety Coloring Book.
- G. This activity can be modified to incorporate any water safety message. Having two teams makes it competitive and fun for the children.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Traffic cones, life rings, an assortment of life jackets of all sizes, a throw bag, something to mark out an area, and prizes such as coloring books.

## “Sink Fast”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Life Jackets in boating and water safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE:** 3rd Grade – Adult

**TIME:** 15-20 minutes

**THEME:** You must wear your life jacket while participating in water recreation activities in order for it to save your life.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will realize that a life jacket is useless, unless it is worn.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. Participants will be able to identify a US Coast Guard approved, proper fitting, and good/serviceable condition life jacket.
- B. Participants will be motivated to wear their life jacket.

**DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Set up 4-8 chairs (depending upon the size of your imaginary boat and the amount of volunteers you wish to involve). Place a different type and size life jacket and flotation aid under each chair. A good assortment might include a large life jacket, a small child’s life jacket, a ripped life jacket, a ski belt, a life jacket in a plastic wrapper, water wings, or other types of water toys, and nothing at all under one chair.
- B. Select enough volunteers to be boat passengers, and have them sit in the “boat.” Remember to have a small person sit where the large life jacket is, and the opposite at the small life jacket chair. You can pass out additional props such as sunglasses, cooler, etc. to the boat passengers.
- C. In order to involve the additional members of the audience, you can select three groups of volunteers to:
  1. Represent the wind. The volunteers will surround the boat with cheek induced air, or make noises associated with wind and water.
  2. Represent an unseen obstruction (rock, tree stump, etc.). The volunteers will rush out and say “kaboom,” indicating that the boat hit something and is sinking.
  3. Represent the water. Armed with spray bottles, they will rush out and spray the boating passengers when cued to do so.
- D. After all of the volunteers are in place, begin your narration of their boat excursion. Their excursion quickly goes from a fun day on the lake to a frightening experience. They are speeding across the lake, as they have been all day. Other boaters are rather upset with them because they came close to their boats, causing various problems (swamped canoe, etc.). At one point the boat operator, who is showing off to his/her friends, goes real close to some swimmers, spraying them with the boat wake. But the skipper is not watching where he/she is

going and hits a tree stump. The boat quickly takes on water, and begins to sink. Passengers (volunteers) rush to put their life jackets on (allow about 30 seconds), before the boat sinks. Have the volunteers remain seated when they are putting their life jackets on so as to better simulate being in the water.

- E. At the conclusion of the “boating excursion,” ask the audience if they see anything wrong with the boaters and their life jackets. Discuss the problems and how they can be corrected. Do their life jackets fit correctly, are they in good condition, and are they actually considered life jackets? Stress that improper fitting life jackets, ripped life jackets, and life jackets that are left in the wrapper can be deadly.
- F. You can possibly tie in statistics from your lake, community, or state that relate to fatalities or injuries that occurred because of failure to use life jackets.

**SUGGESTED MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT:** 4-8 chairs representing the boat, life jackets (large, small, ripped, and still in the wrapper), ski belt, water wings or inner tube, variety of props for “boating passengers” (sunglasses, sun tan lotion, fishing gear, etc.), and spray containers.

## “Boating Obstacle Course or Relay Race”

**Topic:** Boating Safety

**Target:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade - Adult

**Time:** 30 - 40 minutes

**Theme:** Buoy markers are placed in areas to help prevent accidents, but they only work if you obey them.

**Goal:** Participants will understand that buoy markers are in place to help ensure their safety and the safety of others.

**Objective(s):** Participants will obey all buoy markers while boating.

### **Description:**

- A. Explain the different types of buoys and how a boater should react to each one.
- B. Explain to the participants that they will be acting as if they are driving a boat while going through the course.
- C. They will need to obey all buoy markers. If they make a wrong decision they have to return to the starting line.
- D. This game can either be conducted as an obstacle course for individuals or a relay race for teams.
- E. Stations -

#### **Station 1:** Life jackets

Pile of life jackets, several sizes and styles. Participants must dig through the pile to find and a life jacket that will fit them properly. They must put the life jacket on properly before they proceed. Explain why it is important to wear a life jacket while boating and ensure that they have put it on properly.

#### **Station 2:** Channel Buoys

Place a red buoy on the left and a green or black buoy on the right. Ask each participant after they go through the buoys correctly if they are traveling upstream or downstream.

#### **Station 3:** Diver Down Buoy and Flag

Participants must maintain a distance of 150 or more between themselves and the buoy.

#### **Station 4:** No wake Buoy

Participants must proceed slowly in this area.

#### **Station 5:** No boats Buoys

Participants must not enter this area, turn around and proceed back through the course.

- F. For a relay race: After returning their life jacket to Station 1 they must tag the next person in line and the team continues until everyone has completed the course.
- G. After the participant or participants have completed the course explain to them again why it is important to obey all buoy markers.

### **Suggested Materials & Equipment:**

Poster that shows the different types of buoys, No Wake buoy, Different sizes and styles of life jackets  
Real buoys or posters of buoys for the stations, No Boat buoy, Channel markers - 1 green or black and 1 red, Diver Down buoy and flag

## **“Water Safety Bingo”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Elementary School

**TIME:** 20-30 minutes

**THEME:** Knowing basic boating safety principles could save your life.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will learn about water safety equipment.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to recognize water safety equipment and know how it is used.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Pass out bingo cards and game markers to students.
- B. The instructor should select from the stack of picture cards (which correspond to the pictures on the students’ bingo cards) and hold it up for the students to see. Students may cover that picture on their bingo card with a game marker. The instructor should then discuss the water safety practice pertaining to the picture from the discussion notes below.
- C. Continue until a student attains a ‘Bingo.’ Have students remove game markers and start over until all the picture cards have been used.
- D. To conclude and review students, play a final round of ‘Black-out Bingo,’ calling on students to discuss the picture cards as they are drawn.
- E. Pass out water safety decals to all students.

### **PICTURE CARD DISCUSSION:**

- 1 LADY HOLDING ONTO CAPSIZED BOAT - Emphasize that if a boat they are in would capsize, they should stay with the boat rather than trying to swim to shore. Distances are hard to judge on the water and one can easily become exhausted before reaching what looked like a close shore. Most boats have built in flotation that allows the boat to continue floating after swamping or capsizing and it is much easier for rescuers to spot a boat in trouble rather than an individual.
- 2 DIVER FLAG - If you spot this red and white flag while on the lake, it means that a scuba diver is beneath the water surface in that area. To protect the diver from serious injury, make sure the boat you are in stays at least 100 feet away from the flag.
- 3 PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE - Remind students that more than half of the people who drown didn’t intend to ever be in the water, so it’s very important to always wear a life jacket when in a boat or near the water. You never know when an accident may happen.
4. OAR - Oars can be a lifesaver in more ways than one. Discuss the importance of carrying oars on



all boats in case the boat motor should stall when out on the lake. Ask the group if they can think of another use for oars. Remind them that oars can be used as a lifesaving device in case of a drowning person. The oar can be held out to the drowning person to help pull the individual to safety.

5. **BOATS KEEP OUT BUOY** - Buoys on the lake have the same purpose as traffic signs on land. They let a boater know when to slow down, hazardous areas to steer clear of, or areas in which they're not allowed. While on the lake, you might spot Boats Keep Out Buoys around the swimming beach areas. For the swimmer's safety, boats must stay on the outside of these buoy markers.

6. **FIRE EXTINGUISHER** - Explain that a fire extinguisher is an important piece of safety equipment to have on a boat. A fire can happen at anytime so extinguishers should be on board, properly charged and the correct type for fires which may occur on a boat. Encourage students to learn how to operate a fire extinguisher.

7. **WATER SKIER IN WATER** - The popular sport of waterskiing can be dangerous if the following safety practices aren't followed. Safe waterskiing requires at least three people which include the skier, the boat operator, and an observer who is at least 12 years of age. The boat operators should stay a reasonable distance from swimmers, fishermen, and shoreline areas. The observer should constantly keep an eye on the skier. If you fall while skiing, hold the tip of one of your skis up to allow other boats to see you easily.

8. **STORM CLOUD** - Always check the weather forecast before heading out in a boat and check local updates often while on the lake. Watch for signs of changing weather. Storms can come up suddenly causing danger from high winds, hail, and lightning. If you see storm clouds gathering (especially in the West), head toward shore quickly. Don't wait to get to shelter until the storm actually begins!

9. **OVERLOADED BOAT** - Explain that an overloaded boat is a dangerous boat because it loses buoyancy and stability, causing it to capsize easily. Students can check the capacity plate of boats they are in to determine load limits.

10. **ALCOHOL** - Emphasize to students that alcohol and water sports should not be mixed. Alcohol slows reaction time and is involved in more than half of the serious boating accidents. It is also a major factor in many drownings.

11. **SELF-HUDDLE POSITION** - Remind students to assume this body position if they would accidentally fall into cold water. This position conserves body heat and delays the effects of hypothermia.

12. **BEACH BALL** - Review the various items that can be thrown to an individual for a non-water rescue. (Examples include a beach ball, cooler, inner tube). Re-emphasize the rule of reach or throw, but don't go !

13. **FLOATING LOG** - Students should be watchful when on a lake and inform the "captain" of the boat if they see floating logs or other hazards. This is especially true in areas of a lake where timber has been left for fish habitat. These areas should be approached at a slow speed.

14. **SMALL CRAFT WARNING FLAG** - If students are at a lake and see a red flag being flown at the tower, it means that a small craft advisory is in effect and boats should stay off the main lake. However, it is the boaters responsibility to recognize wind conditions or incoming storms which might make boating hazardous.

15. **BOAT** - Remind students that when in a boat they should ask the boat driver to show them the basics of operating the boat in case of an emergency. Especially note where the on/off switch is located in case someone falls overboard and you need to stop.

16. **UNDERWATER STUMP** - Emphasize to the students to always check the water before they dive in for tree stumps, rocks, or other underwater hazards. Water that was deep enough to safely dive into a week ago may now be too shallow due to a lower lake level.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Bingo Cards, Picture Cards, game markers, and water safety decals.

## **“Water Safety Old Maid”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Tips for Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 4-7 years of age (younger or older also)

**THEME:** To make sure you don't get hurt, you need to play it safe around water

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will realize the importance of safety while recreating in or near water.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to name reasons why it is important to perform various safety functions when in or near water, such as wearing a PFD, learning to swim, using the buddy system, never swimming alone, and abstaining from alcohol.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. The game is played like Old Maid. The objective is to obtain pairs, finishing first without possessing the Old Maid/“Unsafe Guys.”
- B. The ideal group size would be 7 players, although a few more or less can be accommodated. If several more players are anticipated, break into groups for more than one game at a time using multiple decks of cards.
- C. The game begins as one player deals one deck of cards to each player in his or her group until the cards are gone. This happens simultaneously, as all groups begin play. After dealing is complete, players lay down pairs. Then the first player picks a card from the deck of the player to his or her right-hand side, hoping to pick a card which he has a match to and especially not the “Unsafe Guys” card. The game ends when players are out of cards. The player who finishes first is the winner. The player who ends with the “Unsafe Guys” card is not the winner.
- D. After each round of play, talk with the group about what is on the cards giving safety tips. Another option is to have each player display a pair and tell why what is on the card is safe (or unsafe for the “Unsafe Guys”).

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Water safety cards, one “Unsafe” card per deck, and a flat surface to play the game.

## “Boating Safety Scavenger Hunt”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Boating Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Jr. High and up

**THEME:** Practicing boating safety will guarantee you fun on the water.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To attract visitors to Water Safety Festivals, and encourage them to visit the various displays and interact with the participants.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to identify a variety of boating safety skills.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Ask participating boat dealers, organizations/agencies to submit a maximum of three water safety related questions that represent their activity (water ski club submits questions concerning water safety skills and water skiing). If this does not apply, formulate your own questions that the participants can still locate.
- B. When all questions have been submitted, select the best questions. Try to select at least one for each organization who submitted questions. Fifteen questions should probably be the maximum used for the scavenger hunt. Here are some sample questions that can be adapted to fit a festival setting or be manipulated in other ways:
1. Under what conditions does a power boat have the right-of-way over a sailboat?
  2. Boats operating with both sail and power are classified as what kind of boat?
  3. What should sailors do when they hear thunder or see lightning?
  4. All persons on board all boats are required to have what?
  5. State law requires that safety chains be \_\_\_ under the coupler when connected to the tow vehicle. ([A] Painted; [B] Crossed; [C] Hanging)
  6. What three things are needed for a fire?
  7. If your boat is disabled or you need some type of help, when would you use flares?
  8. Why kneel in a canoe?
  9. Do you stay with the canoe if you upset in a lake?
  10. The most important thing to do before you go fishing is what?
  11. How many skiers are you allowed to pull behind your boat at \_\_\_?
  12. How many people do you need to safely water ski at \_\_\_?
  13. How long has the Alumacraft Boat Company been in business?
  14. What was the 1995 “Watercraft of the Year” as proclaimed by Watercraft World?
  15. Can you water ski behind a personal watercraft in this state?
- C. Contact local businesses for prize donations. As a suggestion, develop a cover letter that may be presented to those businesses or organizations that are donating prizes stating that they are donating a prize for use in the Water Safety Scavenger Hunt. Participating organizations and boat dealers may also be interested in donating prizes. Prizes could include Coast Guard approved life jackets, club memberships, tee-shirts, food certificates, or Corps water safety products.

- D. Develop and print “Scavenger Hunt” game sheets.
- E. Plan on means of distribution to visitors (i.e. from fee booths, etc..).
- F. Create a box that can be used for the deposit of completed game sheets.
- G. All answers must be filled in and validated. This can be accomplished at the display that related to the question. Exhibitors are not allowed to play.
- H. Hold prize drawings throughout the day.
- I. Send thank you letters to all businesses and organizations that donated prizes.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Game sheets, decals or rubber stamps of participating organizations to use to validate game sheets, prizes, and a box for deposit of the game sheets.

## **“Water Safety Slogan Game”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety Slogan Game

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 5th Grade - 8th Grade

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**THEME:** It is easy to know the basics of Water Safety.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To show the participants that learning about water safety can be FUN!

**OBJECTIVE(S):** To have the participants create water safety slogans and then to create a Water Safety Poster from the slogan.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Locate an outdoor, wide, flat, open area.
- B. Have laminated 11" x 17" sheets of paper with words about water safety (such as Safety, Water, Be, Yourself) in the area.
- C. Have children pick up the sheets and place words together to create own water safety slogan.
- D. These are some possible slogans that might be constructed:
  - Swim with Friend.
  - Water and Life Jackets go together.
  - If you or someone is in trouble, yell for help.
  - Make swimming fun, don't use toys as lifesavers.
  - Swim in designated areas only.
  - Alcohol and water don't mix.
  - Falling or diving into water can be dangerous.
  - Every accident is preventable.
  - Learn to swim.
  - You can swim safe.
- E. Participants are judged on creativity, thoughtfulness, clarity of message, and other categories. Appropriate age groupings must be used when judging the slogans.
- F. Each participant receives a certificate.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Laminated sheets of 11"x 17" paper with appropriate water safety words on them.

## “What’s a PFD?”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** PFD’s - Personal Flotation Devices or Life Jackets

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Elementary students

**TIME:** 10-15 minutes

**THEME:** Life jackets are of no use unless you wear it and it fits you properly.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will be able to explain why it is important for a PFD to fit them personally.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** The audience will know what the “personal” in Personal Flotation Device means.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Choose a willing participant from the audience (you will have to accurately assess the weight of your volunteer in order to correctly size the PFD).
- B. Intentionally try on over or undersized PFD’s of different types (I, II, III, IV, etc.), while drawing responses from the audience (How many think this is the correct size PFD?).
- C. After eliminating obvious choices (i.e. too small, too large), choose a PFD which will correctly fit the volunteer.
- D. Ask the audience to **TELL** not **SHOW** you how to put on the PFD. Typical responses may be “put it over his head” or “wrap the strap around her waist.” Following their verbal instructions explicitly will lead to some pretty laughable situations, particularly with younger students.
- E. Finally, after having correctly placed the PFD on your volunteer, ask the person’s weight. Compare it to the poundage limits on the PFD to see if it really is a correct fit. There may be situations where the volunteer does not know their weight - you’ll have to guess.

**PROGRAM NOTE:** To be most effective, the entire program should be highly participatory. Involve the audience by allowing them to “blurt” out how they would put the PFD on.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** An assortment of PFD’s in different sizes and styles.

## “Wheel of Water Safety”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Overall water safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 4th and 5th grades

**TIME:** 45-50 minutes

**THEME:** A fun & fast-paced activity can help children learn important water safety concepts.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** The children will learn that they can save a life and protect themselves if they remember a few precautions and a few rescue techniques.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Children will be able to:

- A. Identify the need for a life jacket
- B. Identify how to save someone in an emergency - Reach/Throw/Don't Go
- C. Identify how to keep safe when in a boat or near water

### **DESCRIPTION:**

“The Wheel of Water Safety” is a program developed to reach young adults as the summer season approaches. The program is fast paced fun, but full of life-saving facts. The program is designed for a school auditorium or gymnasium. The program has four parts: Introduction, Skits, Wheel, and Summary.

**Introduction** - The children meet the Park Ranger who sets up the program by sharing a few facts and asking a few questions about water safety. The Ranger then introduces Buddy the Beaver who acts as co-host and comedic relief. Buddy is a costumed Ranger or volunteer who acts as our water safety mascot. (4-5 minutes)

**Skits** - Sinking Fast & Picnic at the Park

### **Sinking Fast**

#### **Materials:**

4 PFD's (Child, Adult, Ripped, Seat Cushion)  
4 chairs placed in two rows like seats in a boat  
Stopwatch or watch with a second hand

#### **Procedure:**

Ahead of time, set the chairs up with a PFD under each chair. Even tie the straps around the chair leg. Choose four students to go on a boat ride. Tell them they are going to enjoy a nice sunny day on the lake, when all of a sudden you yell, CRASH!! What are they going to do? Quick, put on the PFD's! Time the children to see if they can get their PFD on in 20 seconds or less. A person can drown in 20-60 seconds. Afterwards, show how to properly put on a life jacket or use a seat cushion. Explain that life jackets should be cared for and checked for rips. Also, stress that children should always put on a life jacket whenever they get in a boat. Don't rely on toys or seat cushions to save your life. (8-10 minutes)



## **Picnic at the Park**

### **Materials:**

Towel, Blanket, Cooler, Food Container, Drink Bottles, Sunscreen, Sun Hat, Beach ball, Stick, PFD, and any other picnic accessories.

### **Procedure:**

Set the stage and set up a picnic with 2-3 students. Ask the children some of the things they do on a picnic. After the picnic has begun, have one of the students wander away from the picnic site and go for a swim, without telling anyone. Suddenly the remaining two students hear their friend struggling in the water. What are they going to do? Ask the students and the audience what they would do and run through the proper steps for saving a life. Call for help...then...Reach, Throw, and Don't Go. The kids can come up with suggestions. What of the picnic accessories can be used to save a life. (8-10 minutes)

**Wheel** - A game to test the students' knowledge

### **Materials:**

Wooden Wheel, Score Board, Question Cards

### **Procedure:**

Now that the children have learned some basic water safety concepts it is time to test their knowledge. Divide the auditorium into 3 teams (by class or grade level). The teachers will be the representatives of each team and will come up and spin the wheel. The point amount will be awarded if the team can correctly answer a water safety question. The game goes for three & four rounds with prizes awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. Sample questions:

### EASY

1. The most important water safety item to have and wear is...
  - A. Inner Tube
  - B. Life Jacket \*\*\*
  - C. Sun Hat
  
2. Life Jackets work best if...
  - A. you put them on after you fall in the water
  - B. you make sure they fit before you go in the water \*\*\*
  - C. they are loose fitting
  
3. When you go boating at \_\_\_\_\_, you don't need a life jacket...
  - A. if you took swimming lessons
  - B. if you are with your parents
  - C. Everyone needs a life jacket \*\*\*

### MEDIUM

4. The number one cause of drowning is ...

- A. swimming during a storm
  - B. floods
  - C. not wearing a life jacket \*\*\*
5. If you can't swim, it's wise to...
- A. take swimming lessons \*\*\*
  - B. swim alone
  - C. use a rubber raft to keep you afloat
6. If your boat turns over, you should...
- A. swim for shore
  - B. stay with your boat and wait for help \*\*\*
  - C. take swimming lessons

DIFFICULT

7. How many people drown in the USA each year?
- A. None. They were all wearing life jackets.
  - B. 6000 \*\*\*
  - C. 200
8. The fourth leading cause of drowning is hypothermia. Hypothermia is caused by...
- A. boiling water
  - B. polluted water
  - C. cold water \*\*\*
9. If you see someone in trouble in the water, what should you do?
- A. Call for help \*\*\*
  - B. Don't worry, they're probably just kidding
  - C. Tell them to put on a life jacket

**Summary** - Restate the major points of the program after the prizes have been given. All students receive comparable prizes.

## **Ranger Willie's Reach, Throw, Row, Don't Go**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** A Ranger Willie B. Safe Beach Program

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** All ages

**TIME:** 10 - 15 minutes

**THEME:** If you know basic water safety principles you may be able to save someone's life.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** The audience will know what to do if a person is drowning, realize the importance of being safe on or near the water, and be motivated to learn more about water safety on their own.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** The audience will be able to identify 2 rules of water safety and the signs of a drowning victim. The audience will use the reach, throw, row, don't go principle, if they need to assist someone who is in trouble in the water. At the completion of the program, the audience will realize that they may be able to save someone that is drowning.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. This program is generally given at a beach.
- B. It may be a good idea to walk around the beach and surrounding area and advertise your program.
- C. Pick a central location for your program. The shorter the distance people have to walk to your program the more likely they are to come. Parents are more likely to send their kids if they can see them from where they are. Encourage adults to come, especially parents.
- D. A good thing to use to mark the location of your program is a large flag.
- E. Start your program on time. Introduce yourself and, somewhere in your introduction, state the theme.
- F. Ask the audience if they know the four signs of a drowning victim. They are head back, mouth open gasping for air, no sound, and arms moving in an up and down motion.
- G. A drowning victim cannot yell for help. Have the audience demonstrate this by having them put their heads back take a big breath of air and at the same time they are breathing in try and yell for help. It can't be done. Explain to the audience that they should never pretend to be drowning.
- H. Ask the audience what they should do if they see someone drowning. They should reach, throw, row, but don't go. Have the audience repeat it.
- I. Ask the audience what are some things that they could reach with. Then ask them what could they throw.
- J. Have items such as a reach pole, stick, rope, and shirt to show as things that they could reach with. Have items such as a beach ball, life ring, cooler, and life jacket to show as things that they could throw.
- K. Point out the rescue stations on the beach and explain to them that they should only be used for their intended purposes. Explain to them that they should not play with the life saving equipment.
- L. Explain the concept of row to the audience. Here is how you might row to a person in trouble. If there is a boat nearby take it to save the person or get the attention of a nearby boat and have them help the person. If you are an experienced swimmer you can float out on an air mattress to the person. Remember if you float out to the person do not get near the person in trouble. Get off the air mattress and extend it to them.

- M. Never go in for a drowning victim, because usually instead of one person drowning there are two people that drown. Explain if you are going to go somewhere go for help.
- N. Ask if anyone in the audience has been trained in water rescue. If so, they may be able to add an experience that they have had. Stress that only persons trained in water rescue, such as a lifeguard, should go in for a person that is drowning.
- O. Explain the importance of wearing a life jacket and swimming with a buddy. Parents should watch their children and children should watch their parents. It takes only 20 seconds for a child to drown and 60 seconds for an adult to drown.
- P. Tell the audience of some incidents that involved drownings or unsafe practices that have happened where you work.
- Q. Ask them again what the signs of a drowning victim are and what they should do if they see someone drowning. Repeat the four ways to rescue a drowning victim.
- R. Let them know if they see you again to give you the Ranger Willie B. Safe Thumbs Up Sign and you will give it back. This will let you know that they have attended one of your safety programs and that they know how to be safe around the water.

### **CONCLUSION**

- A. State your theme one more time.
- B. Thank the audience for coming, tell them about upcoming programs, and welcome any questions that they may have.
- C. Give the audience something for attending, something like an activity book or sticker.
- D. You may consider playing some kind of game with the audience after the program. The game does not necessarily have to pertain to water safety.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT:** Items that you can reach with; such as a reach pole, stick, rope, beach blanket, or shirt. Items that you can throw; such as beach ball, life ring, cooler, or life jacket

## **“Freddie Fish Water Safety Program” - 1**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** PFD in boating safety with Freddie the Fish

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Grades K-4

**TIME:** Approximately one hour

**THEME:** PFDs can save your life.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To give students knowledge of how to be safe while enjoying water recreational activities.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** To have students be able to identify water safety hazards and to know ways to enjoy water activities safely.

**DESCRIPTION:** This program can accompany the slide show starring Freddie Fish and family, in which they discuss various water safety tips.

- A. Freddie will need help getting changed. Solicit a volunteer for this before you begin the program.
- B. Arrive at least 15-20 minutes prior to show time to set-up, test your equipment, and to organize items to be distributed and props (PFDs).
- C. Be sure that wires and cords are not arranged in such a manner that someone will trip over them. Be sure no seats are set-up in front of the projector.
- D. Encourage controlled audience participation. Ask questions which the group can answer with a collective one-word answer.
- E. Usually the setting for these programs are large multi-purpose rooms, with one hundred or more students. It's important to keep control of the group at all times. Avoid allowing the students to surround Freddie. This situation gets out of control easily, and one of the students or the person in the costume could get hurt.

### *The Presentation - Introduction*

- F. Greet the students and introduce yourself. Briefly tell them about your position and about the Corps of Engineers. Tell them that you are there to talk about Water Safety, and want to talk about PFDs, to show them a slide show, and to have them meet a special friend. You can ask for a group response on who is coming to visit.
- G. Start into the program by asking who likes the water; how many know how to swim; or how many have ever been in a boat? A show of hands can answer all these questions, and you can control this response by raising one hand yourself. This participation warms the group toward you, while holding their attention.

- H. After asking how many have ever ridden in a boat, follow up by holding up the Type II or III PFD, and asking, “And, how many of us wore one of these while we were on that boat?”

*PFD Presentation*

- I. “These are very important, and we’re going to learn a lot more about them today.” Put that PFD down, and hold up the ring buoy. “Who has ever seen one of these?” SHOW OF HANDS. “Very good! What do we call this?” TAKE A FEW ANSWERS. “Very good! What do we call this?” TAKE A FEW ANSWERS. “Very good! What do we call this?” SIGNAL FOR A GROUP ANSWER BY CUPPING ONE HAND TO YOUR EAR. “A lifesaver! You may know it by that nickname because it is used for saving lives. I have a new word for you, though. This is really a PFD.” HAVE THEM REPEAT PFD. “There are four types of PFDs and today we’re going to see quite a few. This one is a type IV, which means it’s the type you throw to the person who needs it. It’s not the kind you wear - We’ll see those later. Right now, I’m going to show you how to use one of these.”
- J. Give a demonstration of how to throw the ring buoy without actually releasing it from your grasp. Be sure the rope is properly draped across your palm, and that the rescuer’s end is secured under your foot. The students will be amused when you pretend as though you are going to throw it, and stop at the last second. Then explain how you’ve held your end with your foot, in case you miss and have to throw it again, or to pull the victim.
- K. “There are other Type IV PFD’s which you have seen, and I have a different one here.” Hold up the floatable cushion and ask, “Who has ever seen one of these?” SHOW OF HANDS. “Where do we see these?” TAKE A FEW RESPONSES. “Okay, now we need to know how to use one.” CALL A VOLUNTEER UP TO HELP. Get the name of your helper.
- L. “\_\_\_\_\_ is going to show us how some people use this type of PFD.” Instruct the volunteer to put his/her arms through the loops, and wear it like a backpack. “How is this? Is this right?” MIXED REPLY FROM THE GROUP.
- M. Demonstrate how this is not the proper way to wear a PFD. Have the student bend forward at the waist, with the PFD about his/her back. Explain that the PFD floats, but that this way, the victim is underwater, face-down. Then show the subject the proper way to use the PFD, tucking it in at the waist, having him/her bend over it, and grasp the edges while bending over it. Explain that now he is out of the water, and has a good, safe grip on the PFD. Then explain that the handles are not to hold on to, and that if they broke, the victim would be stranded. Instead, the handles are used for throwing the PFD. Take the PFD from the subject, and using the handle, gently toss it to the side, away from the audience. Thank the subject and have him sit down.
- N. Next, pull out the rescue bag. “At this point, you might think that this too, is a Type IV PFD, but it really isn’t for a simple reason. It doesn’t help a person float; although you can use it to save someone’s life. You see...(SECURING YOUR ENDS OF THE ROPE, TOSS THE BAG TOWARD THE FLOATABLE CUSHION)...there’s no cushion inside - just rope. So, you can

toss the rope, and pull the person into safety. PFD's are made to help people float, and as you can see, this rescue bag is not made to do that."

- O. Put down the bag, and pick up the ring buoy and cushion. "So, what are these? Type IV PFDs!" Hold up the rescue bag. "And is this? NO!" "Very good, now I have some other PFDs to show you."
- P. PICK UP THE TYPE III PFD. "This is what we call a Type III PFD. Who has ever seen one of these?" SHOW OF HANDS. "We usually use these while we're water skiing or rafting. This is one type of PFD that you wear. But, before you put on any PFD, there is something else you need to know. First of all, let's talk about what the letters PFD stand for. The "P" stands for PERSONAL; which means something made for the person. The "F" stands for floatation because it's made to float; and "D" stands for device.
- Q. So this is a device, or a tool, made to fit a person; to help him/her float. In other words. PFDs come in many sizes for different people. Let's see what happens when we use the wrong size. Call a very small student up to the stand, and put the PFD on him/her.
- R. "Now \_\_\_\_\_ is wearing his PFD, and he's out in a boat. Let's imagine that the boat tips and \_\_\_\_\_ falls into deep water. "Slowly and gently pull the PFD over your subjects head, remove it completely. "What happens is, the PFD floats, but since \_\_\_\_\_ is too small for it, he/she slips right out of the bottom! So here is the PFD on the surface of the water, but what about \_\_\_\_\_" RESPONSES.
- S. "So then, \_\_\_\_\_ should be wearing his own right size?" RESPONSE.
- T. Thank the subject and send him back. Open the jacket, and point out that it's labeled as an Adult XL. Explain the different sizes that are available. Then explain that the tag tells something else, in addition to size, which is important. Explain that a PFD must be labeled, Coast Guard Approved, and that this information can also be found on the label. Then ask the group to tell you what type of PFD it is before putting it down and moving on to the Type II.
- U. With the Type II, again ask how many have seen one. Then call a second volunteer one who will fit in the PFD correctly. Explain that this is a Type II, and that, like the Type III, it is made to be worn. Then, as you're putting it on the subject, explain that though it is similar to a Type III in some ways, it is also very different. Once the subject is wearing it correctly, have him/her turn so that the group can see the head cushion. Explain that this will turn a person face-up in the water, even if the person can't do it for him/herself, and that this can save even an unconscious person from drowning. Lean the subject's upper body backward just a little, demonstrating the position in which he would float.
- V. Next, point out to the group that this PFD is the right size for the subject. Remove the PFD and have the subject take a seat. Ask the group to tell you what type of PFD it is. Then, summarize by showing the PFDs again, and re-stating what type each is.

### *Freddie Slide Show*

- W. Introduce the slide show by congratulating the students on how well they learned about the PFDs. Then tell them that there are many other ways in which to be safe, as well. Tell them that you have a cartoon that is fun to watch, but also has an important message from Freddie and his family. Encourage them to listen quietly, with the promise that Freddie will come to see them if they behave well.
- X. Begin the slide presentation. Toward the end of the show, the person who will wear the Freddie costume will have to get changed.
- Y. When the program ends, the speaker should immediately take control, to avoid losing the group's attention. Begin by asking if they liked the show. Then ask what was learned. Take a few answers, covering some main points that came up in the slide show. Tell the group that they did well during the show, and that Freddie would like to speak to them. Welcome Freddie with applause.
- Z. Freddie should speak to the group from the front of the room, especially if the group is very large. The speaker can assist by relaying messages from and to Freddie. Allow time to joke with the students, as well as to cover some major Water Safety points. Leave the group with wishes for many safe water-fun hours, and a warm good-bye. The speaker can close by showing the students the Freddie coloring books, pins, and stickers, which they will be receiving.

**SUGGESTED MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT:** Freddie the Fish costume, slide/tape presentations, buttons, stickers and coloring books (enough for all), synchronized tape player and slide projector, movie screen, rescue bag, floatable cushion and ring buoy; XL Adult Type III PFD, Small Child's Type II PFD.

**NOTE:** Arrange beforehand to have a changing room for Freddie which is easily accessible to the program area, yet out of view. Keep in mind that the person in the costume will not be able to see, hear, or project his voice very well. The assisting speaker will have to relay messages, and guide Freddie past obstacles. Avoid wires or cords, low ceilings, furniture, steps, rough terrain, etc.



## “Freddie Fish Water Safety Program” - 2

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** K - 7 years old

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**THEME:** Freddie Fish’s Golden Rules can keep you safe.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To teach the students that learning how to swim, swimming in water that is not over your head, having adult supervision, and using a PFD is important rules to follow for being safe in the water.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. After completing the session, children will understand that water can be dangerous if not treated with respect.
- B. They will know not to go in water without supervision and will understand the importance of learning to swim.
- C. They will also recognize a PFD and its associated use.

**DESCRIPTION:**

*Introduction:*

How many like to go to the beach? How many of you can swim? Good! Now tell me, what is more dangerous: water that’s 6 feet deep or water that’s 100 feet deep? (Let the children raise their hands and then ask one from each group why they think their chosen depth is more dangerous).

(Now act a little confused and tell them you’re not sure and that if it’s okay with them you’ll call out your water safety expert). Enter Freddie Fish. He emphasizes that, as one of his golden rules, it doesn’t matter whether the water is 6 or 100 feet deep, if you can’t swim and the water is over your chin, it is dangerous! Learn how to Swim!! (During the preceding and the following, Freddie may speak for himself or through the instructor).

**Freddie’s Golden Rules:** In addition to learning to swim, there are three other Golden Rules. They were taught to him by his mother and father many years ago.

#1. Don’t swim in water that’s over your head. Why? Because if you get tired of swimming, you can just stand up and rest. Remember, you can swim just as easily in 2 1/2 feet of water as 6 feet.

#2. Always have adult supervision; never swim alone.

#3. If you don’t know how to swim, and you’re planning to be near or on the water, wear a PFD. What is a PFD? It’s a Personal Flotation Device, one that keeps you floating in the water. (Place PFD on instructor and leave it on for the rest of the program).

Freddie would like you to meet his family. They have more ideas on being safe around the water.

(Slide Show may be used to accompany this program).

(After the slide show, pass out Freddie coloring books and Golden Rules sheet). Color in your favorite picture now while Freddie watches. Make sure you show your mom and dad Freddie's coloring book and his golden rules.

In conclusion, let's go over Freddie's rules:

- #1. Learn to swim!
- #2. Never swim in water over your head!
- #3. Always have adult supervision.
- #4. If you can't swim, wear a PFD.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Freddie Fish costume, Freddie Fish Coloring Books w/crayons, Freddie slide program, and PFD (Type II & V).

## **“Freddie Fish Water Safety Program” - 3**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Mentally retarded, intelligence level K-7 years old.

**TIME:** 25 minutes

**THEME:** Water Safety is important to take seriously.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To teach the students the importance of water safety and Freddie Fish’s Golden Rules.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** At the end of the program, students will understand that water can be dangerous and that they should not wade in or be near water without proper supervision.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

#### *Introduction:*

Did you know that there is a 7 foot fish around here? Can you imagine what he looks like? 7 feet tall !!! (Indicate size with outstretched arms). We call him Freddie Fish. Now everybody draw what you think Freddie Fish looks like. (Have paper and crayons for the children).

Okay, everybody hold up your paper and we’ll have Freddie come in and pick the drawing that looks most like him. (Enter Freddie, chooses best resemblance).

Take Polaroid picture of class with papers held up on either side of Freddie. Have winner in front of Freddie. Leave photo for students.

Freddie has something important to tell everyone of you. Freddie: Always make sure when you’re in or near the water that you group leader is with you. And now I’d like you to meet my family, we’ve made a movie just for you. (Start slide program).

Freddie: There you have it - safety on the water-but remember-most important-when you’re near or in the water make sure your group leader, partner, or sponsor is with you!

#### Freddie’s Golden Rules:

- #1. Learn to Swim!
- #2. Never Swim in Water Over Your Head!
- #3. Always Have Adult Supervision!
- #4. If You Can’t Swim, Wear a PFD!

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Freddie Fish costume, Freddie Fish slide program, construction paper, crayons, and Polaroid camera.

## **“Why Ducks Don’t Drown”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Elementary School

**TIME:** Varies

**THEME:** Ducks do not drown, and people shouldn't either.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To teach the audience about water safety.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** The audience will be able to identify a drowning victim and the reach, throw, row, don't go rescue techniques. Also they will realize that hypothermia can kill us.

**DESCRIPTION:**

Ask your students how many have visited lakes, ponds, or swimming pools. During this course we will focus on water safety pertaining to lakes, but the information can carry over to most water activities.

Ducks don't drown, but unfortunately people do! Approximately 8000 persons drown each year in the United States. Drowning is the second leading cause of death in the U.S. for persons from 4 to 44, exceeded only by motor vehicle accidents.

Can you think of ways that ducks are specially adapted for the water so they don't drown? Can you also think of some reasons why people do drown? Man is an animal that is in or near the water mainly for recreation. The most basic reason people drown is that they are unable to stay afloat for some reason. This might be caused by a variety of factors which include; an inability to swim, knocked unconscious in an accident, have been drinking, loss of body coordination in cold water, or sudden panic. Ducks on the other hand are specially suited to their water habitat and possess various adaptations that allow their survival there.

Let's look at some of a ducks water survival adaptations:

The most basic adaptation necessary is the ability to stay afloat without constantly using energy to swim. Many ducks have accomplished this by having hollow bones that add buoyancy. A duck's thick coat has hundreds of feathers that interlock, trapping air in-between and thus also increasing their buoyancy. Of course, the webbing between ducks toes allow swimming with reduced effort.

Have any of the students visited a lake or pond in the winter? If so, they might of seen ducks sitting in near freezing water, often surrounded by ice covering most of the lake's surface. How can a duck survive in this cold water? A ducks thick coat of feathers with its trapped air spaces conserves body heat and provides good insulation. Ducks also constantly oil their feathers from an oil gland beneath their tail which makes their feathers waterproof. A thick layer of fat beneath the skin adds additional insulation. In freezing temperatures, the blood flow to a ducks feet is basically shut off. This prevents the blood circulating through the ducks feet from rapidly cooling the rest of the body.

Can you imagine having your feet in a lake in December? BRRR!!! We're definitely not adapted like a duck. However, man has common sense, special tools such as life jackets and the ability to reason. So although we're not specially adapted to life in the water, most drownings could be prevented. Remember, Ducks Don't Drown...People Shouldn't Either.

We talked about a ducks adaption such as hollow bones that allow it to float without a conscious effort. Because we aren't adapted to float, we tire easily if we're in the water for a long period and we can't stay afloat if we develop severe cramps, lose body coordination, or panic. This is why its important to wear our life jackets or personal floatation devices (PFDs) which act like the air spaces in a ducks body and allow us to float without effort.

It is required by law to have a PFD of the proper size for every person on board a boat. However, it isn't required that persons wear them. Do you think you should wear them? What are some reasons you can think of why people should actually wear their PFD, rather than just having it on the boat?

As with seat belts, many people do not like to wear PFDs because they view it as an inconvenience. They feel it restricts their movement or interferes with getting a tan. However, the inconveniences are far outweighed by the potential for saving your life.

In boating accidents, 8 out of every 10 people that drown weren't wearing a PFD even though one was available on the boat. In addition, if a person cannot swim and is struggling to stay afloat they will usually drown within 60 seconds.

Ask students to describe what they think a drowning person would look like. Victims generally do NOT cry out. They are too busy trying to breathe. Toward the end, most lapse into involuntary motions; pushing down on the water, arms outstretched, bobbing to the surface, mouth open but making no sound, head tipped back for maximum air intake. Also, near-drowning persons may not be able to see. To be saved, they must be touched by a rescue device.

If you see someone in trouble, it's natural to want to swim to him or her, but DON'T! If the person you are trying to rescue panics, both of you may be in trouble. (Especially if you aren't trained in life saving). When it comes to rescuing someone from the water, the rule is to "Reach or Throw, but Don't Go!

Drownings occur as often in spring and fall as in the summer. Most victims that were boating never intended to go into the water. A sudden fall overboard or a boat capsizing finds the boater suddenly in the water.

Can someone define hypothermia? Hypothermia is the loss of body heat, in this case to the water. If you are suddenly in cold water from a boat accident, don't try to swim to shore. Swimming will increase the rate of heat loss from your body and you will fatigue quickly in cold water. If possible hang onto or get into your overturned boat. Again, its important that you are wearing your PFD when the accident occurs. Like the ducks thick feathers, it will help insulate and hold in your body heat. Keep your head above water and if there is more than one person, huddle to share heat. Unlike a duck who can slow circulation to its exposed legs, we must try to reduce the body surface area exposed directly to the cold water. If you are alone, draw your knees to your chest and clamp your arms to your sides. This can reduce heat loss up to 60 percent.

Likewise, when swimming, the effects of cold water can be dangerous. Don't dive or jump into cold water. When cold water covers your body all of a sudden it can cause you to gasp, inhaling water

whether you mean to or not and fill your lungs with water.

Even champion swimmers have drowned in cold water. In cold water, the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. The first sign is shivering, then severe cramps and poor muscle control. Fatigue can be so severe you may find you can't move your arms or legs. If you're in water over your head, you will probably drown. In cold water, swim near shore, stay in shallow water and get out if you feel chilled. Better yet, wait for the water to warm up!!

# **Audio Visual Programs**

## **“The Choice is Yours”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** PFD types and their use

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 6th Grade – Adult

**TIME:** 13 minutes

**THEME:** Life Jackets come in many different sizes, styles, and colors. Choose one that is right for you and wear it.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will understand the importance of wearing a PFD in all types of water recreation.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to identify the different types of PFDs and know how to choose one for proper fit.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

This film by the National Safety Council describes the various PFD types and demonstrates their use. Film uses action simulations of accidents and interviews with accident survivors to promote the wearing of PFDs. It also demonstrates how to select the proper PFD type and size for specific uses, including the new hybrid inflatable devices.

### **SUGGESTED MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT:**

\* VHS Video Equipment / 16 mm Film Projector

\*Film Source: National Safety Council  
444 North Michigan Ave  
Chicago, IL 60611



## **“Cold, Wet, and Alive”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Hypothermia

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 6th Grade – Adult

**TIME:** 23 minutes

**THEME:** Hypothermia is a chill that can kill.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will be aware of the causes and dangers of hypothermia.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. Participants will be able to list the symptoms of hypothermia.
- B. Participants will be able to list precautions which can be used to avoid hypothermia.

**DESCRIPTION:**

Film follows five canoeists on a river day trip and examines hypothermia from a prevention viewpoint.

By using computer-enhanced graphics, the viewer can see how and why the body loses heat.

Although canoes are profiles, this film would be useful for any boater or person involved in water recreation.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:**

\*VHS Video Equipment

\*Film Source: American Canoe Association

P.O. Box 1190

Newington, VA 22122-1190

## **“Freddie the Fish Slide Show”**

**TOPIC:** Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE:** Preschool - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade

**TIME:** 6 minutes

**THEME:** One careless mistake is all that it takes.

**DESCRIPTION:**

This slide show consists of 59 slides. Join Freddie the Fish and his family as they take you on a family vacation to an U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project. They will teach you valuable water safety tips as they review their recreational experiences on and near the water. This resource guide also includes three program outlines that this slide show can be used.

**CREATED BY:**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Pittsburgh District

## **Hypothermia, The Cold Facts”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Hypothermia

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 9th Grade – Adult

**TIME:** 28 minutes

**THEME:** Hypothermia is the chill that can kill.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will be aware of the causes and dangers of hypothermia.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to list the symptoms and precautions which can be used to avoid hypothermia.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Produced for showing on PBS by the Minnesota Sea Grant Extension, University of Minnesota, in cooperation with the Minnesota DNR and Sterns Manufacturing. It describes the causes and effects of hypothermia, research being conducted by the University of Minnesota hypothermia lab, and explodes the myth that if you fall into cold water, you will be dead in a few minutes. The film also discusses the role of PFDs in hypothermia prevention.

### **SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:**

VHS Video Equipment

Film Source: Minnesota Sea Grant Extension

2305 East 5th Street

Duluth, MN 55812

## **“A Little Common Sense”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Boating Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 6th Grade – Adult

**TIME:** 18 minutes

**THEME:** Alcohol and boating can be a deadly combination

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will understand the dangers of drinking and boating.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to list some of the major causes of boating accidents and practice safe boating by not drinking while boating.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

The program interviews a variety of boating experts, including a boat builder, harbor pilot, insurance claims adjuster, Coast Guard coxswain, speedboat racer, hypothermia expert, and a professional salvage operator. It profiles the hazards of drinking and boating and other boating safety issues.

### **SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:**

VHS Video Equipment

Film Source: Filmtech, Inc.

181 Nortre Dame Street

Westfield, MA 01085

## **“Safe Passage”**

**Topics:** Swimming, Boating, Personal Watercraft, and Dam Safety

**Target Age** K-6

**Time:** Classroom Version: 38 minutes, Program Version: 33 minutes

**Description:**

While visiting their grandparent’s cabin on the lake, Jason and Holly discover a marooned boat containing a mysterious compass that takes them on a magical adventure. In order to get a safe passage home, they must learn the rules of water safety and learn to work together as a team. The video is comprised of four scenarios pertaining to water safety, one on each topic. The classroom version includes a break in between each scenario, so that discussion and activities can take place. An activity book for this video is available on USACE National Water Safety Program webpage at <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil>

**Source:**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers National Water Safety Program

## **“ride Safe, ride Smart”**

**Topic:** Personal Watercraft Safety

**Target Age:** 5<sup>th</sup> - Adult

**Time:** 16 minutes

**Description:**

Before you drive a personal watercraft (PWC) there are a few things you need to know besides where the throttle is located. Ride Safe, Ride Smart is a fun way to learn the basic rules of the waterways. How close can I ride to another boat? How old do I have to be to ride a PWC? Where can and can't I ride? These may be just a few of the questions you may be asking yourself. You could risk it and learn the hard way, but why not do it the easy way. Sit down, relax, and watch this video. This video will explain the basics that you need to know before you operate a PWC. Enjoy the ride!

**Source:**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers National Water Safety Program

## “Boating Basics”

**Topic:** Boating Safety

**Target Age:** 5<sup>th</sup> grade – Adult

**Time:** 75 minutes

**Description:**

This video provides a complete introduction to boating with all the basic information that a person needs to know. The video is divided into six sections: All about boats, navigation rules, accidents, legal requirements, getting underway, and special topics. This video would be useful during a boater safety course to review a specific topic.

**Source:**

Outdoor Empire Publishing, Inc.

511 Eastlake Avenue E.

Seattle, WA 98109

(206) 624-3845

Visa and MasterCard telephone orders accepted.

## **“Miscellaneous Titles for Water Safety Films/Videos/Slides”**

### **DESCRIPTIONS:**

- A. “Better Think Twice - A Look at Alcohol Use While Boating” - Slide show with cassette tape, 15 minutes in length. It discusses about why boat operation and alcohol consumption are such a dangerous combination.
  
- B. “Judgement on the Water” - 16mm film, 24 minutes in length. Discusses small boat safety.
  
- C. “Water Safety and the Young Adult” - Slide show with cassette tape, 15 minutes in length. Promotes water safety by examining the reasons why so many young adults drown each year; for example, attitudes, peer pressure, and environmental stress.
  
- D. “Water, the Timeless Compound” - Video cassette, 44 minutes in length. Discusses the hazards associated with bodies of water in various environments and forms.
  
- E. “Water Safety, A Family Affair” - Video cassette, 16 minutes in length. Discusses how to avoid accidents while recreating around water.



# Skits and Scripts

## **“The Adventures of Sandy and Sally”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety Puppet Show

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** 3 years and up

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**THEME:** Don't forget to play it safe while you are having fun at the beach.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To teach the importance of following rules and being safe.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** To inform the audience of the rules and safety habits when swimming or near water.

**DESCRIPTION:** Script

**Sandy** - Hi, my name is Sandy.

**Sally** - And I'm Sally.

**Sandy** - We're here to talk to you about water safety.

**Sally** - Yeah, and cool ways to enjoy your summer.

**Sandy** - And how to do it safely.

**Sally** - One of the best ways to keep cool is to go swimming. There's nothing like having the beach all to yourself, just swimming the day away and...

**Sandy** - Wait a minute, you don't go to the beach and swim alone?

**Sally** - Yeah, I do it all the time.

**Sandy** - Didn't you know that it could be dangerous and you could drown?

**Sally** - How's that?

**Sandy** - If you get into trouble in the water who would help? No one, and that can lead to a serious injury or even death.

**Sally** - I never thought of it that way, so do you think you can go with me to the beach?

**Sandy** - Sure, let's go, but first let's get life jackets to wear.

**Sally** - Oh, I don't need a life jacket. I can swim like a fish.

**Sandy** - Whenever you are around the water it's always best to wear a life jacket.

**Sally** - But I don't like them and they leave me with a bad tan line.

**Sandy** - Life jackets can be fun, whenever you get tired they can keep you afloat and they're also good to help us learn to swim.

**Sally** - Well okay, I guess I'll borrow my brother's life jacket, he won't mind.

**Sandy** - You can't wear that, look at it, it has holes in it and water will weigh it down when your swimming.

**Sally** - You're right. It's not safe to wear a worn out life jacket. I'll get Dad's jacket - it's new and I'll have plenty of room to move around in it.

**Sandy** - It's a good life jacket, but it's too big! You will slip right out of it, you need one that's not too big or too small, but one that fits you.

**Sally** - Okay, Okay, I'll get one for my size.

**Sandy** - That's better. Another thing to remember is to follow all safety rules of the beach.

**Sally** - What kind of rules?

**Sandy** - Like no food or glass bottles should be brought on to the beach.

**Sally** - You mean I can't eat when I go to the lake?

**Sandy** - You can eat but only in grassy areas so the beach doesn't become trashy and smelly from dropped food and wrappers.

**Sally** - What about drinks, can't I have a Pepsi or Kool-Aid?

**Sandy** - Sure, but only if they are in plastic or aluminum containers. Glass bottles can break causing serious injury to those who might step on the glass.

**Sally** - I see, it's best to keep the beach clean for everyone to enjoy.

**Sandy** - Yes, that's it! So everyone can have a good time and a safe beach to play on.

**Sally** - Okay, last one to the buoys is a rotten egg!

**Sandy** - Wait a minute, those buoys are not for playing on. They are there to keep swimmers in the swimming area where it's been cleaned from debris like sharp rocks and tree limbs, and to let boaters know not to come near the area. That's where you'll see no boat buoys floating outside the swimming area.

**Sally** - I guess it's wise for swimmers not to go past the buoy, because it's very dangerous.

**Sandy** - That's right. You can get hurt by a boat or sharp objects so stay in the swimming area.

**Sally** - I now understand how important it is to follow the rules to play it safe in and out of the water.

**Sandy** - Great! I hope all the boys and girls remember to be safe around the water.

**Sally** - Yeah, and to always take a buddy along when going to the lake.

**Sandy** - Let's Go! Have a safe and enjoyable summer.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Two puppets, a box or puppet stand to stand behind, and life jackets (different sizes to show which one is the right one to wear).

## **“Powerbait” Meets Ranger Dave**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Educating unsafe boaters

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** All ages

**TIME:** 15 minutes

**THEME:** Unprepared boaters are all wet.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will be propelled to learn safe boating habits.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

- A. Audience will be able to list at least three pieces of required boating equipment.
- B. Audience will also be capable of describing two safe boating practices.

**DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Park Ranger meets “Powerbait” (Name) while on land patrol. Powerbait is preparing to launch his less than sea-worthy craft and go fishing.
- B. Ranger Dave sees the pathetic conditions of Powerbait and his vessel. Some of the less than ideal conditions and equipment include:
  - Open alcoholic beverages
  - Desiccated PFD’s
  - Anchors Away (Not tied to rope)
  - Antiquated fire extinguisher
  - Too large of outboard motor
  - No audible warning device
  - No navigation lights
  -
- C. Ranger Dave does a boarding and points out the infractions, while Powerbait keeps the audience laughing with his lack of knowledge and his simple minded approach to life.
- D. Although focused on safe boating habits, an impromptu and lighthearted approach keeps this skit fresh and spirited.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Small Jonboat, large motor, old PFD’s, empty beer cans, fishing tackle, Powerbait fishing hat, fire extinguisher, cooler, anchor, rope, and a sense of humor.

## “WPF D News”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** PFD’s save lives

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Older elementary school (4th-6th Grade)

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**THEME:** When you care about your friends safety on the water you make more friends.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Creatively illustrate why PFD’s are an integral part of boating.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Viewers will realize nobody wants to be around those who don’t play safely and wear their life jacket.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Choose volunteers to act the parts in the PSA radio script. Don’t forget people to act out sound effects, narrate, be producer/director, etc. The following is a sample script:

“PFD’s Save Lives!!”

**Situation:** Two young men, to be joined by a young woman, about to set off in a boat for a day’s fishing.

**Larry:** Hey, Jimbo, the hour of the great fishing trip has arrived, right? Pass me those PFD’s.

**Jim:** PF whats?

**Larry:** PFD’s man - Personal Flotation Devices. Life Jackets! I say who needs ‘em, but (sarcastically) Lindsey says PFD’s can prevent 80% of drownings and she feels “safer” with ‘em on board, so what the heck, right? Just stow ‘em someplace. Hey, here’s Lindsey!

**Lindsey:** Hi guys!

**Larry:** You’re gonna feel so safe - your PFD’s are all on board.

**Lindsey:** Well, you’re improving! Let’s see if they fit everybody.

**Larry:** What for? The boat goes down, we grab our PFD’s and float away, right? Then somebody comes by and picks us up.

**Lindsey:** You wish! You think you can count on that?

**Jim (to himself):** This man has a death wish! (Aloud) Larry, shouldn’t we wear them? If the boat went down in a spin, they could get thrown out of reach.

**Larry(still nonchalant but getting peeved):** Hey, we’d think of something.

**Jim:** Look buddy, attitudes like that kill people. Lindsey, you still want to go?

**Lindsey:** Nah, let's just split. So long Larry.

**Larry** (voice fading out): Hey, I'm putting it on!

**Narrator:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Your safety. Our concern.

**Program Note:** Once you get over the silliness and the kids lose their inhibitions, it can be a fun and entertaining way to get across the importance of PFD's. It may also take a few takes before the script goes smoothly.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Sample scripts, usually 60 second psa's. You can use old Corps of Engineers scripts, or be a playwright and create your own.

## “What You Should Know”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Elementary School

**TIME:** 10 minutes

**THEME:** Reach, Throw, Row, Go is very important to know when you are around water.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To teach the audience the importance of water safety

**OBJECTIVE(S):** To have the audience remember Reach, Throw, Row, Go, and other safety precautions while taking part in water recreation.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

#### **CAST OF CHARACTERS**

Cynthia the Frog -- Very ambitious, smart, and caring.

Nellie the Monarch -- Often flutters around, a leader, kind, and sometimes bashful.

Susie the Snake -- Helpful, but self-centered and slightly vain.

Rick the Beaver -- Likes to take charge, understanding.

Joe the Grey Squirrel -- The comedian of the group.

*Stage left has waves symbolizing water line. Stage right is the beach. There are a few beach items strewn about. Curtain opens to scene in progress. Nellie is flying around the area. Joe the Squirrel is out in the water splashing and having a great time. Suddenly Joe starts to sink, then resurface. He is struggling to stay afloat.*

**Joe:** Help! I'm Drowning! Help!!

**Nellie:** Oh my! Joe is in trouble! I have no arms to help him! I'm much smaller than he-he'd pull me in if I tried to reach him. Oh dear me, what can I do? *(Pause)* I'll fly for help. *(She flies off the stage).*

*(Susie slithers up to the water. Joe is still yelling in the background).*

**Susie:** Gracious. He looks rather wet. Perhaps he needs assistance. Too bad I just shed my skin. I can't get it all soggy - that would ruin my sleek complexion. *(Susie slithers to the edge of the water and watches Joe).*

*(At this point, Cynthia and Rick come on stage holding air mattresses and wearing PFD's. They do not notice Joe).*

**Rick:** These waves look great! I can't wait to try out our new air mattresses!

**Cynthia:** Me neither, Rick! Hey, Your PFD sure looks cool.

**Rick:** Thanks! I just bought it at Shopko!



**Cynthia:** You know, mine's gettin' kinda old, maybe I need a new one.

**Rick:** That's right. If they get too old they might not work ---  
*(At this point, they notice Joe).*

**Cynthia:** Oh dear me! Lookie!

**Rick:** Heavens de Mergatroid!

**Susie:** Yes, frightful mess he's in, isn't it?

**Cynthia:** Oh! We have to help!

**Rick:** But what do we do?

**Susie:** It's hopeless ---

*(Just then Rick grabs Susie and flings her out to Joe)*

**Susie:** Oh My! What are you doing, you animal? Put me down! You BEAST! Let me go!

*(Seeing that Susie will not reach Joe, Rick puts her down)*

**Cynthia:** She won't reach, it's no use!

**Rick:** Use this air mattress!

**Cynthia:** That's right, Rick! THROW!

*(With that Rick throws the air mattress out to Joe. Joe grabs a hold and glides to safety).*

**Joe:** *(Waterlogged, coughing, and gagging)* Thanks for saving my life!

**Susie:** *(To Rick)* You savage beast! Look at this! You've destroyed me! I had a date! *(To Joe)* I am glad you are alright Joe. *(Susie slithers off stage, disgusted).*

*(Nellie flies back on stage)*

**Nellie** *(out of breath):* I called 911!

**Rick:** It's okay, we have everything under control.

**Joe:** Yes, I'm okay. Thanks to these fine animals.

**Cynthia:** Now Joe - why weren't you swimming with a buddy? Where is your PFD?

**Joe:** PFD? What is that Cynthia?

**Cynthia:** A Personal Flotation Device.

**Joe:** Oh! A life jacket!

**Cynthia:** Yes!

**Joe:** Well they look funny...and...well...and...um...

**Cynthia:** That is a silly reason to risk your life, don't you think?

**Joe:** Yes, I guess so.

**Rick:** What about your buddy? You could've asked us. We would've gone with you.

**Nellie** (*in a high pitched voice*): But that's okay! Everything is fine now.

**Rick:** Nellie is right, but next time just be more cautious.

**Nellie:** Always have a buddy, a PFD, and an adult watching you.

**Joe:** Yeah, guess that would've saved a lot of troubles, eh?

**Rick:** Say, do you guys remember that song, the one about water safety. I think it is called "Think Fast - What You Should Know."

**Cynthia:** YES! Let's sing!

**Nellie:** Oh Joy!

*(They all break into song).*

CHORUS: Reach, throw, row, and go  
These are four things you should know  
Reach, throw, row, and go  
These are four things you should know

VERSE 1: Reach--it's what you do with your arms and legs,  
Or anything else that will stretch real far  
stretch real far

REPEAT CHORUS

VERSE 2:     Throw--it's what you toss to those waving arms  
                  Something that'll float and keep 'em from harm  
  keep 'em from harm

REPEAT CHORUS

VERSE 3:     Row--Jump in a boat and GO, GO, GO, GO, GO. GO  
                  Once you're there reach or throw  
  reach or throw

REPEAT CHORUS

VERSE 4:     Go--If you can't get nothin' else to work  
                  Use those legs and run for help  
  run for help

REPEAT CHORUS

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Beach Towel, 2 PFD's, and an Air Mattress.

## "The Story of Ranger Willie B. Safe"

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety skit

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** All ages

**TIME:** 10 - 15 minutes

**THEME:** Members of Ranger Willie B. Safe's Safety Team make safe choices while around the water.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will realize the importance of being safe on or around the water.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to name at least 3 water safety principles and associate the "thumbs up" sign with safety.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Have a cassette player with the "The Story of Willie B. Safe" song ready to play.
- B. Hand out a copy of "The Story of Willie B. Safe" song to everyone in the audience. First have everyone listen to the song without singing. Encourage audience participation in singing the song the second time it is played.
- C. Before playing the song the second time ask for volunteers to come up to the front of the audience to act out the song. The number of volunteers can vary.
- D. Distribute the props to the volunteers and explain to them what they will need to do.
  - Five volunteers can hold one of the different cue cards. The remaining cards can be distributed throughout the audience. When the volunteers holding the cards hear the phrase that is on their card they should hold it up for everyone to see.
  - One volunteer can blow up and hold two balloons. The volunteer should not tie the balloons. They let go of the balloons on the "don't depend on inflatable toys" phrase.
  - The volunteer that wears the life jacket models it during the "PFD" section of the song.
  - If you use a wheelchair, have one volunteer sit in it and another one push it towards the audience during the "Never Dive" section of the song. The volunteer could also wear a neck brace during this section of the song.
  - The volunteer that wears the big sunglasses starts looking around at the audience during "those watching are sure to see" phrase of the song.
  - A volunteer can hold the minnow bucket and they toss it somewhere near the audience during "something nearby that floats will do" phrase of the song.
  - During the "hold out a paddle and pull them to you" phrase of the song, the volunteer holding the boat oar reaches it out to someone.
  - Everybody hugs one another during the "Lots More Hugs" section of the song.
- E. When the song is over, let everyone know that they are now a part of Ranger Willie's Safety Team. Encourage everyone to give you a thumbs up for safety. Explain to the audience that if they ever see you again to give you a thumbs up and then you will know that they are part of Ranger Willie's Safety Team. Also, encourage them to give other people a thumbs up for safety when they see them being safe.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:**

The Story of Willie B. Safe song sheets, “You Can’t Keep a Good Life Jacket Down!” cassette –  
“The Story of Willie B. Safe” song

- minnow bucket
- balloons
- boat oar
- neck brace (optional)
- life jacket
- large sunglasses
- tape player
- microphone
- wheelchair (optional)

**3 of each: Learn to Swim, PFD, Never Dive, Swim with a Buddy, and Lots More Hugs signs**

## "Water Safety with Ranger Willie B. Safe"

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** All ages

**TIME:** 15 - 20 minutes (beach program using 1 - 2 skits)

30 - 45 minutes (campground program using 3 - 4 skits)

**THEME:** Many people die every year because they do not follow basic water safety principles.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** The audience will realize the importance of being safe on or near the water and be motivated to learn more about water safety on their own.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** At the completion of the program the audience will be able to identify 1 or 2 rules of water safety and will associate the thumbs up sign with being safe. The audience will wear their life jackets and will encourage others to wear theirs. At the completion of this program, the audience will respect the water and will not take the importance of being safe around it for granted.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Set up the skits so that they are visible to the entire audience.
- B. It is ideal to choose volunteers for the skits before your program starts. This keeps your program moving along smoothly without interruptions. If this is not possible, take a few minutes during the program to get volunteers.
- C. Remember the volunteers should be willing to participate. Explain to them briefly what they are going to be doing.
- D. Explain to the volunteers what their parts in the skits will be. Let them know that they act out their part according to what you say during the program.
- E. The skits involve the volunteers being in unsafe situations on or near the water.

### **SKITS:**

#### Fishing from the shore / Reach, Throw, Row, Don't Go

Kid on an inflatable raft / Swim with a buddy

Alcohol and boating can be a deadly combination

Be Dam careful (or It Can Suck the Life Out of You)

Hotdoggers stay home

Life jacket fashion show / Life Jackets: They Float. You Don't.

- A. Skits are attached and can be changed to fit your needs or different skits can be used.
- B. Have music playing while the audience is entering to set the mood. Preferably music pertaining to water safety.
- C. Welcome everyone to your program, introduce yourself, and explain your program briefly. Try and state the theme somewhere in the introduction.
- D. Ask for a volunteer to be your assistant. Pick a willing volunteer, preferably from the age of 10 -12 years old. The volunteer will be Park Ranger Willie B. Safe. Provide a ranger hat and life jacket for Ranger Willie.
- E. You and Ranger Willie interact throughout the program. You ask Ranger Willie if the participants in the skits will be safe. You may need to provoke Ranger Willie using questions to encourage the correct response.

- F. Don't embarrass or humiliate your volunteers in front of everyone. Remember you need them, so make them feel comfortable.
- G. After it has been explained why the participants in the skit were not safe and what should be done to be safe, tell Ranger Willie that he/she was right and give them a "thumbs up for safety".
- H. Have the audience give a "thumbs up for safety". This should be done after each skit and at the end of the program.
- I. Explain to the audience that if they ever see you again they should give you a Thumbs Up For Safety. They can also give the thumbs up sign to other people that they see being safe. This will help your audience recall your program and remember to be safe.
- J. Thank your volunteers for assisting you and give them something for helping.
- K. Wrap up your program with a strong conclusion. Repeat the theme one more time. Thank everyone for coming.
- L. Have handouts for the audience and encourage them to take them.
- M. Tell the audience about upcoming programs or have flyers available on them.
- N. Let the audience know that they may ask questions, concerning the program, your agency or project at the end of the program.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:**

Skit materials are included with the scripts

Water safety music	Sound system and microphone	Handouts and flyers
Prizes for volunteers	Ranger hat and life jacket for Ranger Willie	

**FISHING FROM SHORE / REACH, THROW, ROW, DON'T GO SKIT**

Items Needed: Fishing pole, Long stick or something to reach with, Cooler or something to throw that floats, Two volunteers, preferably adults

One volunteer will be a fisherman acting like they are fishing from shore. Give them a fishing pole for a prop. The other volunteer will be a passerby that may need to help the fisherman.

The fisherman slips into the water and can't save himself. The passerby thinks about jumping in to save the fisherman, but is encouraged by the audience not to do so. The passerby then finds a long stick to try and reach the fisherman, but the fisherman is just out of reach. The passerby notices a cooler that belongs to the fisherman. The passerby empties the cooler and places the lid back on it. Then the passerby throws the cooler out to the fisherman. The fisherman reaches for the cooler and uses it to float on. The fisherman floats close to the shore and is saved.

Explain reach, throw, row, don't go and why you should wear a life jacket near the water even if you don't intend to get into the water. Remember to interact with Ranger Willie and give he/she the thumbs up sign. Have the audience also give the thumbs up for safety sign.

**KID ON AN INFLATABLE RAFT / SWIM WITH A BUDDY SKIT**

Items Needed: Inflatable raft

3 or 4 volunteers portraying the following:  
one child that will be on the raft, one swimmer, one or two parents

The kid is floating several feet from shore and it looks as though no one is paying any attention to the child. The raft hits a stick in the water and starts to leak. The kid panics and falls into the water. The kid does not know how to swim and the depth of the water is over their head. They try to yell, but no words come out. The kid starts waving and thrashing their arms in all different directions. The kid goes under the water. Wait 5 seconds. But luckily a person swimming nearby noticed the kid go under the water. The swimmer pulls the kid out of the water. The kid's parents are enjoying lunch several feet away and wonder what all of the commotion is about. They realize it is their kid being carried out of the water. In a panic they run to see if their kid is ok. Luckily the kid is alive.

Explain that a child can drown in only 20 seconds, swim with a buddy, and don't rely on inflatable toys.

### **ALCOHOL AND BOATING CAN BE A DEADLY COMBINATION SKIT**

Items needed: Two volunteers as boaters    Mock boat    Cooler

Two boaters are enjoying a beautiful day on the lake. While enjoying the lake they are also enjoying something else, alcohol. They are boating along with nothing to worry about. The alcohol is effecting their vision, coordination, judgement, and balance. As the day goes on the boaters start getting a little careless; yelling, standing up, horsing around, and making their boat go faster and faster. The boaters do not realize that they are headed straight for a bridge. When they do realize it the driver tries to swerve, but it's too late and they hit the bridge with such force that it throws them both out of the boat. Ask Ranger Willie and the audience if they think the boaters survived.

Explain that more than 50% of all boating accidents involve alcohol, know when to say when - drink in moderation and the best thing to do is leave the alcohol on shore.

### **BE DAM CAREFUL or IT CAN SUCK THE LIFE OUT OF YOU SKIT**

Items Needed: Mock boat                      "Dam" sign                      No boat buoy (optional)  
Fishing pole                                      Life jacket                                      One volunteer fishing from boat

The boater is having no luck fishing, but they have heard that there are a lot of fish near the dam. They decide to check it out. Their fishing luck increases the closer they get to the dam, but they notice a lot of fish right up next to the dam. The boater notices the no boat buoys, but pays no attention to them because the water looks calm. The fisherman is right about the fish and catches a nice one that is a fighter. The fight continues and is nearly over when the fisherman decides to stand up. They lose their balance and fall overboard, but they are safe because they are wearing their life jacket. But wait, the fisherman is pulled under the water and cannot be seen. Ask Ranger Willie where the fisherman went.

Explain to the audience that they should stay clear of a dam's intake and outtake, because they can suck the life out of you. Interact with Ranger Willie to explain the undertow near dams and why it is important to obey warning signs and buoys.



## **LIFE JACKET FASHION SHOW SKIT**

Items needed: Five different types of PFDs                      Five volunteers

Have the volunteers come up and each one gets a different type of PFD to model. One at a time have each volunteer show off their PFD. Describe each PFD as it is being modeled. With a little audience encouragement the volunteers will usually strut their stuff. After the fifth volunteer is done explain why it is important to wear a life jacket on or near the water. They float, you don't, and an unconscious person can't swim or try to save themselves. Explain state laws throughout the show.

## **HOTDOGGERS STAY HOME / PWC OPERATION SKIT**

Items needed: One volunteer as PWC operator                      Life jacket

Look, there is a person who is enjoying this nice day riding their Jet Ski. Looks like they are being pretty safe by wearing their life jacket. The PWC operator notices a boat making a big wake and has heard that it can be dangerous to jump wakes, but there are not a lot of boats around and wonders how dangerous could it really be anyway. They jump the wake and don't see any danger in it and it is really fun. The boat throws a huge wake that can't be resisted. The PWC operator notices that they can probably get the biggest jump the closer they get to the boat and decide to challenge it. They take off anticipating the jump. They do not realize that there is a boat approaching on the other side of the wake. They are in mid-air before they notice the oncoming boat and by then it is too late to do anything about it. Luckily the oncoming boat sees the Jet Ski and turns before they collide. Ask Ranger Willie what the PWC operator could have done differently to avoid that close call.

Explain that a PWC should be operated safely and hotdoggers should stay home. Explain that not all PWC operators are hotdoggers and that the operators that are not being courteous should stay home before they ruin the sport for everyone.

# Contests

## “Water Safety Poster Coloring Contest”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety Poster Coloring Contest

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** All ages

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**THEME:** Water Safety is important to communicate to others, especially through posters.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will understand knowing water safety can be fun.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** To create a water safety poster that reminds the participants of the importance of water safety.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Locate an enclosed area, or outside (but in the shade and protected from wind), set up several tables in the shape of a horseshoe.
- B. For inspiration, put up several of the large colored water safety posters around this work (coloring) area. These posters are available through water safety products.
- C. Before the children begin creating their own posters, use about 10 minutes to go through water safety material that is suitable for giving the children several messages and ideas.
- D. Tell the children to try to have a sub-theme, although the overall theme is Water Safety. Possible sub-themes are:
  - Don't Drown Your Dreams
  - PFD...Your Vest for Life
  - Water Safety is Our Concern - Please Make It Yours
  - When You Boat - Be Prepared to Float
  - Water Safety - Be Aware - Be Alive
  - Water Safety is a Family Affair
  - Wear A PFD - Your Friend for Life
  - Water - Live to Enjoy It
  - Water - Respect It or Regret It
  - The Corps Wants You - To Be Water Safe
  - PFD - Are you putting me on?
  - Drownings Don't Just Happen -- Think Water Safety
  - Children, Don't Take Your Eyes Off Of Them
  - Invest in Life - Wear a PFD
  - Learn How to Swim - The Life You Save Could Be Yours
  - Reach or Throw - Don't Go
- E. Posters are judged on creativity, clearness of message, suitable message, or other categories.
- F. Try to find a place to display the posters.

G. Each participant of the contest should receive a certificate.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Crayons, markers, and other material children can draw with (paints, and stamps work too!). Paper or half-size poster board is also needed.

# **Special Events**

## “Water Safety Festival”

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Water Safety Festival

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** All ages

**TIME:** 6-8 hours

**THEME:** When taking part in water-based activities, one should always practice water safety.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To increase the visitor's knowledge of water safety, in turn, decreasing the number of accidents, injuries, and fatalities on the lake.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Visitors will know water safety skills that they can use when recreating on/or in the water.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Establish a date, time, and location of the event.
- B. Develop a list of topics/activities that you would like represented at the festival.
- C. Check area for various resources that could be used for the event. This could be boat dealers, water ski clubs, B.A.S.S. Master organizations, local, state, and federal agencies, personal watercraft organizations, etc. Establish a point of contact for these organizations and agencies, and keep them informed of the proceedings.
- D. Create a letter or festival newsletter that could be periodically sent to participants. Various articles applying to the event as well as water safety topics could be included in this newsletter. Perhaps participants would be interested in contributing an article to the newsletter.
- E. Establish a Water Safety Festival Committee, and assign members of the committee certain tasks so as to decrease your work load. For those lakes that have a Water Safety Council, this would be an excellent place to start. This committee should include a representative from each participating agency or organization (if possible). Involve the participants!
- F. Schedule dates for organizational meetings prior to the Water Safety Festival. These meetings will offer an opportunity for participants to discuss displays and presentation ideas, and to brainstorm on other possible persons or organizations that might be interested in becoming involved in the festival. Other topics discussed at these meetings include display set up and take down, scheduling of events for the day of, advertising and policies.
- G. Schedule a show on the event at a local television station. This show could be 1/2-1 hour in length. Encourage participating organizations to send a representative to take part in this show. Interviews on local radio stations and television news broadcasts is also a good source of passing the word.
- H. Develop posters advertising the event, and arrange printing the same.

- I. Arrange to have a sound system for the day of the event.
- J. Establish and mark land and water presentation areas.
- K. Volunteers could be used to assist in set-up, traffic control, and at displays. The Coast Guard Auxiliary could also provide assistance. Some local Coast Guard Auxiliary units provides safety patrols for the perimeter of the water demonstration area.
- L. Arrange for a local radio station to do remote broadcasts from the festival (most radio stations will do this free of charge).
- M. Plan/Develop a Corps display for the festival.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Corps display, buoys to mark the water demonstration area, some type of dock for participants to use, picnic tables (or other kinds) for displays, banners advertising the festival, and directional signs.

**NOTE:** If you wish to develop a Water Safety Festival, it is recommended to start small, and work your way up - it's a learning experience. The events/displays need to be entertaining as well as educational in order to attract and keep visitors interested. Also, avoid "down time" between presentations to keep the audience interested.

**TOPIC:** Water Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AUDIENCE:** To decorate the bags – 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> graders, distribute bags to Adults

**THEME:** Everyone should be made aware of general water safety principles.

**GOAL:** Students will learn basic water safety principles, will practice them, and encourage others to do so also.

**OBJECTIVES:** Students and shoppers will be able to recall one water safety principle. Students will have fun decorating the bags and shoppers will enjoy receiving the bags.

**ACTIVITY PLAN:**

- A. Contact grocery stores that use large paper bags. See if the manager will let you “borrow” enough bags so that each student (Grades 3<sup>rd</sup>–6<sup>th</sup>) in the local school can decorate one. At least one side of the bags needs to be blank. Grocery stores usually get bags in bundles of 500.
- B. Explain the program to the manager. Let them know what the students are going to do with the bags and explain the goal of the program. Explain that you would like the bags distributed during National Safe Boating Week and that the bags will be returned a couple of days before it starts.
- C. National Safe Boating Week is around the third week in May.
- D. Contact the principals at the elementary schools to see if they would like their students to participate in this program. Explain the program to them. Let them know that you will drop off and pick up the bags at the schools.
- E. Each student gets one bag to decorate. They decorate their bag with pictures and messages pertaining to water safety.
- F. The bags can be decorated with colored pencils, markers, or paint. Items can also be glued on to the bags as long as the bag lies flat when it is finished.
- G. Students can put their school name and their name (first name only) on the bags.
- H. Teachers should encourage the students to be creative.
- I. If the teacher would like for the students to decorate more than one bag they can do so as long as there is enough bags for everyone.
- J. Here are some things that you might want to provide the teachers.
  - 1) A water safety reference packet that includes instructions on how the students should decorate the bags, posters, brochures, stickers, etc.
  - 2) Program or Assembly on water safety
  - 3) Videos and activities on water safety
  - 4) Inform them of water safety web sites that they can visit such as <http://watersafety.usace.army.mil> or [www.safeboatingcouncil.org](http://www.safeboatingcouncil.org)
- K. Give the schools a month to decorate the bags.
- L. Pick up the bags from the stores and take them to the schools. After the students are done decorating the bags pick them up from the schools and return them to the stores a couple of days before National Safe Boating Week starts.
- M. Inspect the bags before you take them back to the stores. Make sure the water safety message is appropriate and that the student’s full name is not on the bag.
- N. Send a thank you letter to the schools and stores that participated in the program.
- O. This is a fun and inexpensive way to spread the water safety message.



**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:**

Large paper grocery bags supplied by grocery stores

Decorating materials provided by the schools

Water safety brochures, posters, and other information

# Displays

## **“Boating Safety Walkaround”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Proper safety equipment on board, along with other suggested items, is necessary. Water safety message can be spread where the rubber meets the road.

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Children and Adults

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**THEME:** Safety equipment and other related items must be on the boat in order to help.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To point out the importance of being prepared when going boating. In the absence of a state requirement for licensing of boat operators, use as an interpretive tool to inform the public.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to see what kind of safety equipment is required for the size of boat on display as well as other type boats; provide checklist of items, water safety brochures, stickers, etc.

### **DESCRIPTION:**

Get the trailer, boat, and other boating safety items to site where activity is occurring; visual impact is greater when you can demonstrate what is needed. Ask boaters launching to show you their safety equipment, and can recommend needed equipment. In instances where the boater does not have necessary required equipment, it is allowed to require that they go purchase equipment before they launch.

**BOAT RAMP** - Park adjacent to loading/unloading area, and display safety banner and equipment. As boaters prepare to launch, ask to check their safety equipment, provide checklist, brochures, buoy information, etc. Clean/neat boat a must. Total time: 2-3 minutes.

**SCHOOLS** - Take a trailer boat to schools for water safety programs. Distribute coloring books, stickers, etc. Describe equipment and what it is used for. Total time: 30 minutes.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Clean project boat with all required safety equipment and suggested boating items. In addition, water safety brochures, stickers, coloring books, etc. can be distributed.

## **“Take Boating Safety Serious!”**

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Boating Safety

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** All ages

**TIME:** 2-3 hours (8 hours at Sport Shows)

**THEME:** Take boating safety serious!

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** To promote boating safety on Corps of Engineers projects.

**OBJECTIVE(S):**

A. By using a borrowed, wrecked boat, getting water safety messages across to the public.

B. To make people aware of the importance of having the proper equipment and boating sober.

**DESCRIPTION:**

A. Call an area marina, boat dealer, or insurance company close to the project. Ask for a boat that could be used to display at a water safety event or at the beach on a designated weekend.

B. The boat should be placed in a highly visible area, like just off the sidewalk heading down to the sand at the beach.

C. Post posters around the display that contain water safety messages.

D. This works well, because people are always very curious about wrecks. When they see the damaged boat, they will naturally come over to look at it. A couple of Park Rangers are standing by to hand out water safety information and explain the cause of the damage.

E. Boats that have been wrecked due to an impaired operator or burned because of lack of proper equipment are ideal. This works well because people are more likely to remember the damage that they see.

F. This can be useful for Hunting and Fishing shows as well.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT:** Make up posters with water safety messages. Also need water safety literature and information.