

PLAN B - Stay Safe In Water Survivability Techniques

On shore waves, cant sail or kayak? give this a go.

We are very privileged to be able to share these ideas the Coastguard use, to teach our children some life saving skills, as an excellent Plan B.

Coastguard teach and practice the following activities firstly beside the pool for the demonstration and in the shallow end of the pool.

We will do a beach demonstration, as usual, and then carry out the activities in shallow water. These can be done on a wavy day, the waves will add to the experience, however in this case it would not be safe for a PB to be hovering around children in the water. You will need all help to be prepared to get thoroughly wet. These conditions are the same as when we use boogie boards. Which could be a great way to finish off this wet session.

HUDDLE POSITION

A huddle is the position used if there is more than 1 person in the water. The idea is to keep warm in the water by being close together and maintaining the body's core temperature.



Beach Demonstration

In groups of up to 10, standing on the beach in a circle, facing each other, explain that arms should be placed around the person next to you, not up high, good idea is to grip their vest around their waist. Discuss who should be placed in the middle of the Huddle, coldest, youngest, most vulnerable. The Huddle should be very tight, the smaller the spaces between people, the warmer they will feel. Discuss hypothermia and cold water shock.

Explain that if they stay together as a group, they will keep warmer and will benefit from psychological advantages, staying awake, keeping positive and will be a larger target for rescue services, which will enhance their chance of survival.

When the children are happy with the task, let the children go into the water in their groups, with adults staying close to each group, no need to go out of their depth

RESCUE CHAIN

A Rescue Chain, is a method used to move a group of people through the water from one location to another. It's not easy to judge distances especially in emergency conditions with rough cold water, tides and wind. Trying to recognise whether we should stay put in a huddle waiting for rescue or swimming to shore could affect your chances of survival.

The principal of a rescue chain is to stay together no matter what.

Only attempt short distances (less than 100 m)

Strongest swimmer at the head of the chain, second strongest swimmer at the back of the chain, third strongest swimmer, in the middle of the chain.

Here are 3 methods which we can try :

1. Snake Method



Beach Demonstration

First child to stand on sand, arms folded across chest, second child to stand behind the first, hold tightly on to their vest, at the shoulders, with both hands, and straight arms, Keep adding more children behind, up to 10, now you have a Rescue Chain.

Explain that in the water they will be lying on their back, kicking with their feet, straight arms, head back, holding on to the vest in front of you. They will be moving backwards through the water, usually not in a straight line, so it looks a bit like a snake swimming.

If you have big classes, the children always love a race, you could divide the class into teams and have Rescue Chain Races.

Huddle Position Opening Up To A Rescue Chain

The Huddle can be a place of safety, while you check everyone ok, and what to do next, if there is an option to swim to shore, then staying together is important.

Beach demonstration, to start this demonstration, we need about 7-8 children already standing in a huddle, as already practiced.



To start the rescue chain, 1 child from the outside of the huddle (Red top) who is a strong swimmer, (this could be discussed whilst in a huddle), to peel off the huddle and hold both shoulders straps of the child to your right, everyone else to remain in the huddle position.



The next person turns to child on right and holds onto their shoulders, this keeps going until the Huddle has unwound to be a Rescue Chain.



The child in the middle is the last to leave the huddle.

2. Crocodile Method



Beach Demonstration

First child sitting on beach, legs straight out, arms free, second child to sit behind wrapping their legs round the first child's waist, arms free, and so on, depending on how many you want in a chain. The idea is that whilst their legs are holding on to child in front, their arms are free to swim backwards together. Children to move both arms in a circular motion, it is most effective when they coordinate their strokes, They can decide before they go in the water, or give both ways a go.

3. Side By Side Method



Beach Demonstration

This method is optional as it may be less effective. It could be a good option if you want the children to compare the methods.

This is the third option for doing a Rescue Chain. This time you are side by side. Have the children sitting in a row side by side, get them to shuffle together, arms linked, hands locked together. Explain that in the water they will be swimming on their backs, heads up. Keeping arms linked together and hands locked together.

HELP POSITION - Heat Escape Lessening Position

This is a good position to get into when you are in the water on your own and especially in cold water.

The idea is to stop heat loss around important areas like the chest and the groin area where there are vital organs.



Beach Demonstration and practice.

Sit on the beach

Cross arms across chest holding vest.

Bring knees up to chest, sometimes this can upset your balance in the water, if this happens, bring your knees down, but still cross your ankles.

Ready for the water now