

Water Safety Lesson Plan

Objectives

By the end of this lesson students should know:

1. the Water Safety Code
2. some basic techniques for rescuing a person in difficulty
3. how to avoid neck injuries from diving into shallow water

Materials

Water safety wordsearch
Water Safety Code leaflet
Beach safety leaflet
Beach safety flags leaflet

[All downloadable from lifeguardsupport.co.uk]

Small bowl of water

Introduction

“How many of you went to the beach this summer?”

“Beaches are fun, but did you know they can also be dangerous?”

“How many people live near a river or lake?”

“Swimming is fun but it can also be dangerous”

“How many of you know how to help someone who can't swim and has got out of their depth?”

Presentation

The Water Safety Code has four points:

1. Spot the dangers
2. Take advice
3. Don't go it alone
4. Learn how to help

1. **Spot the dangers**

Every stretch of open water (beaches, ponds, rivers, lakes) has its own particular set of dangers. When you get to an area of open water for the first time you should try and spot the dangers for yourself. What dangers are there at the beach? What questions should you ask when you first get there?

- Are there any warning signs?
- Where is the lifeguard and first aid station?
- What is the ground like? Will I cut my feet if I walk on it? Is it slippery?
- Are there safe places to get in and out of the water?
- Who else is using the water (boats, jetskis, windsurfers etc)?
- How cold is the water?
- What would I do if I got lost? Is there a place we can arrange to meet if one of us gets lost?
- What are the times of the tide? Does the tide come in very quickly?
- Are there any piers, groynes, breakwaters or other things I should beware of?
- How deep is the water? Is it safe to dive?

2. **Take advice**

Most areas will have lifeguards. They are there to make sure you are safe so ask them questions! If you don't know what the dangers are, or what time the tide comes in, then ask!

Make sure you swim in the lifeguarded area as shown by red and yellow flags (give out flags handout).

3. **Don't go it alone**

Never swim on your own, always take someone else with you (preferably an adult) and always tell an adult where you are going. If you are on your own and you have a problem then who is there to get help?

4. Learn how to help

Everyone can learn some of the skills of a lifeguard. If you see someone in difficulty you should:

- a. **Call for help** from a lifeguard or get someone to dial 999
- b. **Reach or throw**
 - you can be most help if you stay securely on land
 - if the person is near the edge you can reach out to them with a branch or an oar if you have one. Take care not to lean out too far!
 - If they are further away then throw them something that floats to hold on to (a ball, an empty plastic bottle, a life vest). Then they will stay afloat while help comes
- c. Most importantly of all – **DON'T GET IN!** If there are two people stuck in the water then the lifeguards will have to rescue you both!

To recap, the Water Safety Code has four points:

1. **Spot the dangers**
2. **Take advice**
3. **Don't go it alone**
4. **Learn how to help**

Diving into shallow water is very dangerous. Every year, lots of people end up with serious neck injuries because they dive into water that is not deep enough.

Activity:

Take a volunteer and stand them on a chair with a small bowl of water on the floor at their feet. Say “Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the daring superstar Alex. Alex will thrill and amaze us all with a death-defying dive into this tiny bowl of water. Drum roll please.....5..4..3..2..1..”
Silence. Laughter. Ask Alex why he didn’t dive and you’ll hopefully get an answer something like “It’s too shallow”

The easy-to-remember message is “look before you leap”. If you are not sure how shallow it is, then you don’t want to find out with your head!

Quiz

Hand out the water safety word search – allow time for students to complete it and share their answers. Alternatively, you could hand this out as an assignment.

Put three chairs at the front of the room facing the class and select three volunteers to be the contestants in “Who wants to be a lifeguard”. Ask the contestants the following questions, the one who puts their hand up first gets to answer, and the most correct answers wins.

1. When you get to the beach what is the first thing you should do?
 - a. Spot the dangers
 - b. Look for the ice-cream shop
 - c. Go for a swim

2. How do you tell where the lifeguards are?
 - a. They always stay in the middle of the beach
 - b. There are red and yellow flags to tell you
 - c. There are black and white flags to tell you

3. What should you do if you see someone in trouble in the water?
 - a. Dive in and rescue them
 - b. Call for help then reach or throw
 - c. Run away and hide

4. What should you do before you dive?
 - a. Make sure you are wearing your goggles
 - b. Make sure it is deep enough
 - c. Make sure everyone is looking at your fantastic skill

Summary

Today we have looked at:

- The Water Safety Code (“what is it?”)
- Some of the dangers at the beach (“name some dangers”)
- How to help someone in trouble in the water (“call for help, reach, throw”)
- What to do before you dive (“look before you leap”)