

WATER SAFETY SKILLS FOR STUDENTS

For Grade Levels K5 through 8TH

**CITY OF MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT
SAFETY DIVISION
MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL**

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INTRODUCTION

Spring is the time of year that brings rain and sometimes even flooding in our Milwaukee rivers, creeks, and lakes. The City of Milwaukee has faced many issues with accidental drowning, in the past involving our children. That is why the Milwaukee Police Department Safety Division would like to keep the momentum of educating our youth on water safety. To further this education we need your help as the educator in the schools of utilizing this water safety program in your classrooms, specifically at this time of the year.

Therefore, it is important that you help us educate Milwaukee's youth on water safety.

MATERIALS INCLUDED

We are providing a teaching strategy on how to educate children on the importance of water safety rules, with questions and answers, suggested activities, activity sheets, a "Water Safety Teachers Guide", and "Water Safety Tips for Students". The materials we have provided for you will help children recognize things they should not do and who to call when someone is having trouble in the water.

TEACHING STRATEGY

As the educator, please review these following steps to ensure the Lesson Plan is followed:

1. Review "Following Water Safety Teacher's Guide.
2. Review Lessons with students.
3. Confirm that the students have a foundation on the water safety rules.
4. Stimulate classroom discussion with questions and answers with students.
5. Water Safety Activity Sheets are also provided.

Objectives:

- A. To develop an understanding that knowing how to swim is important.
- B. To develop an understanding that you should always swim in a supervised area.
- C. To develop an understanding that you should know the water environment you are in.
- D. To develop an understanding that you should always wear safety gear when in bodies of water.
- E. To develop an understanding that you should always look before you leap (look before you enter any body of water).
- F. To develop an understanding to never go near bodies of water after a rainfall.
- G. To develop an understanding to never play, walk, or ride in any motorized vehicles on frozen bodies of water.
- H. To develop an understanding that you should always throw a life jacket to someone who is having trouble in the water and never jump in to try and save him or her, but Call 911!

Methods and Procedures

- A. In order to make this water safety program more effective and timely, it is suggested that the material be presented in the spring.
- B. Present vocabulary through classroom discussion, visual aids and outdoor experiences.
- C. This teachers guide ranges from ages K5 to 8th Grade, please adapt language and activities to appropriate age group and skills.
- D. Use the *Water Safety Teacher's Guide* as a basis for daily instruction. Teach one concept at a time.

LESSON 1 - Know How To Swim

LESSON 2 - Always Swim In A Supervised Area

LESSON 3 - Know The Water Environment

LESSON 4 - Always Wear Your Safety Gear When In Bodies Of Water

LESSON 5 - Look Before You Leap!

LESSON 6 - Safety Hazards of Rivers, Creeks, and Channels after Heavy Rainfalls.

LESSON 7 - Safety Hazards of Frozen Water.

LESSON 8 - Throw! Don't Go. Call 911!

- E. Allow time for question and answers after each lesson. To ensure children have acquired basic knowledge for their age appropriate group of each lesson.
- F. Water Safety activity sheets have been provided.

Vocabulary

The following words represent the basic vocabulary needed to comprehend the material presented in the water safety lessons.

“Designated Adult”	Lifeguard	Safety Gear
Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's)	Channels	Ocean
Rivers	Lake	Frozen Waters

General Water Safety Tips For Students: Follow these general water safety tips whenever swimming in a body of water (pools, lakes, ponds, quarries, canals, rivers or oceans):

LESSON 1 - KNOW HOW TO SWIM

Concept to be taught: Only get in the water if you know how to swim, where a lifeguard or designated adult is present, and someone to swim with (buddy).

1. What would be a supervised area to swim in?

- a. Ex. Pool where a lifeguard is on duty and is present at the pool.
- b. Ex. In the backyard where mom or dad knows how to swim and is the designated adult that is constantly watching.

2. Where do I find out where I can learn to swim?

- a. At a local YMCA, a Summer MPS Division of Recreation and Community Services Division Swim program, Milwaukee County Parks Pools, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee or your local American Red Cross.
- b. Milwaukee's Water Safety Task Force Summer Activities List can be duplicated and provided for children to take home to parents.

3. Give an example of buddies to swim with?

- a. Someone else who knows how to swim.

RULES:

- ❖ ***If you don't know how to swim, don't go in.***
- ❖ ***Only swim in a supervised swim area.*** (Ex. Certified Life Guard and/or Swim Instructor is present)
- ❖ ***Swim with a buddy.*** Always swim with someone, a friend who knows how to swim, a parent, and/or guardian.

Follow-up activities:

1. Have children K5-3rd discuss why they should be supervised at all times by someone who knows how to swim, and the importance of learning how to swim.
2. Have children 4th thru 8th grade develop short stories on Lesson 1.

LESSON 2 – ALWAYS SWIM IN A SUPERVISED AREA

Concept to be taught: Always swim in a supervised area where there is a lifeguard, parent and/or Designated Adult present.

1. Who is a lifeguard? (A person who is a certified swimmer, and can help if someone is having trouble in the water.)
2. Can a parent be considered a Designated Adult? (Yes, a designated adult is anyone who is a trained swimmer and is constantly watching you in the water)
3. If I am swimming in my pool in the backyard should someone be watching me? Yes, a parent or guardian at all times.
4. Should I swim by myself? No, always have a buddy present who knows how to swim, a lifeguard who is on duty at a public pool, or a designated adult present if you are at home in the backyard.

RULES:

- ❖ **Make sure one of the people mentioned above is always present, IF NOT, DON'T GO IN!**
- ❖ **When it comes to swimming in a body of water, or at a local public pool, make sure there is a certified lifeguard present.**

Follow-up activities:

1. For younger students have them draw a picture swimming with their buddy and mom, dad or a Designated Adult present.
2. For older students quiz them on the two rules in Lesson 2 and who can make a good “Designated Adult”. Ex. Designated Adult would know how to swim, know personal water safety techniques, know signs of someone having trouble in the water, and always be responsible by providing constant supervision, etc.

LESSON 3 - KNOW THE WATER ENVIRONMENT

Concept to be taught: Know the water environment and have safety gear present.

1. Be familiar with your surroundings, know where the lifeguard, guardian, parent, or “Designated Adult” is at all times, just in case of an emergency.
2. Make sure there are multiple layers of protection around the water environment you are in (i.e., gates, signage, etc). For example, there should be signs stating, if it is okay to swim in the water, hours you can swim, if a lifeguard is present, etc.
3. When pools are closed, you are prohibited from entering after hours. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

RULES:

- ❖ **If signs state: DO NOT SWIM, CLOSED, or DO NOT COME NEAR, do not enter the body of water.**
- ❖ **If a designated adult is not watching as you enter a private pool, do not enter the pool.**

Follow-up activities:

1. Have K5 thru 3rd grade students bring in a paper grocery bag and draw a safe water environment based on Lesson 3. Check with local grocery stores for additional paper bags if needed. Also, ask local grocery stores if they would like to display the best three drawings in their store for a specific water safety week.
2. Have students 4th thru 8th grade form groups of four to five within classes. Each group has to come up with an art project reflecting Lesson 3, and explain to the class. Art projects can be art collages, posters, paintings, etc.

LESSON 4 – ALWAYS WEAR YOUR SAFETY GEAR WHEN IN BODIES OF WATER

Concept to be taught: Always wear your safety gear when in bodies of water.

1. Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket when you are in or near an open body of water, a boat, or when participating in water sports.
2. Toys such as inflatable inner tubes and “water wings” are not safety devices.
3. Make sure there are multiple layers of protection around the water environment you are in.

RULES:

- ❖ **Don’t just have it, wear your Life Jacket!**

Follow-up activities:

1. Show and Tell: K5 thru 8th grade. If someone has a certified life jacket have him or her bring it in to show the class and how they use the life jacket whenever swimming, so students can visually see, hear and touch.
2. Invite a speaker from the U.S. Coast Guard, American Red Cross or someone who is trained in the area of appropriate safety swim wear when in the water, to speak to the class on the importance of always wearing a life jacket.

LESSON 5 - LOOK BEFORE YOU LEAP

Concept to be taught: Never run, push or jump on others around water.

1. Never play near a river, lake or ocean.
2. Never dive into a river, lake or ocean.
3. Never play, dive, or swim in a residential pool without approval from the designated adult who lives there.

RULES:

❖ **Think! So You Don't Sink.**

Follow-up activities:

1. Have children K5 thru 3rd grade talk about situations they have been involved in with someone running, pushing or jumping in or around water. Have children discuss if there were any actions taken by the "Designated Adult" (knowledgeable swimmer) to correct the behavior. If no "Designated Adult" or lifeguard was present, reinforce the importance of always being supervised near a body of water.
2. Have children 4th thru 8th grade talk about situations they have been involved in that involved someone running, pushing or jumping in or around water. Ask what could have been done differently to correct that behavior or what was done that corrected this behavior.

LESSON 6 - SAFETY HAZARDS OF RIVERS, CREEKS, AND CHANNELS AFTER HEAVY RAINFALLS

Concepts to be taught: Never go near bodies of water after a rainfall.

1. Never play near water, especially after a rainfall when water levels are high and currents are strong. Never play on frozen waters.
2. Do not walk, bike, or play near bodies of water after heavy rainfalls.

RULES:

❖ **Think! So You Don't Sink.**

Follow-up activities:

1. For K5 thru 8th age students. Check out age appropriate video on the do's and don'ts of swimming at your local City of Milwaukee Library for children to view.

LESSON 7 - SAFETY HAZARDS OF FROZEN WATERS

Concepts to be taught: Never play on frozen waters. Bodies of water are frozen at temperatures that are below 0°C (32°F). However, when temperatures begin to get warmer, the hazards associated with frozen waters become very factual and dangerous when children are present.

1. Never play on frozen waters.
2. Do not participate in unorganized water activities on frozen waters (i.e. lakes, rivers, or large bodies of water)
3. Do not walk, bike, or ride in any motorized vehicles on frozen bodies of water.

RULES:

❖ **Think! So You Don't Sink.**

Follow-up activities:

1. For K5 thru 3rd grade, have a discussion with students on the hazards of falling through bodies of frozen water. Ex. The body could start freezing and develop hypothermia.
2. For 4th thru 8th grade students, create a scenario where a friend is having trouble in the water, then ask students what should be done to resolve this situation.

LESSON 8- Throw! Don't Go. Call 911!

Concept to be taught: If someone is drowning or is having trouble in the water, throw a Personal Flotation Device (PFD's) to them and then call 911. If a PFD is not available, immediately call 911 or find someone to call 911 for you.

1. Review what a Personal Flotation Device is by using pictures, which can be helpful to children who are still unaware of the technical word.
2. Get across to students that these devices, such as a life jacket, are used to help keep you afloat.
3. If a PDF is not available immediately, call 911 or find someone to call 911 for you. Don't go in!
4. Do not go into swift-moving waters to rescue someone. This includes rivers, channels, creeks, lagoons, lakes and oceans. Always Call 911! (A gold medal swimmer would have problems swimming in swift-moving waters or bodies of waters after a heavy rainfall.)

Note: This is one of the most important rules and lesson there is, so as the teacher, strongly advise students of Lesson number 8.

RULES:

❖ **Throw a life jacket in and call 911. Throw! Don't Go. Call 911!**

Follow-up activities:

1. For K5 thru 3rd grade students have a discussion on Lesson 8.
2. For 4th thru 8th grade students create a scenario where a friend is having trouble in the water and what should be done to resolve this situation.

CONCLUSION

The material and Water Safety Lessons within this Teachers Guide will give students a basic understanding of water safety, but certified swimming instructions and aquatic classes are the best source for children to get hands on training, which includes an introduction to water skills, a sense of respect for bodies of water, and the dangers of bodies of water to children. For more information regarding water safety here is a list of agencies that are currently on the City of Milwaukee Water Safety Task Force that will be able to provide more water safety information.

Milwaukee Police Department Community Services
Safety Unit
(414) 935-7990

Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee
(414) 267-8100

Milwaukee Fire Department
(414) 286-8970

Safe Kids of Wisconsin
(414) 765-9355

Milwaukee County Parks
(414) 257-8098

American Red Cross
(414) 342-8680

Milwaukee Public Schools Division
Of Recreation and Community Services
(414) 475-8838

YMCA of Metropolitan Milwaukee
414) 265-9622 (1350 W. North Ave.)
(414) 354-9622 (9050 N. Swan Rd.)

Urban Ecology Center
(414) 964-8505