ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

TO THE SWIM TO SURVIVE™

ACTIVITY GUIDE FOR INSTRUCTORS

2016–2017 SCHOOL YEAR

LIFESAVING SOCIETY

BEFORE you start the *Swim to Survive* program:

1. **Watch the *Swim to Survive* presentation**.
2. **Read the *Activity Guide*** and this document.
3. With the aquatic manager's help, **divide students into groups** based on their skill level, using the questionnaire completed by their parents.
4. **Prepare your lessons** (safety, lesson plans, equipment, rules, expectations and consequences).

DURING the *Swim to Survive* program:

1. **Welcome students** (presentation of the instructors and program overview).
2. **Remind students of safety rules**, expectations (listening and participation), and consequences if the rules or expectations are not met.
3. **Actively supervise your group** at all times.
4. **Complete the Instructor's Worksheet** at the end of each lesson, so that you can issue a certificate even if a student has only attended a single class.
5. **Evaluate students** during the first, second, and third lesson, using the Instructor's Worksheet. Complete the final evaluation during the last lesson.

AFTER the *Swim to Survive* program:

1. **Complete the Instructor's Worksheet** and certificates. Hand all documents to your supervisor (or, if that is not possible, send the certificates to the school and the evaluation results to the Lifesaving Society by using the *Results Form* available on the Organizer Section at www.sauvetage.qc.ca). **Tip:** prepare certificates in advance to hand then to teachers on the last lesson.
2. **Complete the feedback form** online (www.sauvetage.qc.ca).

PLANNING YOUR SESSIONS

Some activities are presented on page 7 and 8 of this document. Additionally, some lesson plans are included with the program documentation. You can use these as-is, modify them, or create new lesson plans at any time.

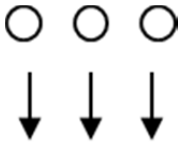
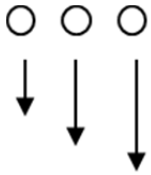
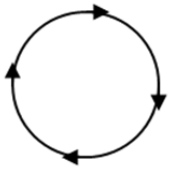
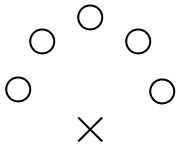
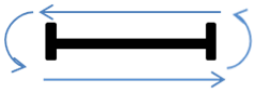
SAFETY RULES

- Know the facility's emergency procedures.
- Escort the group from the changing room to the pool and from the pool to the changing room.
- Keep all swimmers in front of you and supervise them at all times.
- Always look towards the pool.
- Have a buoyant aid available at all times.
- **Have all participants wear a PFD at the beginning of the first lesson.**
- Implement the buddy system.
- Perform regular head counts.
- Stay close to non-swimmers.
- Outline safety rules, expectations and consequences for not meeting rules before the beginning the activity.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

- Keep students active and minimize downtimes as much as possible; keeping them interested will result in less undesirable behaviours.
- Stay close to students who misbehave or who fear water.
- Talk and act in a consistent and coherent manner.
- Lead by example: demonstrate the skills to acquire.
- Give students as many choices as possible. For example:
    - With or without PFD
    - Longer or shorter distance
    - Longer or shorter time
    - Add or remove an element of the activity
    - Try offering a challenge (disoriented entry, tread water, swim)
    - Give feedback often; use the "sandwich" method for negative comments (positive-negative-positive).

FORMATIONS

Wave		• Entering water • Practicing skills • Obstacle and relay races • Teaching strokes
Staggered Wave		• Entering water • Practicing skills • Teaching strokes • Better way to observe each student • Allows individual feedback
Circle or Loop		• Games • Treading water • Continuous swim
Semicircle		• Giving instructions • Land demonstrations • Explanations
Lane		• Continuous swim • Obstacle and relay races • Teaching strokes

SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP SWIMMING

- Use a start signal:
  - Visual signal: movement of the instructor's arm, when the swimmer in front reaches a certain point, etc.
  - Audible signal: whistle blast, verbal signal from the instructor ("go"), etc.

- Place the fastest swimmers at the front.

TIPS FOR ROLLING

If a student is not able to roll on a mat outside water, do not insist. He or she might still be able to roll into water without succeeding to roll on the mat.

EVALUATING THE SWIM TO SURVIVE STANDARD

This evaluation provides an overview of each student's aquatic abilities within the Swim to Survive™ standard. Ideally, the three skills should be evaluated several times. It is recommended that the instructor teach each component separately during the first lesson; the entire sequence can then be evaluated during the second session. At the third lesson, the instructor makes a final evaluation of the students' aquatic skills.

During the evaluation(s), the instructor must ensure that students:

- Do not hold on to anything;
- Never touch the bottom of the pool;
- Are able to breathe while treading water (nose and mouth above the surface).

To achieve the Swim to Survive™ standard, students must demonstrate all three skills as a continuous sequence in the following order: entry, tread water, and swim.

It is primordial to explain the evaluation criteria to the participants before they are evaluated. It is strongly recommended to remind students that when swimming the short course (2 × 25 m), they may not touch the pool's sides or its far end.

WATER SAFETY

Water safety is usually taught by the teachers before, between or after the pool sessions. However, *Swim to Survive* instructors can also teach these lessons, depending on the school's needs. They must be taught outside the pool sessions, since pool time is exclusively reserved for practicing the three aquatic skills.

To make these modules easier to teach, the Lifesaving Society has prepared activities for teachers or instructors to use. There are also four lesson plans available for *Swim to Survive* instructors (pages 9–14), to teach water safety theory on the side of the pool in 15 minutes. Instructors can also create their own activities that meet the program's learning objectives (see information sheets in the *Activity Guide*).

Three of the following four subjects must be taught as part of the *Swim to Survive* program. The teachers will choose which three subjects are most appropriate to the environment in which the students live; for example, ice safety might be more important for students who live near water.

WATER SAFETY TOPICS

- Always swim with a buddy
- Check the ice
- Wear a lifejacket or personal flotation device (PFD)
- Look before diving

SAFETY CHECKLIST

The instructor:

- □ Knows the facility's emergency procedures.
- □ Escorts the group from the changing room to the pool and from the pool to the changing room.
- □ Keeps all swimmers in front of him/her and supervises them at all times.
- □ Always keeps the pool in view.
- □ Has a buoyant aid available at all times.
- □ **Has all students wear a PFD at the beginning of the first lesson.**
- □ Uses the buddy system.
- □ Performs regular head counts.
- □ Stays close to non-swimmers.
- □ Outlines the safety rules before beginning the activity.

ACTIVITY SUGGESTIONS

Non-swimmers:	Wearing a PFD
Weak swimmers:	With or without a PFD
Swimmers:	Without a PFD

ACTIVITIES TO PRACTICE ROLLING INTO WATER

Activity #1 **Feet First Entries**
Have students show their favourite way to enter feet first into the pool.

Activity #2 **Log Rolls**
Have students attempt a log roll from the edge of the pool.

Activity #3 **Side Rolls or Forward Rolls**
Explain that many people who drown do not plan to enter water, then demonstrate how they may tumble in, and have each student attempt it.

Activity #4 **How many different entries can you do?**
Have each student explore different ways to enter deep water.

ACTIVITIES TO PRACTICE TREADING WATER

Activity #1 **How long can you tread water?**
Set a maximum time depending on the student's swimming abilities. Have each student use personal best goals to improve their performance.

Activity #2 **How high can you tread water?**
Have students attempt to get their shoulders out of the water and see how long they can maintain the position.

Activity #3 **Sculling Drills**
Have students attempt sculling in different positions:

- On back, knees tucked to chest, spinning in a circle;
- On back, holding a ball between their feet;
- On back, traveling forward and backward.

Activity #4 **Obstacle Race**
Using the above-mentioned skills, have students participate in an obstacle or relay race.

ACTIVITIES TO PRACTICE SWIMMING

Activity #1 **What is your favourite way to swim?**

Have students show you their favourite way to move through the water.

Activity #2 **Which way is easiest?**

Have students attempt moving through the water in different ways and ask them which way is easiest.

Activity #3 **Drills**

Drills using short distances should be used, such as:

- Legs only, using different kicks such as flutter, whip, etc.;
- Arms only, using different methods such as recover over water, recover underwater, etc.;
- Full stroke.

Activity #4 **Timed Swim**

Time students at each session and have them keep track of their progress.

CHALLENGE ACTIVITIES

Some learners may achieve the *Swim to Survive* standard before the end of the lesson set. Instructors should be prepared to keep challenging these swimmers to become even more efficient by increasing the level of difficulty or by working on skills in preparation for swimming lessons. Students whose aquatic skills are very advanced can help as assistant-instructors or by showing other students how to proceed. You might draw on the following challenge activities:

Entries

- Stride entry
- Shallow dive (always in the deep end, for safety)
- Deep dive (always in the deep end, for safety)
- Entry from a height (e.g. 1 m diving board)

Treading water

- Treading water for a longer time – e.g. 2, 5, 10, 15 minutes
- Treading arms-only or legs-only
- Treading water with one (or both) arm(s) raised
- Treading using other lifesaving kicks like eggbeater or scissor kick

Swim

- Swim with clothes
- Swim front crawl – e.g. 50 m, 100 m, 200 m
- Swim back crawl – e.g. 50 m, 100 m, 200 m
- Swim breaststroke – e.g. 50 m, 100 m, 200 m
- Longer swim – e.g. 75 m, 100 m, 200 m
- Timed swim – 50 m, 100 m, 200 m

SWIM TO SURVIVE™ – WATER SAFETY THEORY BY INSTRUCTORS

15 minutes per topic, in addition to the 1 hour water session. Teach three out of the four topics.

1. SWIM WITH A BUDDY

THEORY (7 minutes)

Ask students why it is always important to swim with a buddy.

- A buddy can help you;
- A buddy can throw you a buoyant object;
- A buddy can call for help;
- An adult can supervise you, etc.

Put the emphasis on the fact that **EVERYONE (including adults) should always swim with a buddy!**

There are two safe places to swim:

- Places supervised by a lifeguard;
- Places supervised by an adult;

What can you do if your buddy needs help?

- Call for help (911 or an adult);
- Throw a buoyant object to your buddy.

Important: Do not enter the water or approach your buddy to help! It is dangerous for you unless you have lifesaving training (such as a Bronze Star, Bronze Medallion, or Bronze Cross).

Key message: **Always swim with a buddy!**

EXPLAIN AND PRACTICE THE BUDDY SYSTEM (5 minutes)

Remind students that you are using the buddy system during the *Swim to Survive* pool sessions. Place them in pairs and explain that it is their responsibility to supervise each other in the pool area. To accomplish this, students must always know where their buddy is. On the instructor's signal, they must exit the water quickly and hold hands with their buddy. This way, it is easy to see if someone is missing. Try out the buddy system if possible (in or out of the water).

CONCLUSION (3 minutes)

Quickly sum up the lesson and ask students a few questions to test their knowledge.

2. CHECK THE ICE

THEORY (5 minutes)

Ice needs to be at least 10 cm thick in order to safely walk on it. The more weight put on the ice (e.g. snowmobile), the thicker it needs to be. Ice thickness is not the same everywhere; currents and varying water depths will affect it, as will temperature, snow, and wind. To make sure that the ice is safe, it is necessary to drill test holes every 9 metres and perform a visual inspection. Ideal ice is hard, transparent, new, bluish, and at least 10 cm thick. Never venture out onto ice that has not been checked properly.

Key message: **No ice is 100% safe**

Show the *Recommended Minimum Ice Thickness for New Clear Hard Ice* picture.

Explain and demonstrate self-rescue techniques on ice:

1. Stay calm and call for help.
2. Break thin ice around you.
3. Extend arms as far as possible on the ice and kick.
4. While kicking, pull yourself forward onto the unbroken ice, until hips are above water.
5. Roll or crawl away from the break until you find solid ice. Never stand up.

SELF-RESCUE ON ICE: PRACTICE (8 minutes)

With floating mats to represent the ice, practice each step of self-rescue on ice. Place the mat so that half of it is on the poolside and half is in the water. Ask two people to sit on the corners out of the water for stability. One at a time, the students will try to exit the water by climbing onto the mat without getting stuck. Make sure students practice all steps of self-rescue on ice.

CONCLUSION (3 minutes)

Quickly sum up the lesson and ask students a few questions to test their knowledge.

Recommended Minimum Ice Thickness
for New Clear Hard Ice.
No ice is without some risk.
Be sure to measure clear hard ice in several places.
3" (7 cm) or less
STAY OFF!
4" (10 cm)
ice fishing
walking
cross country skiing
5" (12 cm)
one vehicle - snowmobile or ATV
8 - 12" (20-30 cm)
one vehicle - car or small pick-up
12 - 15" (30-38 cm)
one vehicle - medium truck
LIFESAVING SOCIETY
The Lifesaving Experts
Québec
Moderation is always in good taste.

3. WEAR A LIFE JACKET OR A PFD

THEORY (5 minutes)

Ask students when they need to put on a lifejacket or a PFD (personal flotation device):

- When someone does not swim well and is in or near water.
- When anyone is on a boat (canoe, kayak, etc.).
- When anyone walks on ice (in case they fall in).

For a PFD or lifejacket to work properly, it must be correctly sized and correctly worn.

Show students examples of PFDs and lifejackets. List the advantages of each so that the students know the difference (reference: *Information sheet 3*).

Show students how to adjust a PFD and choose an appropriate size. For children, we must usually pick a PFD's size based on weight. To make sure it is properly sized and attached, lift your arms and ask someone to tug firmly in an upward direction. A properly sized PFD will never ride higher than the ears or chin of the wearer.

Key concept: **You bring it. Wear it.**

PFD PRACTICE (8 minutes)

Put on a PFD and try this exercise:

- Adjust all straps correctly.
- Enter water until it is chest-deep.
- Bend your knees and float.
- Move as much as possible to make sure it is not too restrictive.
- Your chin must always be out of the water.
- You must not be tipped forward by the PFD.

If you have time, try the same exercise with PFDs that are the wrong size (too small or too large) and see the difference.

CONCLUSION (2 minutes)

Quickly sum up the lesson and ask students a few questions to test their knowledge.

4. LOOK BEFORE DIVING

THEORY (5 minutes)

Ask to students: is diving a safe way to enter the water? Why, or why not?

- Once the diving area has been properly verified, it can be safe to dive.

An unsafe dive can cause lifelong consequences, such as loss of mobility in the legs or in the whole body (also called paraplegia and quadriplegia). This can mean spending the rest of your life in a wheelchair—all because of one unsafe dive.

Checklist for diving from the side of the water (not from a height, such as a diving board or a cliff):

- Area at least 2.75 m deep (give an example to the students).
- Area at least 6 m in length (give an example to the students).
- No obstacles in the diving area (e.g., rock, wood, object, slope).

Show the picture on the following page. Teach students to never dive into a backyard pool (above ground or in-ground). Backyard pools are usually not deep enough or long enough for a safe dive.

Key concept: **For a safe entry, go feet first!**

SAFETY ENTRY – PRACTICE (5 minutes)

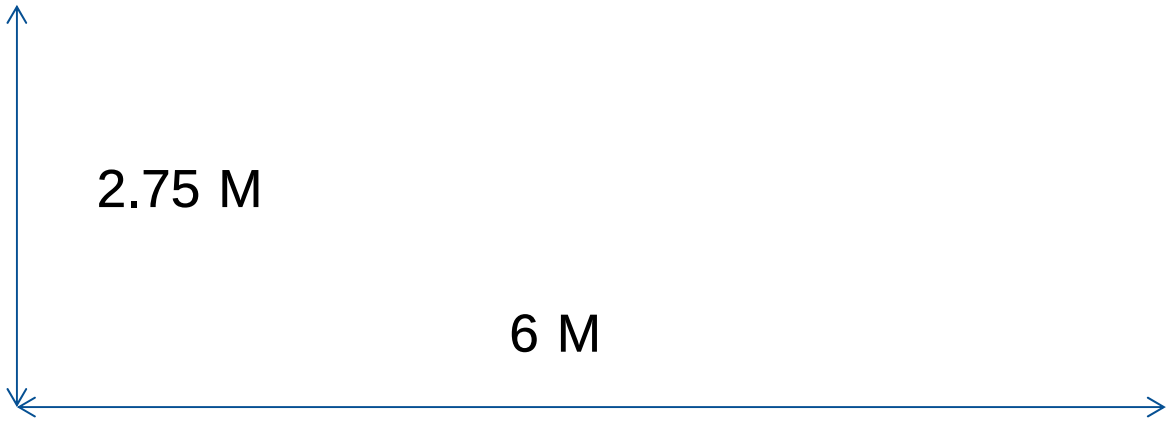
Ask students to safely enter the water in a place designated by the instructor. They must tell you which entry they intend to perform beforehand, so that you can make sure it is safe. *If you are short on time, try asking students verbally what they would do without practicing it.*

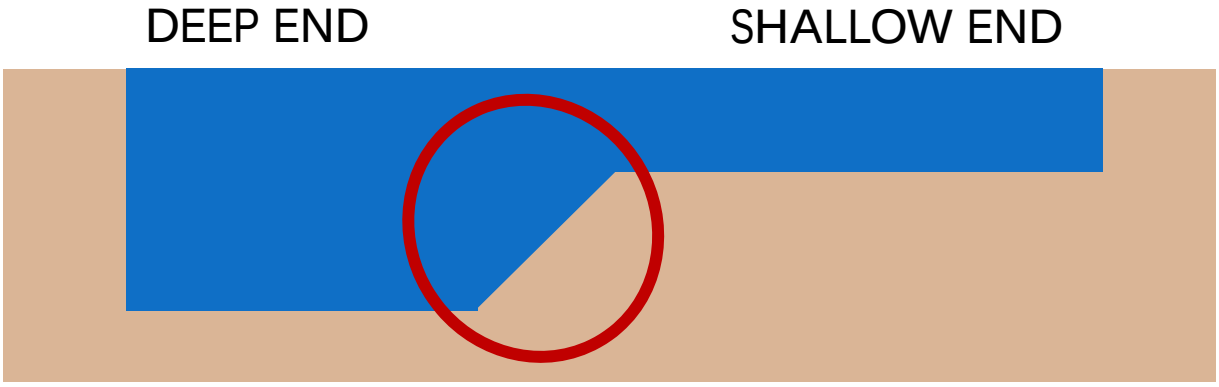
CONCLUSION (5 minutes)

Ask students the following questions. Explain all answers.

Is it safe to:

- Dive into your friend's above ground pool? **No**
- Dive into the shallow end of a public pool? **No**
- Dive into the deep end of a public pool (where the diving boards are)? **Yes**
- Jump off a bridge feet first? **No**
- Dive off the top of a waterfall? **No**
- Jump into a public pool without checking for bathers in front of you? **No**
- Dive into an in-ground pool at your grandparents' home? **No**
- Dive off a small diving board in a backyard pool? **No**





THE SLOPE IS A DANGEROUS AREA FOR DIVING!