

Introduction

This lesson forms part of the WOW Waterside Safety resource. The activities, designed for 9-11 year olds, teach children the importance of **SAFE: Stay Away From the Edge**.

Rescue Stations suggests ways to help people in distress in the water. A child's first action should always be to dial the emergency services and shout for help.

We do not recommend that children attempt to physically pull or remove somebody from the water as this will put their own lives in danger.

Schemes of Work Personal, Social and Health Education and Citizenship.

Learning Objectives

To make children aware of how to deal with a person in difficulties in the water.

The Curriculum

England - PSHE & Citizenship.

Scotland - Health Education: Social Health strand.

Wales - Personal and Social Education Framework: Physical Aspect.

Resources

Optional props: rope (4-5m long) plastic bag, mobile phone, pair of wellies, strong stick (1-2m long), large plastic pop bottle, scarf, whistle, umbrella, chocolate bar, small change / plastic coins.

Key Vocabulary

life ring, coil.

Teaching Activities

Introduction This is a role play activity which places the children in the position of finding a girl, Chris, struggling after having fallen into a canal.

- The activity starts with a two part story setting the scene and explaining how Chris didn't **Stay Away From the Edge** and ended up in the water.

- Following a brief discussion of what Chris did wrong, the second part of the story describes how Chris was rescued – giving various cues to help children with their role plays.

- The children work in six groups, each group being given a slip describing several items they have to hand in their scenario. They should decide how they would use the items on their list to try and help Chris and role play their solutions. There are some 'red herrings' in the item lists, so they don't all need to be used!

- Each scenario has an accompanying sheet which provides a possible solution to the problem and the key points to be emphasised in each case.

- In the story Chris falls into a canal, however, the advice is applicable to helping a person in distress in any inland waterway.

Activities Read the first page of the story to the children, or distribute the story for them to read. Ask the children to tell you all the things that Chris has done wrong:

- Gone to the canal alone.

- Not told anyone where she was.

- Played with a ball on the canal bank.

- Gone close to the canal bank (she didn't **Stay Away From the Edge**).

Continued...

Teaching Activities

Now carry on with the story.

Explain to the children that life rings like the one in the story are very heavy and can injure the person in danger if not used correctly. A life ring should always be placed in the water and pushed out to the person in danger, it should never be thrown! As life rings can be dangerous when used incorrectly, they are not always provided on inland waterways.

Explain to the children that they will be preparing a role play, in groups, to show how they would have rescued Chris. One child in each group can play the part of Chris. Tell the children that each group will have a list of equipment that they can use to help them save Chris' life. Tell them that not everything on their list may be useful. They cannot use the life ring or anything they have on them unless they are told otherwise on their card.

Remind the children to follow the **SAFE** message at all times.

They need to:

- Raise the alarm.
- Try to keep Chris afloat.
- Get her to move to the bank.

Split the children into groups of 4/5 and give out the equipment cards. Tell the children that they have 10 minutes to prepare their role plays.

Plenary Once the groups have prepared their role plays, let each group perform for the others. Use the suggested answers and key points for discussion following each role play.

Chris was bored, it was the third day of the holiday and she had nothing to do. Her mum was at work so Chris had been taken to her grandad's for the day. It was dead boring at grandad's. His computer was broken and she had seen all his videos!

He lived in a small house too with an even smaller garden. There would have been no room for Chris to play football even if her grandad had let her. He didn't like Chris playing with footballs in the garden because he said the flowerbeds would be ruined.

Chris' grandad thought Chris should spend the day reading or sitting quietly. Chris wasn't that type of girl. She wanted to be outside playing football or exploring but grandad said that she wasn't allowed to go further than the bottom of the garden.

Glancing out of the window, Chris could see her grandad hard at work weeding the front garden in the sunshine. She looked down at her football and slipped quietly out of the back door. At the bottom of the garden Chris opened the gate and stepped onto the path.

She already knew where she was going to go...

Near her grandad's house was a canal, Chris thought that it would be an excellent place to play, but her grandad would never let her go there unless he went too.

When Chris reached the canal, she started along the towpath, dribbling the football. The towpath was perfect for dribbling. It was quite wide and straight. Chris ran along it, kicking the football from foot to foot.

After a while Chris got bored and she stopped to watch a family of ducklings swimming by the bank. One of the ducklings had something on its beak and Chris decided to try and get a better look. She crouched down on the edge of the bank, put the football down next to her and leant forward to try and reach the duckling.

As she stretched out to reach the duckling her foot knocked the ball and it landed in the water. "Oh no!" thought Chris. "My football!" In desperation she grabbed a stick which was lying on the bank and reached out towards the ball with it. "Just a little bit further," she thought.

Suddenly, as she stretched forwards, she overbalanced and Chris found herself in the freezing cold water. "Help!" she shouted. "Help! Help!" But the bank was deserted and the football floated away. **End of Part One.**

Important

Make sure you have read and discussed the first part of the story before reading through this!

During the holidays Tim, his friend Gurjit and Tim's dad often went cycling along the canal bank to get to the park. All of a sudden, as they cycled by the bridge they heard someone shouting.

"Quick dad! Someone's in the canal," shouted Tim.

They quickly cycled over to where Chris was struggling in the canal. "Call an ambulance!" shouted Tim's dad and passed the mobile phone to Tim.

Gurjit said, "There's a life ring just along the canal."

"I'll go and get it," replied Tim's dad. "You two stay here and **Stay Away From the Edge.**"

While Tim's dad ran along the canal to get the life ring they had seen earlier, Tim phoned for an ambulance. He was able to tell them exactly where the accident had happened. Meanwhile Gurjit started to shout to Chris to tell her that help was on its way.

Tim's dad struggled back carrying the life ring. "I can't believe how heavy this life ring is!" he panted. Standing well back from the edge of the bank he carefully slid the ring out. Chris grabbed hold of it. Wet people are very heavy and Tim's dad was afraid that he would be pulled into the water.

So he sat on the bank, keeping low to avoid falling forwards, and started to pull Chris towards him. The boys shouted to Chris to keep hold of the ring and to kick her legs. When Chris was close to the bank the ambulance arrived and the paramedics helped to pull Chris out of the water. She was very cold so they wrapped her up in a blanket. "Thank you," Chris said, "for rescuing me."

Scenario 1

You have:

- A stick
- A mobile phone

You must **Stay Away From the Edge** at all times.

Try to:

- raise the alarm
- keep Chris afloat
- get her to move near to the bank

Scenario 2

You have:

- An accompanying adult
- A scarf
- An umbrella
- A plastic bag

You must **Stay Away From the Edge** at all times.

Try to:

- raise the alarm
- keep Chris afloat
- get her to move near to the bank

Scenario 3

You have:

- An accompanying adult
- A life ring stuck high in a tree
- A rope

You must **Stay Away From the Edge** at all times.

Try to:

- raise the alarm
- keep Chris afloat
- get her to move near to the bank

Photocopy these cards, cut them out and distribute to your groups.

Each group gets one card to use for their role play.

The groups have access to **ONLY** what is on the card, nothing else.

Not all items on the card need to be used.

Scenario 4

You have:

- A football
- A pair of wellies
- A mobile phone but no reception

You must **Stay Away From the Edge** at all times.

Try to:

- raise the alarm
- keep Chris afloat
- get her to move near to the bank

Scenario 5

You have:

- One of the group is a very strong swimmer who has learnt how to rescue people at the swimming pool
- A large bottle of pop
- A rope
- A whistle

You must **Stay Away From the Edge** at all times.

Try to:

- raise the alarm
- keep Chris afloat
- get her to move near to the bank

Scenario 6

You have:

- A chocolate bar
- Some loose change
- Anything the group has with them
- A pet dog

You must **Stay Away From the Edge** at all times.

Try to:

- raise the alarm
- keep Chris afloat
- get her to move near to the bank

Photocopy these cards, cut them out and distribute to your groups.

Each group gets one card to use for their role play.

The groups have access to **ONLY** what is on the card, nothing else.

Not all items on the card need to be used.

Scenario 1:

- A stick (red herring)
- A mobile phone

Scenario 1: Suggested answer

Shout to Chris to see if she can stand up.

One member of the group should phone the emergency services whilst another tries to reassure Chris and persuade her to swim towards the bank. The group should follow the advice that the emergency services give them. Whilst they wait they should remember to **Stay Away From the Edge**, shout for help and encourage Chris to move towards the bank.

Key points

- Do the children know the number to dial?
- Can you make an emergency call if you don't have any credit on your mobile phone?
Yes.
- Which service do they require?
- What information would they need to give the emergency services? e.g. a description of the situation and location.
If they don't know the location, they could give the address they set off from and how long they have been walking.
- Why shouldn't the children use the stick to reach out for Chris?
Using the stick could put the children in danger.

Scenario 2:

- An accompanying adult
- A scarf
- An umbrella
- A plastic bag (red herring)

Scenario 2: Suggested answer

Shout to Chris to see if she can stand up.

The adult should take control of the situation. They should send two children together along the towpath to get help. They need to remind the two children to stick together, **Stay Away From the Edge** and make it clear to them where to look for help i.e. to find some way of contacting the emergency services. They should be told to **come straight back** .

The adult needs to check that the children know what to say when they are asked to give the location of the accident and that they know how to deal with strangers.

The adult should then lie down on the canal bank and using the scarf or the umbrella should try and reach Chris. He could then pull her towards the bank.

Meanwhile, the other children can try talking to Chris to reassure her and they could encourage her to try and swim for the bank.

Key points

- Why was it important that two children go together to get help?
- Where might they find help?
- Why did the adult lie down?
- On a sloping bank what could an adult have done to avoid falling in?
They could have braced themselves by leaning backwards to avoid being pulled in.

Scenario 3

- An accompanying adult
- A life ring in the high branches of a tree
- A rope

Scenario 3: Suggested answer

Shout to Chris to see if she can stand up.

The adult should take control of the situation. They should send two children together along the towpath to get help. They need to remind the two children to stick together and make it clear to them where to look for help and that they should return once they have contacted help. They must take care to **Stay Away From the Edge**.

The adult needs to check that the children know what to say when they are asked to give the location of the accident and that they know how they should deal with strangers.

The adult should coil the rope, making sure they hold one end, without tying it to themselves and then throw it towards Chris. They should then sit down. Chris should catch the end of the rope and hold on to it whilst she is pulled towards the bank.

The other children can try talking to Chris to reassure her and get her to grab hold of the rope. They could try and attract attention by shouting.

Key points

- Why was it important that two children go together to get help?
- Where might they find help?
- If the life ring hadn't been vandalised what could the **adult** have done?
- Why did the adult **coil** the rope?
- Why did the adult **sit down** ?
- On a sloping bank what could an adult have done to avoid falling in?
They could have braced themselves by leaning backwards to avoid being pulled in.

Scenario 4:

- A football
- A pair of wellies (red herring)
- A mobile phone but no reception

Scenario 4: Suggested answer

Shout to Chris to see if she can stand up.

As the phone will not work, two of the children should set off to get help. They need to stick together and know what they are looking for i.e. to find some way of contacting the emergency services and to return once they have found help. The children need to know what to say when they are asked to give the location of the accident and also how they should deal with strangers. They should be reminded to **Stay Away From the Edge**.

The children on the bank can talk to Chris to reassure her. They should throw the ball to her. If she holds on to it, it will act like a float. They should encourage Chris to keep hold of the float and try to swim towards the canal bank. They can also try shouting to attract attention.

Key points

- Why was it important that two children go together to get help?
- Why shouldn't the children put the wellies on and wade out to reach Chris?

Scenario 5:

- One of the group is a very strong swimmer who has learnt how to rescue people at the swimming pool
- A large plastic bottle of pop
- A rope (red herring)
- A whistle

Scenario 5: Suggested answer

Shout to Chris to see if she can stand up.

Two of the children should set off to get help. They need to stick together and know what they are looking for i.e. to find some way of contacting the emergency services and to return once they have found help. The children need to know what to say when they are asked to give the location of the accident and also how they should deal with strangers. They should be reminded to **Stay Away From the Edge**.

The children on the bank can talk to Chris to reassure her. They could empty the bottle of pop, put the top back on it and throw the empty bottle to Chris. The bottle will act as a float. The children should then encourage Chris to kick her legs and try to swim for the bank. They can blow the whistle to attract attention.

Key points

- Why was it important that two children go together to get help?
- Why didn't the swimmer dive in to rescue Chris?
Remind the children about **SAFE**, that swimming pools are built for swimming in and waterways are not, they contain lots of hidden dangers.
- Can the children think of anything else that could be used as a float?
- Would the bottle work if the top wasn't screwed back on, if it was full or made of glass?
- Why shouldn't the **children** use the rope to throw to Chris?
Using the rope could put the children in danger.

Scenario 6:

- A chocolate bar (red herring)
- Some loose change (red herring)
- Anything the group has with them
- A pet dog (red herring)

Scenario 6: Suggested answer

Shout to Chris to see if she can stand up.

Two of the children should set off to get help. They need to stick together and know what they are looking for i.e. to find some way of contacting the emergency services and return as soon as they have got help. The children need to know what to say when they are asked to give the location of the accident and also how they should deal with strangers. They should remember to **Stay Away From the Edge**.

The children on the bank can talk to Chris to reassure her. They should **Stay Away From the Edge**, shout for help and encourage Chris to move towards the bank.

Key points

- Why was it important that two children go together to get help?
- Can the children think of any other everyday objects they might have on them that could be useful?
- Do you need money to phone 999 on a public phone?
No.
- Could the pet dog have swum out and rescued Chris?
No!
- Why shouldn't the **children** reach out with an item of their own clothing?
Reaching out could put the children in danger and clothing will become waterlogged and very heavy.