Presenter Quick Reference - Adult Presentations

**Defining Open Water/Boating-Related Drowning Deaths**

* Open water is natural bodies of water, such as lakes, rivers, ponds, and oceans.
* Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury-related death among Sacramento County children ages 0-17.

1 – Learn to Swim, and Supervise Children!

* **Swim Safely**
  + Children and adults should learn how to swim.
  + Swim with an adult or a buddy who knows how to swim.
  + Swim in designated areas for swimming, where there is a lifeguard.
  + Make sure kids learn water survival skills.
    - 1. Step or jump into water over their head and return to the surface.
    - 2. Turn around in the water and orient to safety.
    - 3. Float or tread water.
    - 4. Combine breathing with forward movement in the water.
    - 5. Exit the water.
* **Supervise Children in or around water**
  + Face the water and avoid distractions.
  + Keep younger kids within arm’s reach of an adult.
  + Choose a Water Watcher.

2 – Wear a Life Jacket!

* **Why we wear life jackets**
  + Our rivers are fast, cold, and full of debris.
  + Even the strongest swimmer can be pulled under.
  + Tubes, air mattresses or ‘floaties’ are toys and are not substitutes for a life jacket.
  + California law - all persons on board a personal watercraft (like a jet ski) and all persons being towed behind a vessel (as in water skiing) must wear a life jacket.
  + Sacramento County ordinance requires any child under the age of 13 to wear a life vest before accessing any public waters.
* **How to fit a life jacket**
  + Demonstrate proper fit, and what happens if life jacket is too tight or too loose.
* **Borrow a life jacket** - Life jackets for temporary use are hung on loaner boards along local waterways. There are also borrowing stations at some local fire stations.

3 – Learn to Float!

* Treading water is a way of staying afloat by calmly moving your arms and legs in wide circles.
* Treading water allows you to catch your breath, assess the situation, and look around for the nearest safe place.
* Floating down river: on your back, feet first, toes out of water
  + Use your feet to push away from rocks, logs, or other obstacles.
  + Never attempt to stand up in swiftly moving water or your feet can be entrapped.

4 –Look Before You Leap!

* Obey the signs – look for “No Swimming” or “No Diving”.
* Riverbeds can drop off sharply. Stay close to shore to avoid drop-offs and currents.
* Ask yourself the following questions:
  + Is the water deep enough?
  + How cold is the water?
  + Are there obstacles under the water that are not visible from the surface?

5 – Learn to Rescue Safely!

* Know the signs of drowning. Drowning is often depicted incorrectly in movies.
* To safely save someone, know how to reach, throw, or find an adult to row.
* If you can’t safely reach, throw or find an adult to row, go call 9-1-1 to get help.

6 – Don’t Overload Your Boat!

* Overloading is very dangerous. An overloaded or unbalanced boat can turn over or capsize, even when there is no wind or rough water.
* Operating a boat requires good judgement and safe behavior.

7 –Stay With Your Boat!

* If you boat capsizes or turns over, stay with the boat. It is easier for rescuers to see.
* Most boats have floatation built into them so they will not sink.
* If help is nearby, yell, gesture, or use a whistle to attract attention.
* If you can’t say with your boat, grab onto anything that floats.

8 –Learn the Boating Rules of the Road!

* Boaters need to be courteous, safe and follow the rules of the road.
* Maintain safe speed.
* Know the right-of-way.
* Follow safe boating signs and recognize channel markers.
* Know navigation rules.
* Respect “no wake” zones for boats, jetskis, etc.

9 – Alcohol, Drugs, and Boating Don’t Mix!

* Using alcohol or drugs can make your judgement poor, slow your response time, and reduce your ability to respond to dangerous incidents.
* It is illegal to operate a boat with a blood alcohol level of 0.08% or more, 0.01% under age 21.

10 –Keep Our Waterways Clean!

* People, plants and animals depend on clean, safe water.
* Learn to properly dispose of waste products.
* Wash hands/shower after swimming and DO NOT drink river water.
* Avoid open water if you have open cuts or sores, or an immuno-suppressive disease.