

1. - Outward Bound Canada - Rob Wallis and/or Marika Chandler,

Hello all, I am happy to join this conversation and represent our policies and practices. As a national organization we have many different environments that we swim and boat in. Nationally we find that Ontario has stronger regulations than other provinces I can imagine some reasons for this include our cottage culture, abundance of fresh and warm water, and our large summer camp populations.

We are considering changes to our policies in 2018 and in fact our Safety Committee is driving the collection of information like this as well to ensure we are on the right track. I am unsure if we will go to a blanket policy of PFD all the time for all of our water programs (eg: surfing and backpacking) but it may be in place for canoe tripping and sea kayaking.

Our current policy is:

[6.8] Water Safety

[6.8.1] Dipping and Swimming

Definitions:

Swimming: swimming or playing in water that is over participant's knees.

Wading: crouching, splashing, or sitting in water shallower than participant's knees.

Wading is permitted without a swim evaluation given the following guidelines are adhered to:

[Guideline] All dipping sites will be assessed by Instructors prior to students entering the water.

[Guideline] Instructors will check for underwater obstructions, depth of water, severe drop-offs, sharp objects, extreme temperatures, and any other hazards.

Safety Policies (SP)

[SP6.8.1-A] Before any water activity takes place the instructor shall determine who are swimmers, weak swimmers and non-swimmers.

[SP6.8.1-B] Prior to swimming, students must complete the swim evaluation:

- Swim 50m, Tread water for 4 minutes, put PFD on in the water, when applicable (where student cannot touch bottom)
- There will be a ratio of 1 staff to 2 students while performing the swim evaluation.
- Students who rate themselves as non-swimmers will not take part in the swim

evaluation and will either wear their PFD when in the water or not go swimming.

- A staff member with appropriate life-saving training must be actively guarding all student swimming activity.

Procedures (SOP)

[SOP6.8.1.1] Carry out reconnaissance to ensure that the defined area for swimming or jumping site free from hazards such as: rocks, currents, underwater obstacles.

[SOP6.8.1.2] There will be no diving.

[SOP6.8.1.3] There will be no swimming at night.

[SOP6.8.1.4] All water activities will be supervised by an instructor.

[SOP6.8.1.5] Before any swimming, or dipping activity with participants takes place, the instructor shall:

- Develop a pairing or “buddy” system
- Clearly define the swimming, stream crossing or dipping area
- Develop a rescue system suitable for the site

[SOP6.8.1.6] There will be no swimming during hiking expedition unless the swim evaluation has been completed.

[SOP6.8.1.7] Swimming in PFDs in designated moving water areas may occur only under the supervision of the Moving Water Instructors.

[SOP6.8.1.8] Nudity is not permitted.

[SOP8.1.9] There will be no cliff jumping. Cliff jumping is defined as jumping from a height of over 3 metres. This is consistent with Ontario’s working at height regulations.

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