

Danang Dragon Swimming and Lifesaving Club

Teaching Water Safety for Children and
young Adults



Author: Garry Seghers DSTA

Produced for the International Federation of Swimming Teachers' Association as an open source document for sharing knowledge to help with drowning prevention worldwide.

Teaching

Water Safety for Children and young Adults

The Author



Garry Seghers DSTA, is the Vice President of the International Federation of Swimming Teachers' Associations (IFSTA), and the Technical Director for the Vietnam Swimming & Lifesaving Company (VSLC). Previously employed by the Swimming Teachers' Association UK for over 20 years, a

STA National Tutor in Lifeguard Training and Swimming Teaching.

In December 2016 he was invited to join VSLC as the Technical Director after working with Hue Help on 4 occasions from 2011 to 2016, training over 100 school teachers to become swimming teachers and developing and running a programme for tutor training.

Danang Dragon Swimming and Lifesaving Club

Now semi-retired living in Da Nang, Vietnam, currently supporting Hue Help with their Water Safety Programme, still training school teachers and tutor training, and this year unanimously elected as the Vice President of IFSTA. And still loves swimming completing the 2500M Ocean Swimming event in Danang this year.



Introduction

After the success of the 'Blue Dragon Emerging from the Water' stories, and the sad news of the recent drowning incidents that have been reported where teenagers that may have been able to swim got into difficulties.

This booklet contains short sections of useful water safety advice to follow. What to check when swimming in open water locations, how to swim in the river, how to swim at the beach and spot a rip current, and what to do in a drowning situation.

Also included is the Water Safety Code from UK with the important message 'Float to Live',

A suggestion for those teaching water safety is to follow up with practical demonstrations of reaching and throwing rescues, these can be achieved in the classroom/dry land situation, or at the swimming pool or their normal swimming location. There is a final chapter with some rescue scenario suggestions once the children have learnt the skills.

Section 1

What to check when swimming in open water locations

It is important to stop and check your location, especially if it is the first time you have visited the site (this is a risk assessment).

1. Does the location have Lifeguards watching the area? If no, do local children regularly enter the water? Are there people swimming when you arrive?
2. Are there any safety signs giving you advice? You can ask the Lifeguards for the location, or you can ask the local people for advice if there are no Lifeguards.



Danang Dragon Swimming and Lifesaving Club

Questions to ask the Lifeguards or the local people for advice:

1. Where is the best place to swim?
2. Is the area free from sudden changes in water depth?
3. Is there a shallow slope for getting in and getting out?
4. Is the area free from dangerous underwater objects?
5. Is the location free from dangerous animals (jellyfish)?
6. Is the water free from pollution?
7. Which way is the wind blowing
8. What is the weather forecast for the area?



What should I take with me?

1. Swimming costume, you may already be wearing it.
2. Sunscreen to protect your skin.
3. Swimming hat, especially if you have long hair.
4. Goggles to protect your eyes.
5. A buoyancy aid such as a tow-float, makes you more visible.
6. Towel for when you finish.
7. Drinking water, it is easy to get dehydrated even when swimming.
8. A light snack, you may feel hungry after swimming.



Section 2

How to swim in the river



1. Is the water flow less than half walking speed? Check by throwing a stick into the water and try to walk along beside it. If you cannot keep up with the stick the water flow is too fast for you.
2. Is the area downstream clear of strainers (rubbish building a dam across the river)? Walk downstream of the swimming area looking for debris.
3. When entering the water from the river bank the water may seem calm, but as you swim across the river the flow will get faster and potentially push you downstream. To swim to a point on the other side you

Danang Dragon Swimming and Lifesaving Club

will need to swim diagonally upstream to allow for the flow pushing you downstream.

4. When swimming in the river it is good to swim in a direction upstream first, if you are getting tired then you can return to your starting point by allowing the flow downstream to help you.
5. It is good to wear a buoyancy aid or attach a tow-float when swimming in open water, it makes you more visible to others, especially if there are other water users such as canoeists, Stand Up Paddleboarders or powered craft.



Section 3

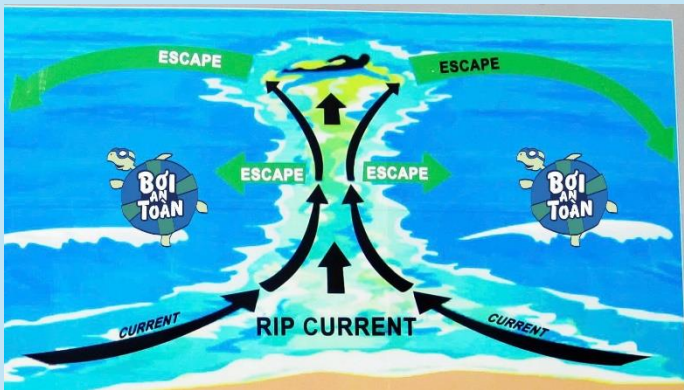
At the Beach, swimming in the sea



1. It is always important to check the sea conditions, even if you frequently swim in the same location.
2. What is the sea doing, is it coming in or going out?
3. Is the sea calm or are there waves breaking on the shore or further out?
4. Are the waves nice and smooth or are they bigger and suddenly crashing down?
5. When there are waves coming in, there is a possibility of rip currents, where the water is going back out.
6. If you find yourself caught in a rip current, stay calm, slowly swim parallel to the shore, swim towards the waves, then swim diagonally to the shore, the waves

will help you get back to shore. If you are not sure which way to swim, just float and relax and go with the flow, which will start to diminish, then swim parallel to the shore and make your way back to safety.

7. So when swimming in the sea it is better to swim along parallel to the shore, rather than swimming straight out and then struggling to swim back.



How to spot the rip



Section 4

If you see someone or more than one person in difficulty in the water, what should you do?

1. Your safety comes first, **Do Not** jump into the water to rescue someone.
2. Keep calm and assess the situation
3. This person or persons are no longer your friend, they are your enemy, they will try to climb on top of you to save themselves.
4. Is there someone else who can help, a Lifeguard, an adult?
5. Is there anything you can use to reach or throw to rescue the person?
6. It is good to have an action plan:

Action Plan

1. Stop and look
2. Decide what to do
3. Talk/shout to the casualties
4. Perform the rescues
5. Give after care and ask:
 - a. Are you OK?
 - b. Is anybody with you?
 - c. Did you swallow any water?
6. Phone emergency services if necessary

Section 5

Water Safety Code

1. Spot the Dangers

Water may look safe but it can be dangerous; learn to spot and keep away from dangers. You may swim well in a warm indoors pool, but that does not mean that you'd be able to swim in open water, which may be cold and have hidden dangers. Always look out for special flags and notices that may warn you of the dangers.

2. Don't Go Alone

Children should always be with an adult, not by themselves. An adult may be able to point out dangers and know how to help if someone gets into trouble.

3. Learn How to Help

In an emergency if you spot someone in trouble call your National Emergency Number immediately and ask for help. Never enter the something that floats and throw it to the person that has fallen in – always wait for the emergency services to arrive.

4. Learn How to Survive – Float to Live

If you fall in the water or become tired, always stay calm, float on your back and shout for help.



Section 6

Rescue Scenario

(3/5 people in a team)

ONE

1. Taking turns to be the rescuee; the rescuer turns away from the water to start.
2. The teacher sets up two casualties and the choice of rescue aids.

TWO

1. Two people taking turns to be the rescuers working as a team, facing away from the water to start.
2. The teacher sets up two or three casualties and choice of rescue aids

Casualties can be:	Rescue aids are:
1. Weak swimmers	1. Noodle
2. Suffering from cramp	2. Stick/Pole
3. Have an injury to their hand or arm	3. Ball
4. They can also be facing away from the rescuer	4. Canister
5. One maybe close and the other further away	5. Rope

If you are using this resource, please inform the author,
as he would like to have any feedback or comments to
help with drowning prevention Worldwide:

garry.seghers@outlook.com

