



## LIFE JACKET AND BOAT SAFETY

### LIFE JACKET RELAY

**Appropriate Age:** 5 years +

**Appropriate Skill Level:** Beginners to Advanced

**Set Up:** Divide individuals into teams. Place an object at the center of the playing area. Have each team line up at either end of the playing area, facing one another.

**To Play:** The first team member in line puts on a life jacket, runs to the center and back, takes off the life jacket and passes it to the next person in line, then goes to the end of the line and sits down. The next team member repeats the actions. The first team with all members seated wins.

**The Takeaway:** Coast Guard–approved life jackets are made of a material that naturally floats in water and they have a seal of approval, unlike unapproved flotation devices (e.g., arm floaties). Non-swimmers and anyone participating in watercraft activities should wear approved life jackets.

### FAMILY DISCUSSION: BOAT SAFETY

Being outdoors promotes a healthy lifestyle. We encourage families to make time together a priority and boating can be a fun family outdoor activity for all to enjoy. Teaching kids about boat safety is a necessary step in the planning process. Here are some rules to keep in mind when boating:

- Everyone on a boat should always wear a life jacket.
- Have children practice swimming with a life jacket on. Then, if they are ever in a situation that requires a life jacket, you know they won't panic.
- Ensure everyone in your family knows how to swim. It could save your lives, especially if you're ever caught in open water.

To help prevent drownings in our community,  
encourage others to take the WATER WATCHER Pledge.  
**TUCSONYMCA.ORG/WATERWATCHER**



## LIFE JACKET AND BOAT SAFETY

- If you own a boat or boat regularly, take a boating safety course.
- Never go into the water after someone in trouble, unless you are a trained lifeguard. Use another means of rescue, such as a reaching assist (show them how to do a reaching assist) or a throwing assist.
- Never swim alone. In Safety Around Water, we teach children to swim with a buddy and to be responsible for caring for that buddy.
- Don't dive from a boat unless you know the water is deep enough and are sure there aren't large objects at the bottom.
- Don't drink alcohol and boat.
- Know boating laws and etiquette.
- Boat defensively. Others may not know or follow the rules.
- Check the weather before you go out, and keep an eye on the weather while boating.
- Always have Coast Guard–required equipment on your boat (like life jackets, fire extinguishers, navigation lights, sound signaling devices, and visual distress signals) as well as other appropriate safety equipment (approved gas can with fuel, oar, anchor and line, first aid kit, basic tools, flashlight and extra batteries, something to bail water, rain gear, compass, and extra clothing).
- When changing seats in a small boat, stay low and near the center.
- Anchor the boat from the bow, not the stern.
- File a float plan before you leave in your boat. Give a friend or relative a list with the following information:
  - A complete description of your boat and car, including the boat registration number and car license plate number
  - A description of the survival equipment aboard the boat, including the radio (type and frequency)
  - The number of people aboard and their home addresses and phone numbers, as well as whether any of those people have a medical problem
  - When the boat is leaving and returning and where the boat is leaving from, going to, and returning to
- Respect the water...and have fun!