

## Kayaking Training Manual

### Goals and objectives of the Outdoors for All Kayak Program:

To provide participants with a SAFE, FUN atmosphere to learn and practice safe paddling techniques. Each kayaking event is different. The focus of some is just to have a safe and fun paddle experience and others may also work to develop paddle skills to effectively paddle a boat independently.

In general, our programs operate in more controlled bodies of water such as lakes or areas near shore or in a cove. The water areas should have low boat traffic, be without major currents or tides, and have light winds (no whitecaps). It is recommended that water temperature be above 70 degrees F or that the combined air and water temperature be more than 120 F.

### These goals will be accomplished by meeting the following objectives:

1. Participants will become familiar with the equipment.
2. Participants will be able to put on their own PFD (if possible).
3. Participants will learn to use different paddling strokes and technique.
4. Participants will follow all the safety parameters outlined in this manual.
5. Participants will become familiar with water and equipment safety.
6. Participants will have fun!!!

### Volunteer Requirements

Volunteers must be comfortable paddling in light to moderate winds. Volunteers will also be expected to paddle in a tandem kayak with a participant.

In order to qualify as an instructor (for on water ratio purposes) a volunteer must attend training and demonstrate ability to wet exit, self-rescue with a paddle float, t-rescue, and demonstrate strong paddling skills. Volunteers will be trained on rescue skills.

During training, volunteers will also learn basic kayak instruction and may have time to be introduced to some of the adaptive kayaking equipment.

For one-time volunteer experiences (such as custom events) volunteers are encouraged to attend training but not required to. The volunteer must attend a 30-minute training on the day of the event.

### Policies and Procedures

- Everyone must wear an appropriately fitting, coast guard approved PDF on the water.
- Anyone not able to self-attest to the ability to independently roll over to gain an airway must wear at type 1 PFD.

- Anyone not able to maintain a sealed airway must wear a type 1 PFD and be in a tandem kayak.
- A participant with a seizure disorder who has experienced a seizure within the last 24 months must either be in a tandem kayak or have a shadow boat next to them, ready to raft up at any point if the participant has a seizure.
- At a minimum, there should be a ratio of 1 Outdoors for All staff/volunteer who has participated in kayak training to every 4 boats. Depending on the ability level of the participants, additional volunteer help is recommended.
- Volunteers, family members, etc who have not attended kayak training may participate as support paddlers but are not trained instructors. Thus, they fall in the participant category with respect to ratios.
- Boats should be carried by two people and not be dragged across the ground
- Check kayaks for leaks, secure hatch covers, and sealed bulk heads. Inspect PFDs, paddles, float bags, pumps, and tow bags to insure they are in working order.
- Spray skirts are not generally used in our programs. Staff may determine in a case by case basis if spray skirts are advisable.
- Participants should be in a tandem, with a volunteer/staff, unless checked off by staff
- Participants must be within visible and audible distance of lead instructors
- A rescue boat must be on the water prior to participants launching and there should be a staff/volunteer on shore to catch kayaks as they come in.
- In the event of a capsize, stay with the boat, keep the boat upside down, hold onto paddle and boat and wait for rescue.
- In the event of a rescue or other emergency, the rest of the group not involved in the response should stay together and ideally go to the nearest shore.
- Staff & volunteers can perform transfers if they have been specifically trained. If not, they may assist a trained staff in ways that do not involve moving the participant
- Have a safety chat with participants before getting on the water
  - Inform participants of inherent risks of paddling and how to mitigate them
  - Practice basic paddle strokes on land and before launching
  - Communicate destination for the day and group travel
  - Safety signals – whistles should only be used for emergencies
  - Discuss what to do in the event of a capsize
  - Go over how to safely get in and out of a boat and stay balanced in boat

- Take precautions to prevent participants from getting entrapped in the kayak. A participant must never be strapped to any part of the kayak, adaptive equipment or paddle.
- If there is thunder or lightning everyone must get to the nearest shore as quickly as possible. You may only get back on the water if it has been 30 minutes since the last thunder or lightning occurrence.
- Kayak events should not go out on water with whitecaps.
- Trained Outdoors for All staff and volunteers should carry a whistle, rescue equipment, a phone, and a first aid kit. Rescue equipment includes a paddle float, a bailer, and a tow rope or throw bag.
- Behavior that compromises personal or group safety will not be tolerated. If behavior persists, the individual will be asked to return to the shore with a volunteer or staff.
- Safety signals – whistles should only be used for emergencies

<b>COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>SIGNAL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wave paddle vertically side to side &amp;</li> <li>• Three long whistle blows</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold paddle above head horizontally</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are you okay?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tap your head three times and point</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am okay</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tap your head three times</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All clear, proceed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paddle held vertically in the air</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proceed in particular direction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Point paddle in desired direction of travel</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to shore immediately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long whistle</li> </ul>