Guide

Supervision of Aquatic Activities for Groups of Children
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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Foreword** ................................................................................................................................. 1

**Introduction** ............................................................................................................................... 2
  - Context ................................................................................................................................. 2
  - Glossary ............................................................................................................................... 2

**Organizing Managers** .................................................................................................................. 4
  - Mandate and responsibilities .............................................................................................. 4
    - Communication ..................................................................................................................... 4
  - Preparation and prevention ................................................................................................. 5
  - Supervising groups of children ............................................................................................ 6

**Attendants** .................................................................................................................................... 7
  - Mandate and responsibilities ............................................................................................... 7
    - Communication ..................................................................................................................... 7
  - Preparing an activity ............................................................................................................. 8
  - Prevention ............................................................................................................................. 9
  - Intervention ......................................................................................................................... 10
  - Evaluation and monitoring of remedial action ..................................................................... 12

**Host Site Managers** ..................................................................................................................... 13
  - Mandate and responsibilities ............................................................................................... 13
    - Communication ..................................................................................................................... 13
    - Safety .................................................................................................................................. 13
  - Regulations ............................................................................................................................ 14
  - Staff supervision ..................................................................................................................... 14
  - Preparation and prevention ................................................................................................. 15

**Lifeguards** ..................................................................................................................................... 16
  - Mandate and responsibilities ............................................................................................... 16
    - Communication ..................................................................................................................... 16
  - Preparation and prevention ................................................................................................. 17
    - Preparing to receive the group ............................................................................................ 17
    - Receiving the group ............................................................................................................ 17
  - Rules ...................................................................................................................................... 18
  - Evaluation and monitoring of remedial action ..................................................................... 18

**Parents** ......................................................................................................................................... 19
  - Preparing for an aquatic activity ............................................................................................ 19

**Appendix – Checklists** ............................................................................................................... i
  - Organizing manager ............................................................................................................... i
  - Host site manager ................................................................................................................... ii
  - Attendant ................................................................................................................................ iii
  - Lifeguard ............................................................................................................................... iv
  - Parents ..................................................................................................................................... v
  - Some useful references ......................................................................................................... vi

**Bibliography** ............................................................................................................................... vii
FOREWORD

In the wake of several drowning and near-drowning incidents involving groups of children, the Coroner’s Office has made a number of safety recommendations for aquatic activities. To comply with these recommendations and provide better supervision for children, a task force was set up to produce a safety guide for supervised aquatic activities involving children. The guide is intended for all individuals and groups with a role to play in this type of activity. It does not, however, address the issue of boating safety.

Four organizations helped to produce the guide:

- the Association des camps du Québec (ACQ)

  The ACQ, acknowledged to be the reference for children’s vacations in Québec, has a membership composed of organizations that provide vacation camp, day camp and nature class programs. Members must meet the ACQ’s certification standards.

- the Canadian Red Cross

  The Canadian Red Cross is a humanitarian organization whose mission includes teaching the Canadian population to swim. It recognizes the importance of prevention through education and awareness of safe approaches and behaviours. The mission of its Injury Prevention Services is to help prevent water-related injuries and deaths.

- the Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport

  The Ministère’s mission in the area of recreation and sport is to foster the development of recreation and sport within a safe and healthy environment and to promote a physically active lifestyle for Québec’s population. Its Direction de la promotion de la sécurité was involved in producing this document.

- the Lifesaving Society

  The Lifesaving Society is a humanitarian organization whose mission is to preserve human life and help the victims of water-related injuries. It has been a leader in the areas of lifeguarding and emergency response since 1909, achieving its objectives through public awareness and training programs. It also manages sports lifesaving operations and administers the activities of the Simon-Pierre Fund and the Kelly-Anne Drummond Fund.
INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide information for people who are required to supervise children’s aquatic activities and outings. It provides a host of useful information on safety measures for managers and attendants in vacation camps, day camps, schools and early childhood centres; managers and lifeguards at aquatic facilities; and parents.

Context

Although the overall number of drownings has declined steadily in the last five years, Québec is still the unfortunate record-holder for drownings among 0 to 4 year olds. Between 1998 and 2002, 51 children between 0 and 12 years of age drowned in Québec, for an annual average of 10 drowning fatalities in this age group.

Two of the main causes of drowning or near-drowning among children are easy access to bodies of water and risk-seeking behaviour by young swimmers. Unfortunately, incidents in which children slip out of sight of their supervisors and venture into deep or unknown waters continue to generate victims.

Where groups of children are concerned, there are a number of factors that increase the risk of accidents. The crowd effect makes it harder to identify swimmers at risk or in distress, and it is easier for individual children to evade supervision and break the safety rules.

It is important for supervisors to be familiar with the circumstances in which drowning can occur. For example, children in distress can be difficult to identify, since their arm movements may be suggestive of enjoyment. Contrary to popular belief, victims will not call for help, because they are more concerned with breathing than with emitting sounds. Supervisors must therefore pay careful attention to the body language and facial expressions of swimmers. Constant, intensive supervision is needed, because a child who is unable to swim will lose consciousness within 15 to 20 seconds.

For all these reasons, group supervisors must be aware of the circumstances of drowning, be able to recognize potential dangers and understand the principles of safety, so that they are able to prevent incidents and take action when required.

Glossary

Attendant Any person, whether paid or unpaid, who is responsible for children during an activity or outing, including any travel time. Attendants may be instructors, counsellors, assistant counsellors, teachers or anyone entrusted with the care of children.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Host site manager</td>
<td>A person who is responsible for managing a water facility used by organized groups of children, including a swimming pool, public beach or water park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizing manager</td>
<td>A person who is in charge of an organization that offers supervised activities, such as the manager of a vacation camp, day camp, early childhood centre or school outing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervised group of children</td>
<td>A group of children aged 16 or under, led by people who are trained in child supervision, such as summer camp counsellors, daycare providers, early childhood centre educators, teachers, and so on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquatic facility (host site)</td>
<td>A site that includes a swimming pool or natural body of water governed by the <em>Regulation respecting safety in public baths</em> (c. S-3, r.3), i.e. a water installation that is supervised and overseen by certified lifeguards and that complies with the standards stipulated in the Regulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>A parent, guardian or person responsible for a child entrusted to an organization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifeguard</td>
<td>A person responsible for supervising a public bath, with the qualifications required for that purpose, in accordance with the <em>Regulation respecting safety in public baths</em> (c. S-3, r.3).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PFD</td>
<td>A personal flotation device</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This document contains a number of sections designed especially for you and other people concerned. Please read each section carefully, so that you are aware of your respective responsibilities and roles in ensuring the safety of the children under your supervision.
ORGANIZING MANAGERS
Summer camps, early childhood centres, schools, etc.

Mandate and responsibilities

As the organizers of everyday activities for children, you need to know what is expected of you so that you can provide safe conditions for both the children and your staff. It is important to remember that aquatic activities present specific risks that must never be underestimated.

If you use attendants for aquatic activities, you are subject to the principle of indirect liability, in that you are liable for any negligence on the part of your attendants, whether or not they are employed by you (see responsibilities of attendants). However, that does not necessarily mean that the attendants themselves do not bear any responsibility.

The organization overseeing an attendant is normally liable for his or her negligence. In Québec, article 1457 of the Civil Code states that a person “is also liable, in certain cases, to reparation for injury caused to another by the act or fault of another person or by the act of things in his custody.”¹ To avoid any ambiguity, you must ensure that your attendants are aware of, and fully understand, their role and responsibilities. According to article 1460 of the Civil Code, “A person who, without having parental authority, is entrusted, by delegation or otherwise, with the custody, supervision or education of a minor is liable, in the same manner as the person having parental authority, to reparation for injury caused by the act or fault of the minor.”²

If you are also the manager of a host site, you must ensure that:

- the lifeguards who supervise and oversee the safety of aquatic activities have the necessary certificates, and that those certificates are up to date. (www.sauvetage.qc.ca)
- the site’s water facilities are in compliance with the Regulation respecting safety in public baths (c. S-3 r.3).

Communication

As is the case for everyone involved in aquatic activities with groups of children—host site managers, attendants, lifeguards and parents (e.g. parents, guardians, people with parental authority)—you must be aware of each other’s responsibilities. This will help you to avoid misunderstandings and ambiguities, which are often the cause of accidents.

² Ibid.
Preparation and prevention

You must ensure that the site, whether natural or artificial, is under the supervision of a qualified lifeguard. In addition, you must be familiar with the site’s physical elements so that you are able to plan the activities and implement accident prevention mechanisms. You are therefore responsible for:

- learning about the characteristics and features of the host site:
  - the number of patrons
  - water quality
  - water features (size, location of deep water areas, number of pools and wading areas, etc.)
  - facilities (diving boards, slides, picnic tables, water games, toilets, shade areas, etc.)

- contacting the host site manager for details of:
  - the site’s reception policy
  - regulations
  - emergency procedures, etc.

- giving details of the group to the host site respondent:
  - number of participants
  - special medical conditions and behavioural characteristics
  - the children’s swimming ability
  - the number of children needing PFDs
  - the visual identification methods used to distinguish group members from other patrons

- agreeing on a Plan B with the host site manager, in case the activity cannot take place in accordance with the agreed rules, or if other changes are required as a result of:
  - rain
  - non-compliance with attendant-child ratios (reorganizing supervision)
  - injuries
  - any other reason that may prevent the activity from taking place as planned

- preparing an emergency plan for the facility visited:
  - vocal signal for assembly
  - place of assembly
  - communication methods and procedures: who contacts whom and how (e.g. the attendant contacts you and you contact the parents)
  - evacuation plan (in compliance with the emergency plan drawn up by the host site manager)

- making sure the parents are aware of the host site’s rules and the expected behaviours before and during aquatic activities
Supervising groups of children

To ensure that your staff members are able to minimize the risk of accident, you must:

- provide the leaders of groups of children with the attendance list, the information sheet on each child, and full information on the site rules and recommended attendant-child ratios (see Table 1)
- make sure the attendants know and understand their own roles and responsibilities, and those of the lifeguards, in supervising and monitoring the children
- provide follow-up with the group leaders both before and after the activity
- ask the attendants to submit a report on:
  - the children’s swimming ability
  - any behavioural problems
  - any medical problems, including allergies, illnesses, phobias, etc.

Table 1: Recommended attendant-child ratios for aquatic activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Under 5 years of age</th>
<th>5-6 years of age</th>
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<td>1/9</td>
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</table>

These ratios were established by the Association des camps du Québec, on the basis that the attendants are trained in child supervision techniques. They are used for reference purposes only.
ATTENDANTS

Mandate and responsibilities

As an attendant, you plan to make activities as interesting as possible and hope the weather will cooperate. Children are constantly learning, and it is important to keep activities fun. Nevertheless, these activities do involve a number of risks, and it is your responsibility to make sure the children are aware of them.

It is also your responsibility to ensure the safety of the children entrusted to you, and your duty to respond and intervene in emergencies. According to article 1460 of the Civil Code, “A person who, without having parental authority, is entrusted, by delegation or otherwise, with the custody, supervision or education of a minor is liable, in the same manner as the person having parental authority, to reparation for injury caused by the act or fault of the minor.”

Communication

As is the case for everyone involved in aquatic activities with groups of children—organizing managers, host site managers, lifeguards and parents (e.g. parents, guardians, people with parental authority)—you must be aware of each other’s responsibilities. This will help you to avoid misunderstandings and ambiguities, which are often the cause of accidents.

In addition, we strongly recommend that you establish a good working relationship with the lifeguards. If you are able to exchange information with them at the beginning of and throughout the season, you will significantly reduce the risk of accidents.

- Inform the lifeguard of:
  - the group’s arrival
  - the number of children and attendants
  - the group’s special needs
  - the methods used to identify children who cannot swim, etc.

- Ask the lifeguard to inform you about:
  - the facility’s rules
  - the rest areas and swim areas assigned to your group
  - emergency procedures
  - the basic principles of safe supervision, etc.

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3 Ibid.
Preparing an activity

Because you know your group, you are best placed to prepare its activities. Some activities, including those that involve water, need more detailed and more precise planning. You must therefore be familiar with the site where the activity will take place, its features and any challenges it may present for the children. Your preparation should also include notes on the children’s individual swimming abilities. Lastly, you must be aware of the mandates and responsibilities of the various people who will be in direct contact with the children (e.g. lifeguards, attendants, counsellors).

Below is a more detailed list of the elements to be considered.

1. Water features: characteristics and rules

   Your task will be easier if you are familiar with the characteristics of the water features on the site. You will be better able to organize the day so as to maximize the activity time and minimize the risk of accident.

   You should find out about:
   • the site’s reception policy
   • the site rules (make sure the group understands them)
   • the features of the aquatic facility
     o swimming pools and wading pools
     o beaches
     o water parks

2. Swimmer assessment

   If you are familiar with each child’s swimming ability, you will be better able to supervise the weak swimmers and non-swimmers in the group.

   • Assess or obtain an assessment of each child’s swimming skills at the beginning of the session, or every time a new group member arrives.
   • Ask if they have taken swimming classes (when, level, certificates obtained).
   • As a basis for your assessment, use the Junior 3 level from the Canadian Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety Program.
   • Identify any swimmers at risk and notify the lifeguards.
   • Always keep the children’s identification sheets with you, along with a note of their swimming skills.
   • Group the children by swim skill level (strong, moderate, weak).

3. Other preparations

   • Make sure the organizing manager has reserved the activity; if not, make the reservation yourself.
• Make sure the parents have been informed about the date and place of the activity.
• Take attendance:
  o before departure
  o upon arrival at the host site
  o during the activities
  o before leaving the host site
  o upon your return
• Prepare and check the equipment of each child and attendant:
  o child identification sheets
  o sunscreen
  o towel
  o PFD
  o medication
  o first-aid kit
• Make a list of the objects that are prohibited on site.
• Inform the group of the expected behaviours and safety measures.

Prevention

Prevention is everyone’s responsibility. Every member of the supervising team has a role to play in ensuring the children’s safety.

1. Prevention

In addition to working closely with the lifeguards, you must also identify any hazards and risks and make sure that the site rules and safety rules have been explained to the children and that the children understand them.

To work with the lifeguards, you must:
• be familiar with the rules of the facility or site
• know what to do in an emergency (e.g. evacuation procedures)
• be familiar with the hazards of the site
• identify a rest area and swim area for your group

To be aware of potential hazards, you must:
• identify children at risk (e.g. non-swimmers; children who are hyperactive, ill or disabled)
• assess the risks associated with deep water, diving boards, slippery areas and so on (ask the lifeguards about these elements)
• identify weak swimmers; a visual identifier such as a PFD or bracelet could be used to facilitate supervision (Warning: Identifiers may create a false sense of security. If a swimmer loses the identifier, he or she will be very difficult to spot in a crowd.)
Explain:
• the rules of the facility and of your organization
• safety signals
• where to assemble

2. Monitoring and supervision

The lifeguards are not the only people responsible for monitoring and supervision. You can and must apply the same monitoring and supervisory measures for aquatic activities as you would for any other activity.

The main measures are:

• Identify each person’s responsibilities: lifeguards, other attendants.
• Select a meeting point for the start and end of the activity and inform all group members.
• Provide continuous supervision by:
  o assigning and rotating tasks so that all attendants are alert at all times
  o visual scanning
  o any other techniques proposed by the lifeguard
• Identify monitoring and verification techniques: the buddy system, head counting, visual identification devices.

In addition to visual scanning and supervision, you should also use effective identification techniques that will allow you to assess a situation quickly. We propose two effective and easily applicable methods.

The buddy system

Each child is paired with a friend, and the two must stay together and watch out for one another. When you shout “buddy up,” the pairs must get together so that you can check that everyone is present.

Head counting

You must count the children in and out of the water on a regular basis. To do this, it is easiest to identify the children by sector: deep end, shallow end, rest area, etc.

Intervention

In spite of all your preparations and preventive measures, emergencies can happen and you must be prepared for action. This is not the time to improvise.

In an emergency, you must apply your emergency plan, and it is important for everyone concerned to know exactly what they have to do in such a situation. One thing you can do to refine your emergency plan is to prepare for different scenarios and different
reactions. Test your plan as often as possible by simulating different kinds of emergencies. When an emergency occurs, you will be better prepared to take effective action.

1. Apply an emergency plan

   - Make sure all those concerned know what they have to do:
     - attendants
     - children
     - lifeguards

   - Identify different scenarios and the actions required in each type of situation:
     - injury
     - drowning
     - missing child

   - Tell the children about the different aspects of the emergency plan and make sure they understand:
     - the vocal signal for assembly
     - landmarks
     - the assembly point

2. Intervention

   When action is needed, remember that you are not alone and can call on the lifeguards and the support and expertise of other people on the site or in the immediate vicinity. Some basic knowledge will enable you to intervene quickly; lives may depend on the speed with which you are able to take action.

   - Be able to identify a person in distress:
     - upright body position
     - expression of fear
     - vigorous arm movements to the sides or in front in an effort to raise the head above the surface (Warning: this may look like a game.)
     - no call for help or wave

   - Be familiar with basic lifesaving techniques:
     - Signal to the lifeguard that there is a person in distress and then:
       > talk to the person and encourage him or her to move to safety
       > throw a rope-free object that will float and encourage the person to use it as a means of moving to safety, or throw a floating object with a rope and pull the person to safety

The following two tables show the steps to be taken in an emergency. They are simple and include the participation of other people.
**Attendant 1 (first witness to the incident)**

1. Maintain visual contact with the child.
2. Alert the lifeguards and other attendants.
3. Help the child (where applicable).
4. Give the lifeguard the information needed for the incident report.

**Other attendants**

1. Evacuate all the groups of children, following the instructions given by the lifeguards.
2. Assemble the groups at the place indicated by the lifeguards and check who is present using the buddy technique.
3. Reassure the children and keep them busy.

Given that the senior attendant will have a first-aid certificate from a recognized organization, this guide does not discuss the issue of first-aid for injuries.

**Evaluation and monitoring of remedial action**

Your role ends when you have completed the activity report, regardless of whether or not an incident occurred.

After an incident, it is important to review the situation with the other people concerned, in order to devise solutions for future activities.

Even when everything goes well, it is useful to see whether certain elements could be improved, and identify any positive aspects of the activity.

Examine the situation in detail:
- decide which elements need to be improved or changed
- inform managers about the day’s events
- complete an activity report and submit it to the organizing manager
- contact the host site manager for comments and suggestions
HOST SITE MANAGER

Mandate and responsibilities

If you employ a lifeguard, you are subject to the principle of indirect liability, meaning that you are liable for any negligence on the part of your employee (see responsibilities of lifeguards). However, this does not mean that your employees do not have certain responsibilities. A lifeguard’s employer organization is usually held liable if the lifeguard is negligent. As the Lifesaving Society points out, under Québec’s Civil Code, “a person is responsible for damage caused by the fault of persons under his or her control.” On the other hand, to avoid ambiguity, you must ensure that your lifeguards know and understand their role and responsibilities.

Communication

As is the case for everyone involved in aquatic activities with groups of children—organizing managers, attendants, lifeguards and parents (e.g. parents, guardians, people with parental authority)—you must be aware of each other’s responsibilities. This will help you to avoid misunderstandings and ambiguities, which are often the cause of accidents.

Safety

Owners must ensure that their water facilities are safe.

As a manager, you are responsible for checking the skills of your staff, ensuring that they are qualified and complying with the standards set out in the Regulation respecting safety in public baths (c. S-3, r.3). To ensure that your lifesaving team is always on the alert, we recommend that you introduce a summer group training plan. This will help your lifeguards to maintain their physical fitness, upgrade their knowledge and be able to act spontaneously in emergencies. It will also help to create good communications within the team.

It is your duty to comply with two regulations that are applicable to every public water facility in Québec, namely the Regulation respecting safety in public baths (c. S-3, r.3) and the Regulation respecting water quality in swimming pools and other artificial pools (c. Q-2, r.18.1.02)

Children must be supervised closely, because they are not always able to assess the level of danger. A great deal of litigation for negligence in sports and recreation is the result of accidents caused by the condition of the site or premises. Many jurisdictions have legislation that places the responsibility firmly on the shoulders of the owners.

Failure to provide adequate protection for users of a site is one of the main grounds for civil liability actions. Owners must identify the risks and make sure users are informed about them. Your role is therefore to identify and examine the elements of your facility that pose a risk and then install signs (pictograms are strongly recommended) to inform users of the potential risks.\(^5\)

**Regulations**

In addition to applying the *Regulation respecting safety in public baths*, you must also introduce specific rules applicable to your facility. These site rules should be revised each year and adjusted in light of changes to the facility or its client base. For example, if the number of patrons increases, you and your staff may decide to prohibit floating objects or to divide the water into swim zones. The various scenarios for rule changes should be established in advance and clearly explained to the lifeguards.

You must make sure all the rules are applied at all times (e.g. no diving into shallow water). In addition, we strongly recommend that you introduce an attendant-child ratio for visiting groups.

**Table 1: Recommended attendant-child ratios for aquatic activities**

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These ratios were established by the Association des camps du Québec, on the basis that the attendants are trained in child supervision techniques. They are used for reference purposes only.

**Staff supervision**

To minimize the risk of accidents:

- Check the skills of your staff.
- Provide training at the beginning of the season on:
  - the job and responsibilities of a lifeguard
  - the rules of the facility
  - the reception policy
- Organize or require regular group training sessions to improve the lifeguards’ reflexes, physical fitness and teamwork.
- Introduce a plan of action for supervising the facility, inform the staff of its existence and make sure everyone understands it.
- In the emergency and evacuation plan, provide for different situations, including the presence of groups of children. The *Lifesaving Society’s* handbook entitled *Alert, Lifeguarding in Action* is an excellent source of information for preparing an emergency plan.

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• Monitor the staff’s activities to assess the quality of the supervision provided and make adjustments where necessary.
• Ask for a report of every accident or incident. These reports should be kept for five years since they may be used for legal or statistical purposes.

Preparation and prevention

At the beginning of the season, you should contact managers who are likely to organize activities at your facility for information and prevention purposes. This will enable you to:

• establish procedures for group visits, based on this guide
• identify the features of each group:
  o number of children and attendants
  o the age of the children
  o the children’s swimming ability
  o any special needs (e.g. allergies, behavioural problems)
• agree on a Plan B with the organizing manager, so that the activities can be adjusted to various situations, for example if:
  o the group is unable to comply with the attendant-child ratio recommended in this guide
  o a child is injured
  o it rains, etc.
• give organizing managers a copy of your facility’s rules and reception policy

Because the number of patrons can be a primary risk factor, it is very important to ensure that all groups comply with the recommended attendant-child ratios.
LIFEGUARDS

Mandate and responsibilities

As a lifeguard, you may be required to work in a variety of aquatic environments including swimming pools, surf beaches, water parks, summer camps and so on. Although there are variations in each job description, you will basically be required to perform accident prevention, rescue response, public relations and administrative duties.

Your primary task is to prevent accidents by controlling, directing or influencing patron behaviour. This involves being knowledgeable about how accidents occur (when, where, to whom, etc.), so that you are better able to prevent them.\(^6\) In addition, you are responsible for keeping your knowledge up to date, ensuring that your lifeguarding and first-aid certificates are always current, and maintaining or improving your physical fitness.

As a lifeguard, you also agree to take on one of the main responsibilities of organized water facilities, namely patron safety, which involves the duty to intervene in an emergency.\(^7\)

Communication

As is the case for everyone involved in aquatic activities with groups of children—organizing managers, host site managers, attendants and parents (e.g. parents, tutors, people with parental authority)—you must be aware of each other’s responsibilities. This will help you to avoid misunderstandings and ambiguities, which are often the cause of accidents.

In addition, we strongly recommend that you establish a good working relationship with the attendants who are likely to bring groups to your facility on a regular basis. If you are able to exchange information with them at the beginning of and throughout the season, you will significantly reduce the risk of accidents.

- You should inform the attendants of:
  - the site rules
  - the rest areas and swim areas assigned to their group
  - the emergency procedures
  - the basic principles of safe supervision and the importance of their contribution

- The attendant should inform you of:
  - the group’s arrival time

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\(^7\) *Ibid*, p. 4.
the number of children and attendants
the group’s special needs
the methods used to identify children who are non-swimmers or weak swimmers

Preparation and prevention

The children should be familiar with the facility’s rules before the season begins. It is important to follow up on this throughout the season, so as to establish good communication.

We recommend that group leaders be encouraged to inform the facility of their visit in advance. This will allow you to prepare the day’s activities, plan your supervision needs and control the number of patrons. You should inform your immediate superior of any late reservations.

Preparing to receive the group

Before starting the day, check the safety of the premises; elements such as broken glass or algae are dangerous to bathers.

Receiving the group

Talk to the attendant before the group enters the water to maximize supervision and reduce the risk of accidents.

You should be familiar with:
• the group’s features:
  o number of children and attendants
  o age categories
  o behavioural characteristics
  o the children’s swimming skills
  o allergies, health problems, etc.

You must check to ensure that:
• the attendant-child ratio has been met
• children who cannot swim are:
  o identified using a visual identifier
  o wearing a PFD or life jacket
  o under close supervision
• the attendants have a Plan B if:
  o a child is injured
  o the group does not comply with the attendant-child ratio
  o the facility’s hosting capacity has been reached
  o it is raining, etc.
You must remind the attendant of:

- the site rules
- the special features of the facility (e.g. hazards, deep and shallow water areas)
- the rest area and swim areas assigned to the group
- the most effective supervision techniques (e.g. the buddy system)
- emergency and evacuation procedures
- the possibility of certain objects being banned if there are too many patrons

In some cases you may need to assess the children’s swimming skills and identify any non-swimmers in the group. You should base your assessment on the Canadian Red Cross Junior 3 level.

Rules

You may need to make changes to your supervision method. For example, for some groups you may need additional supervision positions, or you may have to move your existing positions. As mentioned earlier, the site manager must provide the staff with a supervision plan of action, and it is important for all the lifeguards to understand the plan.

You may also have to adjust the site rules in some situations, for example due to the number of patrons or to patron behaviour, in order to ensure the safety of all swimmers.

You may, for example, decide to prohibit:

- objects such as inflatable rafts or sinking toys
- access to certain elements of the site, such as diving boards or deep water

Decisions such as this should be made with a view to maximizing patron safety. Where necessary, they should be approved by the facility manager.

Evaluation and monitoring of remedial action

At the end of the day, we recommend that you review the day’s events and perhaps produce a written report. This will help you to identify the aspects that need to be improved, changed or maintained. It will also be useful in improving both the activities and the supervision provided and in informing group leaders of the changes made.

You should give a copy of your report to your manager, so that he or she can suggest improvements if necessary. You may find it useful to contact the organizing manager for comments on the day’s activities.
PARENTS

As parents, you play a very important role in ensuring your child’s safety inside the host organization. You must work with both the organization and the attendants so that nothing is left to chance.

Preparing for an aquatic activity

You must:

- give the following information to the staff of the host organization (e.g. summer camp, school, early childhood centre):
  - your emergency contact information
  - details of your child’s behaviour
  - your child’s special medical needs
  - your child’s swimming skills (with copies of any certificates, plus a PFD, if necessary)
- be familiar with the responsibilities of the people concerned (e.g. organizing manager, attendant, host site manager and lifeguards)
- be familiar with the host site’s characteristics, features and rules
- educate and prepare your child for an aquatic outing or activity (e.g. rules, appropriate behaviour)
- provide your child with all the items on the list drawn up by the organization responsible for the outing or activity (e.g. bathing suit, towel, PFD, sunscreen, hat)

Lastly, if you feel it is necessary, you may meet with the attendant to discuss the plans for the activity.
## APPENDIX—CHECKLISTS

### Organizing manager

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am aware of:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>my role and responsibilities and those of the group’s attendants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the special medical and behavioural characteristics of the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the children’s swimming abilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the characteristics, features and procedures of the host site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I make sure that:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attendants are properly trained for their task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>information sheets are available for every child, and that the attendants have read the sheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre- and post-activity procedures have been set up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there are sufficient attendants to comply with the recommended ratios</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I inform:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the parents about the activity and gather information on the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the host site manager about the special characteristics of the group and of individual children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the attendants about the importance of their role in working with the lifeguards to supervise the children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Host site manager

**I make sure that:**

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the facility complies with the <em>Regulation respecting safety in public baths</em> (c. S-3, r.3) and the <em>Regulation respecting water quality in swimming pools and other artificial pools</em> (c. Q-2, r.18.1.02)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my staff are aware of and fully understand their roles and responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pre- and post-activity procedures have been set up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>special reception procedures have been set up for groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>my staff and the activity organizers are aware of my reception policy and the rules governing water facilities, and that full details of both the policy and the rules are available to all visitors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attendant-child ratios are enforced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am aware of the number of visitors and the special requirements of the group and of individual children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Attendant

### I am aware of:

- my organization’s rules for aquatic outings
- my role during the activity, in normal circumstances and in emergencies
- the features of my group and of the host site
- my role and responsibilities and those of the lifeguards in monitoring and supervising the children
- the rules and features of the site to be visited
- the children’s individual swimming skills and the medical information on their identification sheets

### I inform:

- the parents about how to dress their children for the activity and about the materials that are permitted or prohibited
- the lifeguards about the group’s special characteristics
- the children about how we expect them to behave
- the children about where to assemble before the activity, after the activity and in an emergency, and the sign I will give to indicate that it is time to assemble

### I prepare:

- the children’s individual identification sheets showing their medical details, behavioural details and swimming skills
- and check each child’s equipment
Lifeguard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I am aware of:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>my role and responsibilities, and those of the attendants, in monitoring and supervising the children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the special features and requirements of the facility (e.g. exit, checking and putting away equipment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the specific characteristics of the group and of certain individual children</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I prepare:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the safety aspects of the premises and the equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a list of instructions for the group when it arrives, including rules, emergency procedures, the plan for the day and so on</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>I make sure that:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the attendants are aware of their role and the procedures to be followed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the attendant-child ratio is enforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the attendants have identified the children who are non-swimmers or weak swimmers</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I inform:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>the attendants about the rules and emergency plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the attendants about the best supervision points and the rest areas assigned to their group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Parents

**I am aware of:**

| the characteristics, features and rules of the host site |

**I inform:**

| the camp, early childhood centre, school or other organizing manager of my child’s special medical needs (e.g. illnesses, allergies, phobias) |
| the organization responsible for the outing or activity about my child’s swimming ability |
| the attendants of the telephone numbers at which I can be reached in an emergency |
| my child of the rules to be followed during the activity |

**I make sure that:**

| My child’s bag contains everything on the list provided by the organization responsible for the outing or activity (e.g. swimsuit, towel, PFD) |
## Some useful references

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEEN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Regulation respecting safety in public baths</em> (c. S-3, r.3) under the <em>Public Buildings Safety Act</em> (c. S-3)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca">www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Regulation respecting water quality in swimming pools and other artificial pools</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c. Q-2, r.18.1.02)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Web site of the Association des camps du Québec</td>
<td><a href="http://www.camps.qc.ca">www.camps.qc.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Web site of the Lifesaving Society</td>
<td><a href="http://www.sauvetage.qc.ca">www.sauvetage.qc.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Web site of the Canadian Red Cross, Québec Division</td>
<td><a href="http://www.croixrouge.ca">www.croixrouge.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Laws and Regulations of Québec</td>
<td><a href="http://www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca">www.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boating Events</td>
<td><a href="http://www.evenementnautique.ca">www.evenementnautique.ca</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books, periodicals, research reports and letters


Web sites


