



SAFETY AT SEA

This section requires that the cub should have at least gained Stage 1 of the Swimmer's badge. This session will also require some hands on training from the Leaders themselves. During this session the Cub will learn how to identify a drowning person, and the Reach and the Throw method to save someone else's life.

How to tell that someone is drowning:

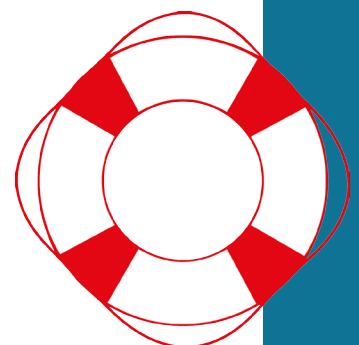
This is a very important matter, especially in Malta since we are surrounded by sea. We must provide the Cubs with clear, correct and understandable information. You can also ask an expert to give a talk about this, if you feel uncomfortable delivering the session yourself.

First, remove everything you think you know from films or TV. There isn't a lot of splashing and shouting when someone is drowning. There are two types of reactions a person makes when they encounter a difficulty in the sea: Aquatic Distress and the Instinctive Drowning Response.

When a person is experiencing Aquatic Distress, they recognize that they are in trouble, and try to attract attention to themselves. They can still do some voluntary movement, like waving, shouting, or reaching to grab an object. They can help in their own rescue. This phase does not last long before the situation gets worse and the victim goes to the Instinctive Drowning Response; but if you get to the victim in this time, they can be responsive to help.

During the Instinctive Drowning Response, the victim is not in control of their movement and actions; this means they cannot wave or call for help. The victim stays upright, with their arms extended to try to lever themselves up. They do not kick to stay afloat. When they manage to get their mouth above water, they use the time to breathe, not shout for help. The victim's head is low, mouth at water level. The head may be tilted back, and their mouth kept open. Their hair may flop in front of their eyes, and they make no attempt to remove it. They may try to swim, but make no progress. They may also try to roll over to float. They may look like they are climbing an invisible ladder. The victim goes quite. This is particularly significant in the case the victim is a child – children make noise in the water.

If you suspect that a person is in trouble, simply ask. Call out "Are you all right?" If they do not respond, they give you a blank stare, or continue any of the above actions, they are in trouble, and you need to respond.



What to do if you see someone drowning

- o **NEVER** jump in the water yourself – we are not life savers, and shouldn't jump in, even if the victim is younger than us.
- o **NEVER** have any direct contact with the victim. This is because they might pull you down as well.
- o Ask for an adult's help. If you can do so immediately (e.g. you have mobile phone with you), call 112.
- o If there is no adult:
 - o Try to **REACH** the victim using an object.
 - o If you can't reach, **THROW** something.
 - o Once the victim is safe, or you threw the object, or you can't do anything, call the emergency number, if you haven't done so.
- o **First Aid:** Take off their clothes and wrap them up in towels, to dry them and keep the heat in.

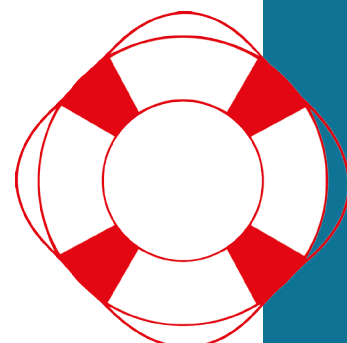
Reach

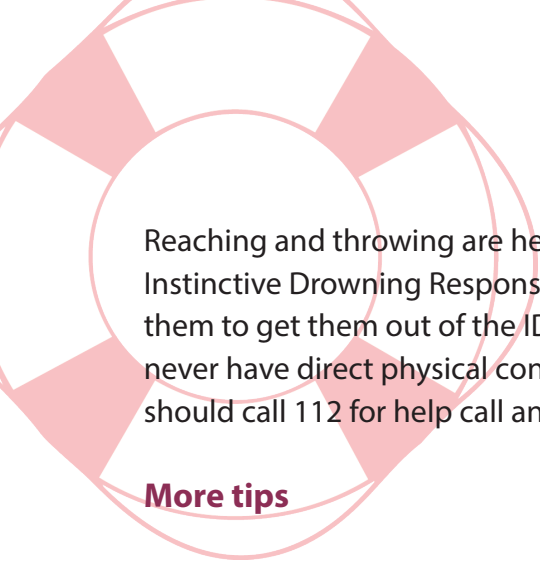
The farther you stay from a victim you are aiding, the safer you will be. If you can, remain on shore and reach for the person. Use a tree branch, a fishing pole, a canoe paddle, the sleeve of your jacket, or whatever else is handy. You should have **NO DIRECT PHYSICAL CONTACT** with the victim so you can let go if it becomes necessary.



Throw

Throw something that floats to the victim if they cannot reach. A football or empty plastic bottle may save a life. Life Jackets, tyres, lilos are all good to help a victim grab, but you must pay attention to the wind. If the wind is blowing against the victim, it will be difficult for the victim to catch these objects. Therefore, in these cases we can use ropes. Almost any light line can be thrown a moderately long distance. One of the best ways to weight a line for practice and actual use is to tie one end to a plastic bottle containing an inch of water. After throwing the object, **GO AND ASK FOR HELP**. Don't stay there with the victim, he/she will get more tired and let loose of the object you have thrown.



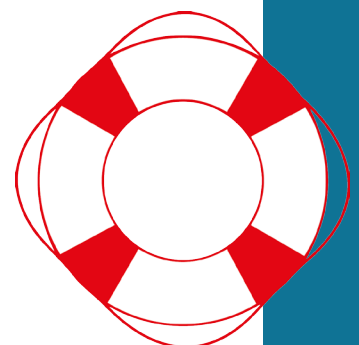


Reaching and throwing are helpful for Active Drowning Victims. If the victim is in the Instinctive Drowning Response, the only help seems to be swimming to the victim, support them to get them out of the IDR, and swim them out of the water. Children (cubs) should never have direct physical contact with a drowning person. Thus in the case of IDR, cubs should call 112 for help call and ask for expert help.

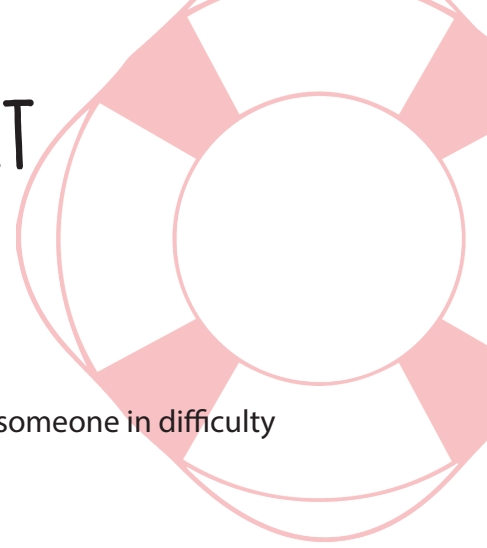
More tips

- o If you become tired while swimming, take a deep breath and float on your back to rest.
- o **NEVER** pretend to be drowning, as it may cost someone else their life!
- o In light of this, what should we take with us to the beach? (Eg. mobile phones, a ball, see what the Cubs come up with)

You can also see <http://www.wikihow.com/Recognize-That-Someone-Is-Drowning>, and the references for more details.



ACTIVITY FACT SHEET



Activity: Practice throwing and reaching



Objective: Learn how to 'reach' and how to 'throw' to help someone in difficulty



Time: 30 minutes



Outline: Use one of the lashings to divide a dry area (ground/hall) into a "beach" and a "sea." The Cubs must always stay on land. You stay "in the sea," and the Cubs have to try to help you.

First, let the Cubs reach to you with the broomstick. Offer some resistance, and even pull them in. The Cubs have to let go before you pull them into the sea.

To practice throwing, go further back, and the Cubs have to throw the ball next to you. You can also ask the Cubs to throw the lashing at you. They have to wind it as if they're doing a hank-a-rope, hold one end tightly and throw the rest in an underhand manner.

It is important to avoid hitting the drowning person with the object you are trying to save him/her with.



Equipment: Two lashings, a broomstick, or something else that is long, and a ball.



Place: Group HQ



Group Size: Arrow Group






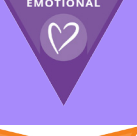

3rd Parties: N/A



ACTIVITY FACT SHEET



During the Activity:

-  – Working together to learn how to help anyone who might be drowning.
-  – The acts of reaching and throwing are physical activities. It takes physical strength to help a drowning person.
-  – Cubs learn how to identify a drowning person, and how they can help.
-  – Following the practicing discuss with the Cubs the emotions that such an incident can bring about e.g. fear, panic, hopelessness, reasonability, stress, tired, proud, happy. The cubs may even have had an experience which they can share.
-  – Recognising the value of life and the importance of know how to help a person is a life threatening situation such as drowning.

