

# Water Safety Scotland: Water Safety Workshop



water safety  
Scotland

## Learning objectives

- 1 To develop an understanding of the dangers of water, in particular the effects of cold water shock.
- 2 To develop an understanding of how you can keep yourself and others safe around water, and how to respond in an emergency.

**Estimated delivery time:** 1 hour (estimate)


**Equipment needed:** Screen, audio



**Optional:** Print out Cards (see activity 2)

## Welfare warning

- **General warning:** check if there has been a recent drowning fatality or water-related injury in the local area or within the group.
- **Warning:** This workshop is suitable for ages 14+. However Activity 5 (Cameron's Story) is based on a true, emotive story which may be difficult for some. It has a recommended viewing of age 16+. Adult to watch the video prior to delivering the presentation.

Presentation structure	Slide number	Timings	Presenter action
<b>Starter activity</b>	1	5 minutes	<p>Settling activity as members of the group come into the workshop.</p> <p>Introduce yourself and explain that you're here today to talk about water safety.</p> <p>Ask the group: can anyone tell us about a body of water near you? Do you think you always act safely when you're there?</p> <p>Note: it is advisable to research local bodies of water (e.g. loch, river, reservoir) prior to delivery, as they are helpful to refer to and may make the session more meaningful for young people.</p>

Presentation structure	Slide number	Timings	Presenter action
<b>Learning objectives</b>	2	< 5 minutes	<p>Today, we will be talking about water safety. Water can be fun but also dangerous, and sadly every year people are injured or drown in Scotland's waters. Today, you'll learn some simple tips to help you stay safe and keep each other safe in and around water.</p> <p>Activities on or near water can be fun, but you need to make sure you stay safe.</p> <p>Scotland has an incredibly large coastline, as well as thousands of lochs, rivers and canals.</p> <p>Activities on or near the water are important for staying fit and getting outside.</p> <p>We are not here to frighten anyone away from enjoying activities near or on water, but to tell you some simple steps to identify dangers, keep yourself and others safe, and how you should respond in an emergency.</p>
<p><b>Activity 1:</b></p> <p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> <div data-bbox="190 874 808 1137" style="border: 1px solid #0070C0; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p>  <p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> </div>	3	10 minutes	<p>The first step in the Water Safety Code is to <b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b>. It's important to stop and think and spot potential dangers when you're near water. Most people who need to be rescued never intended to be in the water in the first place.</p> <p>I want you to imagine you and two friends are taking your dog on a walk by the river. Have a look at the photo and think about the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Can you see any dangers in this picture?</li> <li>2 What dangers might be hidden?</li> <li>3 It's important to identify where you are and if there is rescue equipment near you. How could you get help if you got into trouble here?</li> </ol> <p>If possible, ask a couple of individuals to volunteer to share their ideas.</p> <p>Reinforce the main dangers to be aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The water is <b>colder</b> than you think.</li> <li>• The water is <b>deeper</b> than you think.</li> <li>• The water can be <b>fast moving</b> and <b>powerful</b>.</li> <li>• There can be <b>hidden dangers</b> in the water.</li> <li>• The <b>edge</b> can be <b>dangerous</b>.</li> </ul>


Presentation structure	Slide number	Timings	Presenter action
<p><b>Activity 2:</b></p> <p><b>Where do accidents happen?</b></p> <div data-bbox="192 544 808 815"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p>  <p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> </div>	4-5	5-10 minutes	<p>Unfortunately, people lose their lives every year in different bodies of water. All water can be dangerous, can you guess where most accidents happen?</p> <p>We will go through the cards: put your hands up if you think the number will be higher, or hands down for lower (number of people injured/drowned).</p> <p><i>Note: these figures refer to Scotland only.</i></p> <p>Click through the cards.</p> <p>Option: print the cards out and ask for volunteers to come up to the front. They need to arrange the cards in order of least to most dangerous location. You can ask them how they came to this order/decision.</p> <p>Remind the group of the key dangers, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cold water/cold water shock</li> <li>• powerful and moving water</li> <li>• hidden dangers (rubbish, broken glass, trolley etc.)</li> <li>• busy waters (boats/traffic).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Activity 3:</b></p> <p><b>Stay Together, Stay Close</b></p> <div data-bbox="192 1102 808 1337"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p>  <p><b>Stay Together, Stay Close</b></p> </div>	6	5-10 minutes	<p>The second key message to keep yourself and others safe is to <b>Stay Together, Stay Close</b>.</p> <p>Ask the group to think about why they might be safer in a group. Why is it important to look out for others when you're near water? Planning for a day out can help keep you safe: what could you bring with you?</p> <p>It's important to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tell someone where you're going, and when you'll be back</li> <li>• bring a mobile phone with you</li> <li>• be prepared: plan your trip</li> <li>• check the weather forecast in advance and wear the right clothing.</li> </ul>

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	7	5 minutes	<p>The final step is <b>In an Emergency, Call 999</b>.</p> <p>We're going to watch a video – this is not a true story, but unfortunately this scenario does happen across Scotland.</p> <p>First, read the questions aloud and then play the video:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why do you think he went into the water?</li> <li>• Would you have gone into the water?</li> <li>• What would you have done to help him?</li> </ul> <p>Tell the group that they can also reflect on the challenge questions at the bottom of the screen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why should you never go into the water to help someone?</li> <li>• What would you do if someone encouraged you to act dangerously near water?</li> </ul> <p>Play the video.</p> <p>It's important to stress the importance of never entering the water to help someone: you don't know how that person got into trouble and if you enter the water, you're likely to also get into trouble.</p> <p>Stay back, call 999 and ask for the Coastguard or Fire (if inland).</p> <p>While you wait, keep an eye on the person in the water, shout to them to calm them down and reassure them. Encourage them to float on their back rather than fight against the water. While you wait for help, find something that floats (e.g. football), tie clothing together, or find a piece of rescue equipment.</p>

**Key message:**



**In an Emergency,  
Call 999**

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<p><b>Activity 4:</b></p> <p><b>What to do if you see someone in trouble in the water</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #0070C0; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <p><b>In an Emergency, Call 999</b></p> </div> </div>	8	5 minutes	<p>If you had been in that scenario, with the boy struggling in the water, you need to know how to react. The people on the screen are individuals who respond to emergencies: they include the Police, Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, the Coastguard and the RNLI.</p> <p><b>Q</b> Does anyone know who helps us in an emergency at the beach?</p> <p><b>A</b> Coastguard and RNLI.</p> <p><b>Q</b> What about at an inland loch or river?</p> <p><b>A</b> Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.</p> <p>Play each clip, which will tell the group their role in an emergency and will also include key safety information. Reiterate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Never enter the water to save someone</li> <li>• In an Emergency, Call 999</li> <li>• After calling for help, try to help the person using rescue equipment, or throw them something that floats (e.g. a football). Reassure them that help is on the way, and try to get them to stay calm and float.</li> </ul>

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<b>Core concept: Cold water shock</b>	<b>9-10</b>	<b>&lt; 5 minutes</b>	<p>Why are Scotland's waters particularly dangerous? Anything below 15°C is defined as cold water and can seriously affect your breathing and movement, so the risk in Scotland's waters is significant most of the year. Average UK and Ireland sea temperatures are around 12°C. There is always a very real risk of cold water shock in Scotland's waters.</p> <p>Go through the diagram, which shows the effects of cold water shock on the body in the short term (0–3 minutes), medium term (3-30 minutes) and long term (30+ minutes).</p> <p>You could ask the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is anyone surprised by the effects of cold water shock at the various stages?</li> <li>• What would you do to calm yourself down?</li> <li>• How could calming down increase your chance of survival?</li> <li>• How could floating save your life?</li> </ul> <p>Move onto slide 10.</p> <p>We've spoken about what to do if you see someone in the water who needs help. But you also need to know what to do if you're the one that needs help.</p> <p>Play the video of Paralympic Athlete Toni Shaw discussing cold water shock.</p> <p>After the video, reiterate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you have a mobile on you Call 999 and ask for the Coastguard (at the coast/beach) or Fire Service if you're at inland waters.</li> <li>• Do not panic – Instead of trying to fight the water, lie back, relax your legs and use your hands to keep your head above the water.</li> <li>• Float for 60 seconds or so until you've calmed down and adjusted to the temperature of the water.</li> <li>• When you feel you can, shout loudly and wave for help or try to swim to land or something that floats.</li> </ul> <p>Ask the participants to 'act out' floating by standing (or lying on the floor, if possible) with their arms stretched out, legs relaxed and head back. Explain that by floating, rather than attempting to fight against the water, you'll be able to calm down, get used to the temperature of the water, slow down your breathing, and then make a decision to either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 swim to the shore or something that floats</li> <li>2 put one hand up in the air and shout for help.</li> </ol>

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<p><b>Activity 5:</b></p> <p><b>Cameron's story</b></p> <p><i>Please note: this video should be watched by an adult in advance of presenting to young people. This video contains content that some young people may find difficult to watch, and discusses a real-life story of loss of life.</i></p> <p><b>We recommend that this should not be viewed by those under the age of 16.</b></p>	11	5 minutes	<p>Please decide whether or not it is appropriate to view the video. If you decide it is not, please move to the next slide.</p> <p>If you decide to play the video, please warn the group that this is a real-life story that some may find upsetting.</p> <p>Play video and ask for any feedback. If a discussion arises, please facilitate.</p> <p>Provide appropriate support if any young people are upset. If you need assistance speak to your local mental health charity or reach out to a national organisation like the Samaritans.</p>
<p><b>Activity 6:</b></p> <p><b>Have you learned the Water Safety Code?</b></p> <p>Returning to the initial images</p> <p>Exit activity</p>	10	5 minutes	<p>Ask the group to look back at the image on the screen that they'd reflected on at the beginning of the session.</p> <p>Ask them to reflect again on the questions – would they change their responses now? Would they now act differently around water, and do they feel more confident in knowing how to stay safe and appropriately respond to an emergency?</p>
<p><b>Summary</b></p>	13	< 5 minutes	<p>Summarise the three-step Water Safety Code:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</li> <li>• Stay Together, Stay Close</li> <li>• In an Emergency, Call 999</li> </ul> <p>Direct them to further information at: <a href="http://www.watersafetyscotland.org.uk">www.watersafetyscotland.org.uk</a></p>



**Stop and Think,  
Spot the Dangers**



**Stay Together,  
Stay Close**



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Call 999**