

# Alcohol and Water Safety:

## Water Safety extension activity/workshop



water safety  
Scotland

### Learning objectives


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



**Warning: This workshop is suitable for age 14+. Slide 7 depicts drowning that some pupils may find upsetting. Adult to watch prior to delivery.**



**Estimated delivery time:**  
20 minutes

**Equipment needed:**  
Screen, Audio

Presentation structure	Slide number	Timings	Presenter action
<b>Starter activity</b>	2	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 and alcohol. In particular how alcohol can affect you and increase your risk around water.</p> <p><b>Questions for the group:</b> Can you think of somewhere local that is similar to these scenes? What sort of activities can you do there?</p> <p><b>Note:</b> It's 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. This can make the discussion more meaningful.</p>
<b>Learning objectives</b>	3	< 5 minutes	<p>Today, we'll be talking about alcohol and water safety. Water can be fun but also dangerous, and sadly every year people are injured or drown in Scotland's waters. Alcohol can increase the risk of drowning. Today, you'll learn some simple tips to help keep yourself and others safe in and around water.</p> <p>We're not here to frighten anyone away from enjoying being near or on water, but we are here to tell you some simple steps to identify dangers, keep yourself and others safe, and how you should respond in an emergency.</p>

Presentation structure	Slide number	Timings	Presenter action
<p><b>Activity 1:</b></p> <p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> <div data-bbox="197 480 710 719" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p>  <p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> </div>	4	10 minutes	<p>We want you all to learn an important three-step message to keep you safe – the Water Safety Code. 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 so that you can 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 a few friends are hanging out after school by a canal. Have a look at the photo and think about the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1</b> Can you see any dangers in this picture?</li> <li><b>2</b> What dangers might be hidden?</li> <li><b>3</b> How could you get help if you got into trouble? Here, it's important to identify where you are and if there's rescue equipment or a lifeguard near you.</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 hidden dangers in the water e.g. in Canals there could be shopping trolleys and debris</li> <li>• The <b>edge</b> can be <b>dangerous</b></li> </ul>
<p><b>Core Concept:</b></p> <p><b>Cold water shock</b></p>	5	< 5 minutes	<p><b>Key messages: Be aware of the effects of cold water shock</b></p> <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, and even more so with the freezing temperatures in winter.</p> <p>The UK and Ireland average sea temperature is around 12°C. There's always a very real risk of cold water shock in Scotland's waters, and in winter the effects of cold water shock and hypothermia can develop very quickly.</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>

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<p><b>Activity 2:</b></p> <p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #0070C0; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p>  <p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> </div>	6	10 minutes	<p><b>Key message:</b> alcohol increases your risk around water</p> <p>I want you to imagine the scenario in this picture. You have already identified the common dangers of water. Let's now look at how the inclusion of alcohol would increase these dangers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1</b> What additional dangers would alcohol bring to this scenario?</li> <li><b>2</b> How might alcohol effect Cold water shock?</li> </ol> <p>If possible, ask a couple of individuals to volunteer to share their ideas.</p> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcohol impairs your judgement, it means you are more likely to take risks – such as swimming under the influence.</li> <li>• Alcohol slows down your reactions and makes swimming difficult.</li> <li>• Alcohol can effect your decision making and make you more likely to succumb to peer pressure.</li> <li>• Alcohol intoxication can make you think warmer than you are and may make you think that you will be fine in the water but any cold water can lead to cold water shock.</li> </ul> <p><b>Challenge question:</b> Do you think there could be a delay to emergency response?</p> <p>Alcohol can increase panic and adversely effect your ability to summon the emergency services.</p> <p>Alcohol can also affect decision making, there may be reluctance to involve emergency services if there has been underaged drinking.</p>
<p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #0070C0; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p>  <p><b>Stop and Think, Spot the Dangers</b></p> </div>	7	2 minutes	<p>Play video.</p> <p>Clip covers the effects of cold water shock and relates to alcohol consumption.</p> <p>Re-iterate the key points covered in the previous slide and discussion.</p> <p>The second key message to keep yourself and others safe is to <b>Stay Together, Stay Close.</b></p>

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<p><b>Activity 3:</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #0072bc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p>  </div>	8	5-10 minutes	<p>I want you to imagine the scenario in this picture. You have already identified the common dangers of water. Let's now look at how the inclusion of alcohol would increase these dangers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 What additional dangers would alcohol bring to this scenario?</li> <li>2 Why is it safer to be in a group?</li> </ol> <p>If possible, ask a couple of individuals to volunteer to share their ideas.</p> <p><b>Key points:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It's already dark which poses risks in itself – find another way home.</li> <li>• Alcohol effects your balance and ability to judge surroundings so you might be more likely to fall in.</li> <li>• Look after your friends and make sure they get home safe too. If you are by yourself, there will be nobody to look out for you or raise the alarm in case of emergency.</li> </ul> <p><b>Key message: It's best to keep away from the water if under the influence of alcohol. Always make sure your friends get home safe.</b></p>
<p><b>In an Emergency, Call 999</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid #0072bc; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p><b>Key message:</b></p>  </div>	9		<p>Play video.</p> <p>It's important to reiterate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not enter the water yourself, call 999.</li> <li>• You won't get in trouble for drinking alcohol if someone's in danger.</li> <li>• It's more important to help the person.</li> <li>• Don't delay your 999 call and pass the relevant information.</li> </ul> <p>The third step of the water safety code is <b>In an Emergency, Call 999</b>.</p>
<p><b>Activity 4:</b></p> <p><b>Have you learned the Water Safety Code?</b></p> <p>Return to the initial images</p> <p>Exit activity</p>	10	5 minutes	<p>Return to the original images and ask the group to look at the images on the screen again.</p> <p><b>Ask them to reflect on the questions</b> – 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>

Presentation structure	Slide number	Timings	Presenter action
<b>Summary</b>	11	< 5 minutes	<p>Summarise, or ask the group to 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>