A note to parents and teachers

This water safety coloring and activity book may be used to instruct children in some of the basics of boat and water safety. We recommend that you go through the book with your children and read the poem on each page out loud. Then discuss the message with your children, and how it may apply to them. The teaching guide in the back of the book elaborates on each picture with an activity that will help reinforce what the children have learned, and will suggest topics for discussion. There are also several pages of puzzles with a water safety theme at the end of the book.

Please take a little time with your children to study this book and help protect Minnesota’s most precious resource…our children!
Teaching Activity and Study Guide

Page 1  Life jackets come in many styles and colors. You should always wear a life jacket when in a boat, even if you are a good swimmer. Why? What would happen if you were not wearing a life jacket and were knocked unconscious in a boating accident?

Activity  Practice putting on different sizes of life jackets. Have the child put on a life jacket and then lift their arms above their head. An adult then lifts up on the shoulders of the life jacket If it touches the child’s ears or it comes off, it is too loose.

Page 2  Swim at supervised beaches and always with a buddy. Wear a life jacket if you aren’t sure of your swimming ability.

Activity  Talk about why there should be a grown-up present to supervise swimmers. The adult who is supervising should be watching the swimmer, not reading a book or snoozing. Why?

Page 3  The best water safety advice we can give is to learn to swim properly. Lessons are available from the American Red Cross, YMCA, community school programs and many other institutions.

Activity  If you are a weak swimmer or don’t know how to swim at all, enroll in a swimming class today!

Page 4  Don’t substitute inflatable toys, tubes or air mattresses for swimming ability, because you might fall off, or they might suddenly deflate or drift out into deep water.

Activity  Talk about what bad things could happen while using an inflatable toy for flotation.

Page 5  These foolish folks are breaking an important safety rule. They are standing up in a boat.

Activity  Try to think of ways to keep a boat from tipping over. (Hints: Would staying seated and keeping low in the boat be a good idea? How about always having one hand on the boat when moving around?)

Page 6  There are lots of things to watch while boating. Help your skipper keep an eye out for logs, boats or other objects that could cause a collision.

Activity  Name as many things as you can that you should watch out for while boating.

Page 7  Capsizing (tipping over) and falls overboard are the two most common kinds of fatal boating accidents. If you do tip over, try to climb back onto your boat, even if it is still upside down. It is important to get as much of your body as possible out of the water, because cold water robs body heat 25 times faster than air of the same temperature.

Activity  Discuss why you should not take your clothes off if you fall into cold water. (Hint: Clothing traps air and heat.)

Page 8  Unless you have special training in lifesaving, don’t swim out to help someone in trouble. Something could be extended from shore to the victim like a long stick or a boat oar, or a fishing pole. Something that floats could be thrown to them to help them stay afloat, like a boat cushion, life jacket or empty picnic cooler. Most importantly, yell for help from an adult!

Activity  Name things that boat you might find at the dock or a beach that could be extended or thrown to someone having trouble in the water and why you should not try a swimming rescue.

Page 9  Never dive into waters of unknown depth. You could hurt your head and neck on a rock, log or shallow bottom. Just remember “First time, feet first.”

Activity  Talk about other things that could happen if you were wading or swimming in unknown waters. (Hint: What if there was broken glass on the bottom?)

Page 10  Find out how many people your boat can carry. Look at the plate usually near the back of the boat (transom) or the steering wheel.

Activity  Talk about why too many people in a boat might be dangerous.
When swimming at the lake or beach take a buddy to keep from trouble.
A lifeguard standing by to help can get there on the double.

18 Hidden Words or Phrases
Some are safe things, some are not. How many can you find?
(Hint: They can be up/down, left/right, or diagonal)
Learning to swim is lots of fun and a very smart thing to do. A swimming class can really help make it easy and safe for you.

Copy the numbered boxes on the left in the correctly numbered empty boxes on the right to unscramble the picture. (Hint: You should always obey this person at the pool or beach.)
Water toys like tubes and mats are only meant for play.
But trusting one to save your life could ruin your whole day!

You have to wear your life jacket or no boat ride today!
Billy told his sister Sue
near thin ice please don't play
He's read the rules, he knows his stuff
this sign means stay away!

Tippy boats and standing up
are bad for son and daughter
'Cause if they take that one wrong step
they could wind up in the water.
The skipper said “Full speed ahead”
“Let’s see how fast we’ll go!”
But if logs or rocks are in the way
they should be going slow.

Sunny days are best for boats but when you hear lightning’s crack
Be smart, be cool, don’t be a chump when you see a storm HEAD BACK!
Too much weight is dangerous and can cause your boat to sink. ‘Cause overloading is just plain dumb, you could wind up in the drink!

Cold water likes to steal your strength and makes it hard to float. So if your skiff turns bottom up, always climb back in the boat.
Reach a stick to save his life
or a long rope you could throw
And if a boat is standing by
to help him you could row.

I'll show them I'm no scaredy cat!

Johnny dove into the lake but didn't check
the bottom,
Tho' the water wasn't very deep it was the rocks that got him.