GUIDE FOR
DAY CAMP GROUP
CHAPERONES

JEAN-DORÉ
BEACH

Parc Jean-Drapeau
INTRODUCTION

A day at the beach might seem like a fun and enjoyable outing - for you and the youngsters alike. But it involves water areas, you need to be aware of the dangers related to water. You constantly have to keep in mind that an accident can occur in a matter of seconds, and your main responsibility during these outings is to ensure the safety of the children in your group. As a chaperone, it is your duty to react and take action in the event of an emergency. There are still too many drownings and water-related accidents occurring every summer. Your role is of utmost importance in the smooth functioning of a day at the beach, and especially in ensuring the safety of participants in your charge. The safety of participants is everyone’s business – managers, lifeguards-monitors, chaperones, etc. The Aquatic Complex’s lifeguards are trained and coached in being able to ensure the safety of pool users. Their role is to monitor all beach-goers. As the chaperone of a group of participants, your knowledge of the characteristics (age, swimming ability, handicap, etc.) of your group is greater than that of the Aquatic Complex employees. Thus, we believe it is of utmost importance that we work as a team to ensure your visit to our facilities unfolds smoothly and the participants are kept safe at all times. In this respect, we are providing this document, which serves as a guideline for everyone’s role and, most importantly, to explain how you will be tangibly contributing to the overall safety of the participants. It is essential that you have an awareness of what your responsibilities are as a chaperone.

This guide is based on the Guide for the Supervision of Aquatic Activities for Groups of Children, a document published in collaboration with the Lifesaving Society, the Ministry of Education, Sports and Leisure (MELS), the Québec Camps Association, the Canadian Red Cross, as well as on our own structural procedures at Parc Jean-Drapeau.
Your responsibilities as chaperones

**BEFORE**

- Find out whether the children have taken swimming lessons (when, the level of proficiency achieved, whether they received a certificate). Write down all the pertinent information on the attendance sheet (need for a flotation device, special needs…) (Appendix 5)

- You need to read the Parc Jean-Drapeau regulations (Appendix 2)

- Make sure you familiarize yourself with the swimming areas, the depth of the water, and the shade areas of Jean-Doré Beach. (Appendix 6)

- Be aware of the chaperones’ role in terms of emergency measures (Appendix 3)

- Make sure you have the proper chaperone/children ratio before you come to the beach

**DURING**

- Upon your arrival, you need to inform the person in charge of the first-aid monitors about the number of children and chaperones in the group, and the characteristics of the group.

- You need to discuss with the person in charge of first-aid monitors about the areas assigned to your group. You must ensure your group obeys the facility’s regulations.

- You must let the first-aid monitors know how many personal flotation devices (PFD) you need and ask the attending lifeguard for swimming tests.

- Swimming test: you need to help the lifeguards-monitors during the swimming tests and the distribution of the PFDs, and you need to write down the name of the children requiring PFDs. Your knowledge of the participants’ swimming ability is essential (Appendix 4)
Do a follow-up, so that the next time you come to a water facility, you know which youngsters require a PFD

Determine which things need to be improved or changed for your next trip to a water facility

Provide your opinion by taking the opportunity of writing your comments and suggestions following your experience at the Parc.
## Our responsibilities as lifeguards-monitors and first-aid monitors

### BEFORE

- The person in charge of first aid and the person in charge of the lifeguards-monitors does the preparation work for the arrival of day campers (how many swimmers, gets the PFDs ready...)

### DURING

- Greets you upon your arrival at the beach and allots a specific place on the beach to your group
- Informs you about the beach regulations and makes sure these regulations are understood by you and your group of participants
- Tells you about the ways to monitor participants and the various monitoring techniques
- With your help, conducts a swimming test among your youngsters at the start of the season and provides personal flotation devices
- Provides you with a rope to mark off your area
- Does an active monitoring of your group and the beach clientele
- Administers treatments, if required

### AFTER

- Evaluation of the quality of the lifeguards-monitors: In an effort to ensure the highest level of safety, the Société du parc Jean-Drapeau rightfully conducts an evaluation of the overall support system of the group provided by the chaperones. Following this evaluation, feedback will be provided to the person in charge of the group. Recommendations might be made as to how to improve the monitoring. Based on our team’s evaluation, we might recommend a tighter ratio for some of the groups.
Appendix 1: Ratio

Participants aged 5 and under with swimming ability lower than Junior 3

Monitoring: Chaperone does an active monitoring by constantly facing the body of water.

1 chaperone per 3 participants

Participants aged 6 to 11

Did pass the swimming test

Did NOT pass the swimming test

Monitoring: Chaperone does an active monitoring by constantly facing the body of water.

1 chaperone per 6 participants

Participants aged 12 and over OR successfully did swimming test

Monitoring: Chaperone does an active monitoring by constantly facing the body of water.

1 chaperone per 15 participants
Appendix 2: Beach regulations

1. A proper bathing suit must be worn (babies must wear a swim diaper).
2. Spitting, urinating or blowing your nose in the beach is prohibited.
3. Safety belts and personal flotation devices are recommended for people who don’t know how to swim.
4. Only safety belts (dorsal ball or hippo belt and personal flotation devices (PFD) are permitted.
5. Civil and safe conduct is required at all times in the beach confines.
6. Diving head-first and climbing on the shoulders of another person is prohibited.
7. Flippers, snorkels, inflatable games or other flotation objects are prohibited.
8. Filtration backwash areas must remain free of swimmers at all times.
9. Users must stay within the marked-off swimming areas.
10. The swimming corridor is exclusively for clientele wanting to swim laps
11. Balls and Frisbees are only allowed in the green-space areas.
12. Beach chairs and umbrellas are only allowed on the grassy sector.
13. No rolling stock (bicycle, skateboard, skates) is permitted in the beach confines.
14. The smoking and vaping ban applies in all places.
15. The use of barbecues on the site is prohibited.
16. No alcoholic drinks may be brought into the confines of the beach.
17. Glass containers are prohibited; plastic bottles are permitted.
18. No music device, except for walkmans, is allowed within the beach confines.
19. Pets, including those kept on a leash, are not allowed.
20. Feeding the animals is prohibited.

IMPORTANT
• Anyone failing to comply with the regulations is subject to a warning
• The Société du parc Jean-Drapeau reserves the right to expel anyone failing to comply with the directives or warnings
• Parc Jean-Drapeau is not responsible for lost or stolen items
Appendix 3: Emergency procedures

Person in distress
1. A person in distress Signal to the lifeguard-monitor that there is a person in distress;
2. Talk to the person and encourage the person to move to a safe area;
3. Toss a rope-free object that is floatable to the person and encourage the person to use it as a means to get to a safe place, or throw a floatable object with a rope and pull the person to safety;
4. If you are in the water and your feet can touch the bottom, pull the person in distress to the surface and immediately notify the lifeguard-monitor.

Children that go missing
1. Immediately notify the closest lifeguard;
2. Order the children out of the water if the lifeguards request that you do so;
3. Check whether the children under your care are all present, and notify the lifeguards if anyone is missing;
4. Briefly describe the missing child to the lifeguards;
5. Closely monitor the children in your group until the lifeguards give the signal to go back into the water;
6. Once the lifeguards have confirmed the child is out of the water - and only then - join the search in the other non-aquatic areas of the swimming site.

In the event of a storm
1. Immediately notify the closest lifeguard if you see lightning or hear thunder;
2. Order the children out of the water and direct them to a place that is covered;
3. Check whether the children under your care are all present and notify the lifeguard if anyone is missing;
4. Wait for the lifeguards’ instructions before going back into the water.
Appendix 4: Swimming test procedure

Who needs to take the swimming test?
Every participant in your group who does not want to wear a PFD must take the swimming test. If you have already evaluated your participants' swimming ability, you can give a PFD to the children who, in your assessment, don’t have strong enough swimming skills. In such case, there is no need for a swimming test. Participants who ask beforehand for a PFD are also exempt from having to take the swimming test. Please note children aged 6 and under must wear the PFD.

How does the swimming test work?
1. Chaperones station themselves 15 metres from the water’s edge
2. Participants form lines in front of the lifeguards
3. Participants have to enter the water and swim to the chaperones and then come back to the water’s edge, without touching the bottom.

Participants who are unable to do this will have to wear a PFD every time they are in the water during the day.

L: LIFEGUARD
P: PARTICIPANT
C: CHAPERONE
How do we identify participants who have to wear a PFD?

Participants who are required to wear a PFD will have to put on an orange-coloured identification bracelet. Participants who are not required to wear a PFD will have to put on a green-coloured identification bracelet.

Who provides the PFDs?

Parc Jean Drapeau provides the flotation devices to help out its clientele. But, quite often, on days when there are a lot of people or when there are many day-camp reservations on the same day, there may not be enough flotation devices for every child requiring one. And, we need to keep a certain amount of these devices for our regular clientele. Consequently, it is strongly recommended that you bring flotation devices for the children in your group. You can even urge parents to provide their child with a flotation device.

In the event there are not enough flotation devices for the children in your group, you need to make sure there is a fair balance of swim time for these children. At no time is a child who did not pass the swimming test (orange bracelet) allowed to go into the swimming area without a flotation device.
### Appendix 5:
**Exemple of attendance sheet**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>1. Henri</th>
<th>2. Geneviève</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had any swimming lessons?</td>
<td>no lesson</td>
<td>Junior 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs device(s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>am</td>
<td>11h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child's medical characteristics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6: Demarcation of the areas

A. Depth limit
To determine the depth of the area assigned to your group, keep in mind the water level should reach no higher than under the armpits of the smallest participants in your group.
Appendix 7: Effective monitoring

The children are not always on the surface of the water. To maintain visual contact, you need to remember that water is a three-dimensional space. You also need to consider there are different factors which might hide the children from view and put them out of your sightline. These factors include reflections of light on the water surface and movements of the water that might make the surface translucent or opaque; floating objects; other swimmers; and pool walls. By changing your position to offset these factors, you will be able to keep the children in your field of vision at all times.

A. Some efficient methods to put into practice:

**Buddy system:** Each child is paired with a friend in his or her group. They have to stay together and watch out for each other. When you shout, “Buddy-up”, the pairs get back together and this enables you to see them more easily and also see if everyone is there.

**Head counting:** You must count the number of children in and out of the water on a regular basis. To make this easier, identify the children by sectors (deep end, shallow end, rest area, picnic table, etc.) or evacuate the swimming area (pool or beach) and send everyone to the meeting point.

**Visual scanning:** Monitor the movements of the children who go underwater (by diving, jumping or ducking under the surface) and make sure you see them re-emerge. You should also monitor the movements of non-swimmers to make sure they stay in the appropriate section of the swimming area.
B. Monitoring procedure with the rope

The société du parc Jean-Drapeau provides you with a rope so you can mark off your area. **Use of a rope to mark off your area is mandatory.**
Parc Jean-Drapeau