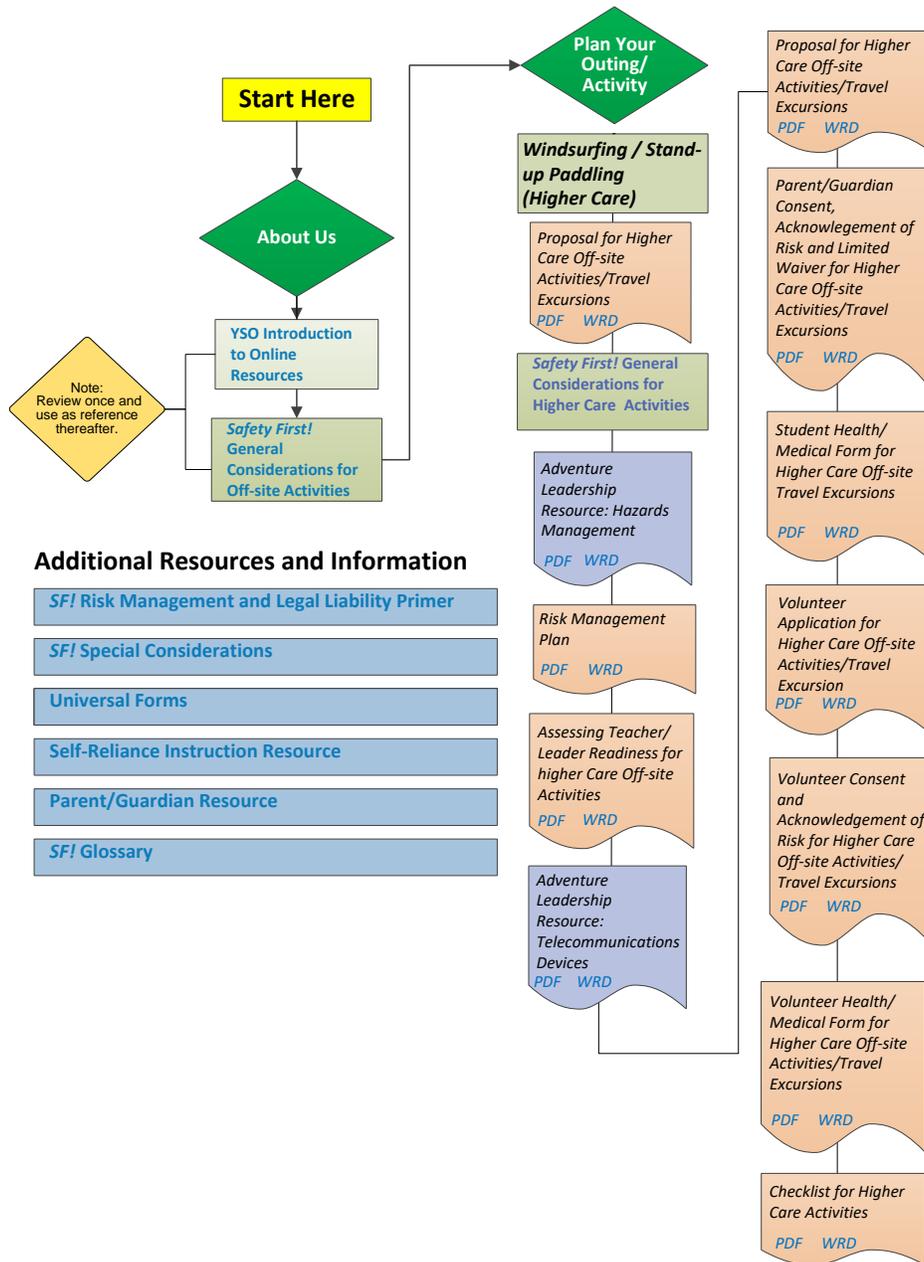


Windsurfing / Stand-up Paddleboarding (SUP)

Flow Chart, Steps to Success, and Safety Guidelines

Grade 7+



Safety Guidelines

Windsurfing / Stand-up Paddle boarding (SUP)- Higher Risk

Windsurfing involves using a small sail rigged to a 'surf' type of board and using the wind to propel the board and rider as one would on a small sailboat.

Stand Up paddleboarding involves standing on a long paddleboard and using a long shafted canoe paddle to propel the board.

In the school context, these activities may be done on ponds, lakes, in calm bays in the sea or on moving flatwater such as a Grade 1 river.

Known Potential Risks

- Injuries related to motor vehicle incidents en route to and from activity area;
- Becoming lost or separated from the group or the group becoming split up;
- Injuries related to slips, trips, and falls in the program area or en-route to/from it;
- Injuries related to board capsize or falling off of board;
- Injuries related to collisions with movable (e.g., other people/boards or one's own board) or immovable (e.g., rock) objects;
- Injuries related to equipment malfunction (e.g., windsurf rigging jammed) or becoming tangled in apparatus (e.g., snagging in rigging);
- Injuries related to lifting, carrying, walking with, or putting down the board;
- Other injuries (e.g., blisters, sprains, strains; acute or overuse injuries/conditions);
- Drowning or near drowning;
- Injuries related to the physical demands of the activity and/or lack of activity skill;
- Weather changes creating adverse conditions (e.g., cold, wind, precipitation);
- Hypothermia due to remaining in cool/cold water too long or due to insufficient clothing;
- Loss of manual dexterity in hands during cold and wet weather;
- Hyperthermia (e.g., overheating) due to insufficient hydration, overdressing and/or overexertion;
- Illness related to poor personal hygiene, or failure to purify drinking water;
- Allergic reactions to natural substances (e.g., wasp or bee stings or jelly fish stings in ocean);
- Injuries related to encounters with animals and plants in the environment;
- Psychological injury due to anxiety or embarrassment (e.g., re: lack of skill, body image);
- Complications of an injury/illness related to remoteness and time to emergency services; and
- Other risks normally associated with participation in the activity

Common Risk Mitigation Strategies

On-site Instruction/Day Trips

Teacher/Leader Readiness

- The teacher/leader must be competent to organize the windsurfing or stand up paddleboarding activity; to demonstrate, instruct and supervise it; and to effect rescue and emergency procedures as necessary.
- The teacher/leader and assistant leaders must be capable swimmers, able to manage themselves confidently in the water in the selected environment while wearing a PFD. At a minimum they should be able to successfully complete a survival swim test (roll into the water, tread 1 min., swim 50 m. any style while wearing a PFD and no goggles).
- If craft are to be transported by trailer to and from the water, the individual driving the tow vehicle must have sufficient experience and skill to manage these tasks safely.
- To teach/lead windsurfing, training and/or certification is available from Windsurfing Canada, the Canadian Power and Sail Squadron, the Canadian Yachting Association (CYA,) and/or other appropriate sources.
- To teach/lead stand up paddleboarding (SUP), training and/or certification may be available from Paddle Canada or other appropriate sources. Training and experience in canoeing will have high transferability.
- Assistant leaders should be competent in the activity and on the type of water anticipated.
- At least one supervisor must have first aid training, the level dependent on the time and distance to Emergency Medical Services (See *First Aid in General Considerations for Higher Care Activities*).

Location

Guidelines related to travel by bus or walking to/from a site are covered in *Travel to/from Off-site Destinations* in the *General Considerations*. If travelling by a means other than bus or walking, see *Transportation* in *Special Considerations*.

- Identify a safe, allowable way to transport equipment considering the safety of the students and minimal potential for damage to the equipment (e.g., long paddles that are not collapsible may not be permitted in the cabin of a school bus and need to be transported in a lower luggage hold - which not all buses have). Address any such issues when booking.
- Boards must be transported safely, either on trailers or on vehicle tops (see below).
- When selecting an appropriate teaching/skill review site/trip route for a windsurfing or SUP activity, consider:
 - the temperature of air (including wind chills) and water,
 - length of time a participant(s) may spend in the water,
 - rate at which the water is moving (if a river, stream, or ocean current),
 - ease of access to/egress from site or watercourse, and

- the skill/experience level of the students.
- Define boundaries for the activity. These activities should be introduced in confined waters. Avoid areas with substantial motorboat or larger craft powering in area.
- Check the area for sufficient water depth and potential hazards (e.g., broken glass, overhead wires or obstacles, rocks, shoals, strong currents).
- Be particularly cautious in open areas with off-shore winds and/or subject to the effects of incoming or outgoing tides.
- Check the weather and postpone the activity if strong offshore winds, choppy waves or storms are present. Consider how these are likely to influence safe performance of the skills taught and student comfort.
- Curtail the activity if there are indications of dangerous weather (e.g., lightning, storm activity, high wave conditions, or a strong off-shore or very gusty wind - particularly on shallow lakes, wide rivers or the sea).
- Open crossings of large bodies of water are discouraged; groups should generally be kept within 100 meters of a shoreline.
- All participation in diminished conditions should be done near shore unless doing so would increase risk (e.g., strong on-shore winds with a rocky (high energy) shoreline).
- At the end of each trip, and upon changing watercourses, wash any mud, algae or plant fragments from boats, paddles and feet to avoid transmitting any plant or animal pest species to previously uninfected places.

Equipment

- Windsurfing board and sail/rigging apparatus or SUP board and paddle must be in good working condition and board with sufficient built-in buoyancy to support the rider.
- The windsurfing board should be capable of being de-rigged while it is afloat.
- For windsurfing, ensure deck plate is secure and is properly attached. Ensure the downhaul and outhaul are properly tightened, cleated off and rope ends stowed away. Ensure fin is fastened securely.
- For SUP, ensure the fins are fastened securely if not integral to the board.
- An approved PFD for each student, with pea-less whistle attached, is required.
- Wetsuits should be considered for all school-based windsurfing, recognizing the season and potential for repeated dippings in cool to cold water.
- If on open water, a tether from board to boarder/paddler is suggested.

Instruction

- Parents/guardians should be asked to verify the level of swimming training/skill the student has.
- Because there is high potential for students to fall in the water, sometimes in unusual positions, those involved in this activity should be comfortable and competent in the water while wearing a PFD.

- Because the students will be wearing PFDs, it is not essential that they can swim without one. To help ensure the students are sufficiently comfortable in the water, they should be given a survival swim test (roll in, tread 1 min., swim 50 m. any style without PFD or goggles) or endurance swim test (50 m. swim any style), all while wearing a PFD.
- Students must be familiar with emergency procedures and self-rescue skills related to the equipment and area (e.g., remounting the board, hand paddling to safety).
- Students should be instructed regarding how to assist another boarder/paddler in difficulty.
- Students who will windsurf should be instructed in basic windsurfing skills where such instruction will support safe participation in the windsurfing activity and environment selected. Skills taught may include, as relevant:
 - familiarization with the equipment to be used (e.g., terminology, use and care);
 - lifting, carrying, launching and landing boardsails (if appropriate);
 - flag and whistle signals, as appropriate;
 - the way a sail is affected by the wind;
 - how to rig the sail;
 - how to use the wind, including moving forward, gybing, tacking, controlling speed, turning and coming about, and
 - how to right the board and re-board in the event of a capsize on open water.
- Students who will SUP should be instructed in basic stand-up paddling skills where such instruction will support safe participation in the SUP activity and environment selected. Skills taught may include, as relevant:
 - familiarization with the equipment to be used (e.g., terminology, use and care);
 - lifting, carrying, launching and landing paddleboards (if appropriate);
 - flag and whistle signals, as appropriate;
 - the way a paddler is affected by the wind;
 - braces, strokes and manoeuvres; and
 - how to right the board and re-board in the event of a capsize on open water.

Supervision

Ensure students are appropriately supervised (considering age, maturity and context). In addition to the guidelines in *Supervision* in the *General Considerations*, apply the following as appropriate:

- On-site supervision.
- Supervise non-swimming or weak swimming students more closely.
- Generally, unless in a very sheltered, confined bay or lake, there should not be more than six boards/leader.
- Watch group members for signs of hypothermia; it can come on quickly due to repeatedly getting wet and then exposed to the breeze/wind.
- A motorboat or other suitable rescue craft must be present to aid in supervision/rescue of students distant from shore, or other appropriate secondary rescue system put in place.

Notes

1. If, when reviewing the guidelines above, terms and concepts presented are unfamiliar, this is a strong indicator that additional personal leadership preparation (e.g., a training course, reading) or contracting a qualified service provider is advisable.
2. This document is not intended as an instructional guide. The teacher will need to use other references to learn how to teach students the skills (e.g., how to brake when inline skating, how to do a diagonal stride when cross-country skiing).