

# Be River Safe

## The Force of Water

### Activities

#### ACTIVITY:

#### Feeling the force of moving water in a swimming pool

In this activity your students or learners experience what it is like to move with and against the force of moving water.

- Have students or trainees work in suitable sized groups in a part of a pool that has a current and:
  - float with the current (feet off the bottom)
  - stand still against the current
  - walk against the current
  - crouch down with their shoulders under water and stay still against the current
  - turn sideways and stand up against the current
  - swim with and against the current (optional depending on the pool depth and the student's ability).
- Discuss these experiences.



#### ACTIVITY:

#### Experiencing the unexpected

In this activity your students or trainees experience what it is like if you find yourself in the water unexpectedly (accidental immersion) and you are fully clothed.

- Have the students or learners wear clothing (especially jeans, long shorts, etc.) and work in pairs, with one student acting as the safety buddy. One of the pair will stand and walk against the current. The students can compare this with walking against the current when they were wearing a bathing costume.
- Discuss how easy it is to panic and how you would deal with these situations:
  - if you are under water and can't breathe
  - if you are being pushed along underwater by a current
  - if you are being swamped with waves.
- Extend this activity for strong swimmers by asking these students to swim a width immediately after they surface from staying underwater. Do this only in standing depth water.
- Discuss with the students how it felt completing this activity and what they learned from doing it.

*Be River Safe ... learn how to swim and survive*

# Be River Safe

## The Force of Water

### Activities

#### ACTIVITY:

#### Floating with the help of anything that floats

In this activity your students or trainees experience how much easier it is to float if you have something to provide buoyancy.

- Discuss with the students the fact that if they are in difficulty in a river, only trained rescuers are likely to be able to help them. However, people on the side of the river may be able to throw them something they can grab that will help them float. They will use a lot less energy staying afloat if they have a buoyancy aid.
- Working in pairs, have the students float for two minutes unaided.
- Give each pair of students an item that floats – buckets, balls, chilly bins, pool lifebuoys, noodles, kickboards – and have them float for two minutes.
- Compare the experiences.

#### ACTIVITY:

#### Wearing a PFD or Personal Floatation Device

In this activity your students or trainees experience floating with a PFD.

- Refer to the **Survival Swimming** section of the **Be River Safe** DVD and discuss the value of wearing a PFD.  
Wear a PFD (personal floatation device) any time you are in or on the water. The buoyancy it provides will help you float and conserve your energy. You will float higher in the water and will be less likely to hit rocks or get into situations where you are likely to swallow water.
- Provide suitable sized PFDs. Have the students or learners put on a PFD and do a buddy and leader check that they are on safely.  
(Refer to the *Survival Swimming* section of the *Be River Safe* DVD).
- Have the students or learners float for two minutes without a PFD and float for two minutes with a PFD and compare the experiences.



Be River Safe ... take and use the right equipment

#### ACTIVITY:

#### A safe rescue using a paddle

In this activity your students or trainees practise a land-based rescue of someone in the water, using a paddle.

- Discuss with students how difficult it is to rescue someone who is being swept along by the force of the water in a river. The only safe rescue is a land-based rescue. Anyone who is not an expert in a kayak or rescue craft endangers their life if they try to rescue someone in a flowing part of the river. Rescuers can carry out a safe rescue from the side of the river. They can only do this if the water is not flowing too fast and they can safely pull the person from the water. However, there is a danger of the rescuer being pulled into the water, especially if the rescuer is light and the person in the water is heavy or a bigger person.
- Have groups of students practise pulling a student out of the water using a kayak paddle and discuss the problems the rescue presents.

#### ACTIVITY:

#### A safe rescue using throwbags

In this activity your students or trainees practise a land-based rescue of someone in the water using a throwbag.

*(Refer to the Survival Swimming section of the Be River Safe DVD).*

- Have one person on the side of the pool throw the bag to another student or trainee in the water. Do not allow the person in the pool to swim to the throwbag. If the throw misses the student, have the rescuer re-stuff the throwbag and throw it again.
- When the throw is accurate, have the student in the pool lie on their back with the throwbag on their chest and be pulled head first towards the side of the pool.
- Discuss how easy it is to rescue someone using a throwbag.

