Canoeing and Kayaking

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| HAZARD  | CONTROL MEASURES & BRIEFING POINTS |
| Ratios for Canoeing and Kayaking during Training and for Supervision | * Ratios should be in line with British Canoeing Guidance: Flat water 1:12 and Moving water 1:4.
* Consider best practice and employ additional qualified staff where necessary.
* Responsible adults who are not qualified should be counted as participants.
* Qualified staff should be up to date with British Canoeing updates and courses.
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| Environment for water activities | * Supervisors should be familiar with the venue, and brief participants on any natural or man made hazards including weirs, rapids, fallen or overhanging trees, pontoons etc.
* Supervisors and participants should be vigilant to floating hazards in the water eg logs, and warn other group members.
* Supervisors should brief participants on entering and exiting the water at safe places, free of hazards – steep banks, high banks etc.
* Supervisors and participants should be familiar with the consequences of weather at the venue - drought reducing the depth of the water or heavy rain increasing depth, flow or expanse of the water.
* Supervisors and participants should be ready to change plans due to weather events.
* Supervisors and participants should choose an appropriate place for launching.
* Participants should be briefed about slippery, muddy banks and always wear PFDs at the water’s edge.
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| Equipment | * Supervisor to inspect all equipment before use.
* Supervisor to ensure that PPE is correctly fitted to participants - PFDs, helmets etc.
* The correct sized paddles and boats should also be used – check cockpit size and risk of entrapment.
* Supervisor to check that boats have sufficient buoyancy in case of capsize.
* All staff to carry appropriate safety equipment, e.g. throw lines.
* Any suspect equipment, faults or damage must be reported. That equipment must not be used in a session.
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| Group Management during training | * Participants to be briefed on the activity area and no-go zones.
* Supervisors to demonstrate simple techniques for participants to manoeuver their craft and stay within the activity area.
* Participants to be briefed to keep a small distance from each other to eliminate collision and allow other craft to manoeuver.
* Supervisors to ensure participants understand signals and instructions to be used throughout the activity.
* Head count or buddy system in place to check group numbers in case of capsize(s).
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| Injuries from equipment or other sources, from third parties | * Participants to be briefed on the dangers of wielding paddles and refrain from doing so.
* Participants to be briefed on the dangers of trapped fingers between boats, pontoons, canal banks etc. Supervisors to watch novices and remind them through the session.
* Participants to be vigilant when canoeing through golf courses, for flying balls.
* Supervisor to assess whether wearing helmets is appropriate for the group.
* Participants to be vigilant in urban areas, of people on bridges, river or canal banks, and alert the group if they feel suspicious of danger.
* Participants to be briefed about fishermen and lines, as well as old lines entangled in trees etc.
* Supervisors to be vigilant regarding pinning or entrapment, brief group where appropriate and carry emergency equipment to deal with rescues.
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| Journeying | * Supervisor / participants to put system in place to keep group together, e.g. front & back marker, or safety boat.
* Supervisor / participants to monitor condition of river / canal / banks and look out for hazards e.g. underwater obstacles, shallow river, overhanging branches, and make other participants aware of the dangers.
* Participants to be briefed on how to manage an entanglement. Supervisors to carry a knife in case of needing to cut away branches.
* New hazards should be reported to other staff and the appropriate agency(ies).
* Supervisor / participants to be aware of changing weather conditions or water flow after bad weather and be ready to change plans if appropriate.
* Ensure appropriate safety equipment is carried in the even of an incident, e.g. warm clothing, emergency shelter, first aid kit, mobile phone in waterproof case etc.
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| Weil’s Disease | * Participants to be briefed on the nature of the disease.
* No broken skin or wounds to be submerged in water unless completely sealed or taped.
* Participants should not ingest water (unless it has been purified)
* Participants should wash hands before eating or handling food.
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| Swimming | * Swimming in rivers, canals or lakes should only be undertaken with a qualified instructor or lifeguard on site and appropriate safety equipment to hand, eg throw lines.
* Swimming sites should be checked in advance for hazards under the water – sharp objects, weeds, rocks, currents etc.
* Supervisor and staff should be out of the water and observing the group.
* Supervisor should put a head count or buddy system in place to keep track of the group numbers.
* Groups should be briefed on boundaries and rules, and how to signal in distress.
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| Covid 19 | * All paddles are to be sprayed and left to dry between sessions.
* Buoyancy aids are to be left outside to air.
* All customers to use hand sanitizer before entering and using equipment.
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