Paddlesport Safety
On and Off the Water

TRR Adaptive Paddling Conference
Chapter Leadership
Jim Riley - June 2015
Assumed Risk

There are risks to life and limb involved in paddlesports. Participants must assume responsibility for their own safety.

Where Safety Starts

**Personal Responsibility**: The INDIVIDUAL

**Teamwork**: Working together in GROUPS

**TRR Chapter Volunteers**: Value-added PEOPLE.
Paddlesport Injury

It’s not an amusement park ride!

Potential injuries:

Acute Trauma / Impact / Crush
Overuse / Strain
Submersion
Environmental
The Individual Paddler

Reduces risk of injury to him/her self with:
- Skills
- Preparation
- Gear / Clothing
- Sensible Choices

✓ Develop a personal gear and trip checklist
Paddling in GROUPS

Increases safety by sharing:

Knowledge and Skills
Muscle for Assistance
Visuals ‘eyes-on’
Communication
Group Safety Basics

Minimum Group Size
Skills Balance

Established Roles:
Group leader
Middle boats (novice / support)
Sweep boater
The Group Leader

- Plans
- Communicates
- Pools Resources
- Sets Pace
- Encourages
The Sweep Boater

- Vigilant
- Rescue Skills
- Sheep-Dog

All Group Members

Responsible for:
- Personal Safety / Gear
- Keep Group Compact
- Communication
Off-Water Planning

- Safety Policy
- Logistics / Meet Ups
- Environmental Factors
- Skill Balancing
Disability / Mobility Considerations

Know Capabilities
Adapt Gear
Accessible Locations
Adequate Support
Plan / Practice
Put-In Safety

- Warm up / Stretch
- Gear / Equipment
- Communication
- Buddy-Up
- Establish Roles
- Emergency Response
On-Water Practices

Warmup / Confidence Building
Scout / Explain Routes
Positive Communication
Identify Hazards / Preset Rescue
Avoid Information Overload
Take-Out Practices

Access / Safety
Stress Cooperation
Comfort / Stretch / Hydrate
Wrapup Talk
Novice Safety Questions

What would you do?
1. While paddling a rapid, you notice that a boater ahead of you is swimming.
2. Your boat flips and you are swimming in moving water.
3. After an hour on the river, you realize that you need to let out that quart of orange juice that you drank at the put-in.
4. The leader has stopped the group to explain the next rapid. Your stomach begins churning and you feel yourself trembling.
5. You're on a bend of a river and a boater ahead of you holds up her paddle horizontally.
6. Just upstream from a rapid, you spot an awesome wave and want to ‘go for it.’
Panicked Paddlers

Approach / Rescue
Cold Feeds Fear
Induce Calm / B-r-e-a-t-h-e
Adapt Paddling
Decision to Evacuate
Resources