

# **GRAND CANYON COUNCIL**



## **SAFE SWIM DEFENSE TRAINING**

**PARTICIPANT MATERIALS**

# SAFE SWIM DEFENSE

Safe Swim Defense is the recommended procedure for conducting group swims at the beach, private or public pool, wilderness pond, stream, or wherever the water looks inviting enough to take a dip.

Nothing beats swimming for fun and fitness! Surveys of the most popular activities at camp and year-round rank swimming at the top of the list. Unfortunately, swimming also ranks near the top of the list for Scout injuries and fatalities, even though Scouting probably has the best safety record of any youth organization.

When serious accidents do occur, they almost always involve Scouts participating in unit activities. We have also learned from more than eighty years of experience that every tragic incident can be attributed to a lack of supervision and discipline. If swimming activity is not competently supervised by a conscientious adult who has the attention and respect of the children in his or her care, then accidents will occur. But if there is a caring adult who fully understands and appreciates the responsibility he or she assumes when children are in or around the water, and whose relationship with the children ensures that directions will be heeded, safety can be virtually assured.

The critically important first point in Safe Swim Defense has been revised to acknowledge that formal training and certification in water safety is neither essential to, nor a guarantee of, conscientious and responsible supervision and discipline. This revision does not, however, lower the standard or diminish the concern for qualified supervision. Indeed, the new text emphasizes and clarifies the crucial role and responsibility of the adult supervisor.

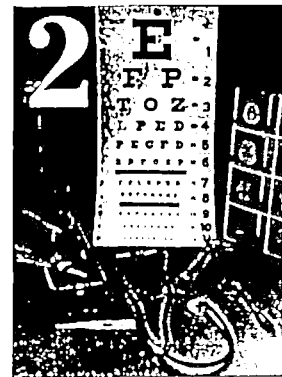
Can any adult supervise Scout swimming activity? No. All Scout swimming activity *must* be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult 21 years of age or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of the children in his or her care; who is experienced in the water and confident of being able to respond in the event of an emergency; and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense.

Leader training should emphasize this supervision requirement and the closely allied need for discipline (i.e., control of the activity). For the competent and conscientious supervisor the other points of Safe Swim Defense are common sense. Would you let a child swim alone, or in an area not known to be safe, or in circumstances beyond the child's ability? Similarly, would you assume responsibility for a child's safety in a physically demanding activity without some knowledge of that child's health and fitness? Would you consider it responsible to let children play in the water without someone watching them who is prepared to assist if a problem develops? The common-sense answers to these questions are easy. A bit more difficult, but attainable through unit leader training, is knowing specific precautions. Finally, a responsible and conscientious supervisor knows his or her own limits and will not put children at risk by permitting activity that may go beyond his or her own ability to control and respond if an emergency arises.

Any adult who works with a Scouting unit—leader, assistant, committee member, or parent—is eligible for training to become a qualified supervisor. Leaders who are coached in and committed to compliance with the eight points of Safe Swim Defense receive a special pocket card (No. 34243). Most councils give this training at summer camps. Some also provide it as a part of the leader's roundtable or show-and-do events, or at separate meetings and demonstrations at pools and beaches. **ANY BSA AQUATICS RESOURCE PERSON, UNIT LEADER, OR OTHER COUNCIL-AUTHORIZED INDIVIDUAL CAN GIVE THIS TRAINING.**

## 1 QUALIFIED SUPERVISION

All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult 21 years of age or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of the children in his or her care, who is experienced in the water and confident of being able to respond in the event of an emergency, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense. (It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently trained as a BSA Lifeguard to assist in the planning and conduct of all swimming activity.)



## PHYSICAL FITNESS

Require evidence of fitness for swimming activity with a complete health history from physician, parent, or legal guardian. The adult supervisor should adjust supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. In the event of any significant health conditions, an examination by a physician should be required by the adult supervisor.

## SAFE AREA

When swimming in areas not regularly maintained and used for swimming activity, have lifeguards and swimmers systematically examine the swimming area to determine varying depths, currents, deep holes, rocks, and stumps. Mark the area for three groups: not more than 3 1/2 feet deep for nonswimmers; from shallow water to just over the head for beginners; deep water not over 12 feet for swimmers. A participant should not be permitted to swim in an area where he cannot readily recover and maintain his footing, or cannot maintain his position on the water, because of swimming ability or water flow. When setting up a safe swimming area in natural waters, use poles stuck in the bottom, or plastic bottles, balloons, or sticks attached to rock anchors with twine for boundary markers. Enclose nonswimmer and beginner areas with buoy lines (twine and floats) between markers. Mark the outer bounds of the swimmer area with floats. Be sure that clear-water depth is at least 7 feet before allowing anyone to dive into the water. Diving is prohibited from any height more than 40 inches above the water surface; feet-first entry is prohibited from more than 60 inches above the water. For any entry from more than 18 inches above the water surface, clear-water depth must be 10 to 12 feet. Only surface swimming is permitted in turbid water. Swimming is not permitted in water over 12 feet deep, in turbid water where poor visibility depth would interfere with emergency recognition or prompt rescue, or in whitewater, unless all participants wear appropriate personal flotation devices and the supervisor determines that swimming with personal flotation equipment is safe under the circumstances.



## LIFEGUARDS ON DUTY

Swim only where there are lifeguards on duty. For unit swims in areas where lifeguards are not provided by others, the supervisor should designate two capable swimmers as lifeguards. Station them ashore, equipped with a lifeline (a 100-

foot length of 3/4-inch nylon cord). In an emergency, one carries out the line; the other feeds it out from shore, then pulls in his partner and the person being helped. In addition, if a boat is available, have two people, preferably capable swimmers, take it out—one rowing and the other equipped with a 10-foot pole or extra oar. Provide one guard for every 10 people in the water, and adjust the number and positioning of guards as needed to protect the particular area and activity.



## ABILITY GROUPS

Divide into three ability groups: Nonswimmers, beginners, and swimmers. Keep each group in its own area. *Nonswimmers* have not passed a swimming test. *Beginners* must pass this test: jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface. Stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before and return to the starting place. *Swimmers* pass this test: jump feet-first into water over the head in depth. Level off and swim 75 yards in a *strong* manner using one or more of the following strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl; then swim 25 yards using an easy resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating. *These classification tests should be renewed annually, preferably at the beginning of the season.*



## LOOKOUT

Station a lookout on the shore where he can see and hear everything in all areas. He may be the adult in charge of the swim and may give the buddy signals.



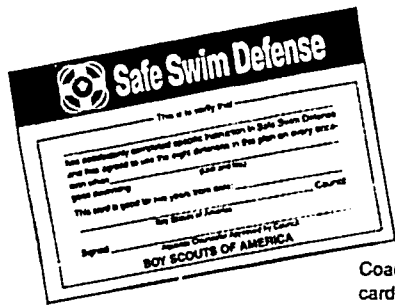
## BUDDY SYSTEM

Pair every boy with another in the same ability group. Buddies check in and out of the swimming area together. Emphasize that each buddy lifeguards his buddy. Check everyone in the water about every 10 minutes, or as needed to keep the buddies together. The adult in charge signals for a buddy check with a single blast of a whistle or a ring of a bell, and calls, "Buddies!" He counts slowly to 10 while buddies join and raise hands and remain still and silent. Guards check all areas, count the pairs, and compare the total with the number known to be in the water. Signal two blasts or bells to resume swimming. Signal three blasts or bells for checkout.



## DISCIPLINE

Be sure everyone understands and agrees that swimming is allowed only with proper supervision and use of the complete Safe Swim Defense. The applicable rules should be presented and learned prior to the outing, and should be reviewed for all participants at the water's edge just before the swimming activity begins. Scouts should respect and follow all directions and rules of the adult supervisor. When people know the reason for rules and procedures they are more likely to follow them. Be strict and fair, showing no favoritism.



Coaching and commitment card, No. 34243

## YOU CAN SET UP A SAFE SWIM AREA

Here is an easy, quick way to make a swimming area safe. Take with you most of the equipment and material needed to conduct a swim during a day hike or overnight or short-term camp. The rest of you can pick up at the campsite. Minimum equipment includes: 100 feet of  $\frac{3}{8}$ " nylon line, two dozen balloons, 200 feet of binder twine, a hand ax, a pocketknife, and a pencil.

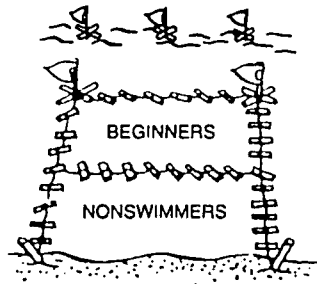
Organize the swimmers in the line holding hands to check the bottom of the area—less than 6 feet in depth—to be used. Use a strong swimmer to scout the area, up to 12 feet, by looking for deep holes, rocks, stumps, or dangerous debris. He should work at the end of a lifeline-bowline around shoulder, with a buddy tending line at shoreside.

Use binder twine to mark off and enclose the areas for non-swimmers, maximum depth  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and for beginners, maximum depth 6 feet. Support the line with deadwood floats cut by hand ax. Large rocks tied with twine make good anchors at the outside corners where buoys (plastic jugs or balloons) should be placed. Do not use glass bottles because of possible breakage.

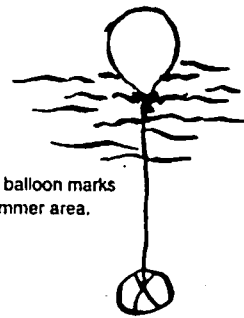
Swimmers use deep water beyond these areas, maximum depth 12 feet. Mark other outside limits with buoys only. To improvise these buoys, use yellow, orange, or white balloons tied to a rock anchor on the bottom.

Many units that swim regularly carry some type of portable checkboard and use official BSA buddy tags, No. 01595. This is a great idea, but protection is equally effective with an improvised buddy check system: For each participant, whittle a short, pointed peg, flat on one side. Write the person's name with a pencil on the flat part. Buddies stick their pegs into the ground at a marked place as they check in by buddy pairs. When a buddy pair checks out of swimming, they remove their pegs.

Customarily, a qualified adult supervises swimming, also serves as lookout, and gives buddy calls. This person should be located at a vantage point where everything in all areas can be seen and heard. At water's edge a two-person lifeguard team keeps close watch on all swimmers and stands ready with 100 feet of rescue line to help anyone in trouble. The rescuer ties a bowline on his end of the line and places it over his shoulder and around his chest. As he swims to a rescue, his buddy pays out the line from a hand-held coil, a chain-knotted line, or a "pineapple ball." Either the victim grasps the line, or the rescuer grasps the victim, and both victim and rescuer are pulled back to shore by the line-tender.



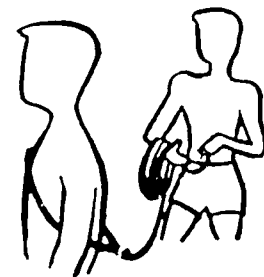
Swim areas using binder twine, sticks, jugs, or balloons.



Plastic jug or balloon marks corner of swimmer area.



Whittled pegs are used for buddy "tags."



Lifeguards stand by with a "ready line."



## LOOKOUTS AND LIFEGUARDS

Lifeguards and lookouts must not take their eyes off the water and the swimmers. Keep all swimmers clearly in view and avoid talking to others when on duty. The time may come when your attention and alertness will save a life. Be alert. Be serious about your responsibility.

## WHO CAN INSTRUCT THIS TRAINING?

This training can be given by any person authorized by the council, including a BSA Aquatics resource person, a unit leader with aquatic skill, or any other person with aquatic knowledge or experience that has been approved by the local council.

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# Appendix A. Safe Swim Defense Discussion



## Qualified Supervision

Explain why qualified supervisors must be 21 years of age or older, what qualities are needed, and what certification is recommended:

Lack of proper supervision is one of the leading causes of aquatics mishaps. Almost every accidental drowning can be attributed to the violation of one or more basic rules of water safety. Most incidents in Scouting occur in circumstances that easily could have been avoided by following safe swim principles. "Qualified supervision" and "discipline" are the first and last elements of the Safe Swim Defense, because all the other points depend on them. All aquatic activities must be supervised and every Scout must know, understand, appreciate, and respect the rules of water safety.

The Boy Scouts of America has established 21 as the minimum age for leadership in aquatic activities. All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult at least 21 years of age who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the well-being and safety of the children in his or her care, who is experienced in the water and confident of his or her ability to respond in the event of an emergency, and who is trained in and committed to compliance with the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense. (It is strongly recommended that all units have at least one adult or older youth member currently certified as a BSA Lifeguard to assist in planning and conducting all swimming activity.)

## Physical Fitness

Discuss why it is important for the person conducting a swimming activity to know the health conditions of participants:

There was a time, not too many years ago, when people with health problems or physical disabilities were prohibited from aquatics because swimming was seen as too risky or detrimental to their well-being. That attitude has changed to the point that many mentally and physically disabled individuals are encouraged to participate in aquatics as therapy. Some people have conditions that are not always obvious or apparent, such as heart conditions, diabetes, epilepsy, severe allergies, asthmatic conditions, ear conditions, or recent illness. The lifeguard and the person in charge need to be aware of the limitations of these individuals, and be prepared to cope with related conditions should they arise. For example, if you have someone who has epilepsy in the group, you



should know what action to take in the event of a seizure.

It is important to recognize the symptoms or "alert signs" of potentially dangerous conditions, and to know what actions to take to prevent or at least reduce the extent of harm the victim experiences:

- *Heart condition.* Shortness of breath; pain in the chest, arm, or jaw; general weakness; nausea; pallid skin
- *Epileptic seizure.* Violent shaking, rolling of eyes, clenching of teeth, frothing at mouth
- *Diabetic coma.* Disorientation, change of character, pallid skin, incoherent speech
- *Asthma.* Wheezing, shortness of breath
- *Allergies.* Possible shortness of breath, possible swelling of face or fingers

## Safe Swimming Areas

Review the qualities of a safe swim area:

**Gentle slope.** The bottom should have a gentle slope from shallow water into deeper water. There should be no holes or sudden drop-offs. All underwater obstructions, such as tree stumps, logs, or rocks, should be removed from the swimming and diving areas. Holes that cannot be filled should be clearly marked.

**Ability areas.** Assign separate ability areas for nonswimmers, beginners, and swimmers. Water depth should not exceed 3½ feet for nonswimmers, 6 feet for beginners, and 12 feet for swimmers. Place buoy lines or docks between each of these areas to help prevent straying into areas beyond respective skill levels. The areas should be large enough to avoid crowding. In a lake or natural waters, 50 square feet per person is recommended. In a pool, 40 square feet is satisfactory.

**Diving.** Injuries frequently result from diving into shallow or otherwise obstructed water. Even when drowning is avoided, crippling neck and back injuries are likely. Studies have shown that most serious diving injuries occur to males, ages 12 to 31, diving from low heights such as the edge of a pool deck, a dock, or a pier into water less than 4 feet deep. Therefore, the Boy Scouts of America recommends a minimum of 7 feet of water beneath and beyond the point of



**Natural hazards.** Thunderstorms, high waves, fast-moving water, cold air, riptides, and certain species of marine life are cause for temporarily closing the beach or swimming area.

Even sufficient water depth and the absence of rocks, stumps, and other obstructions in the water are not adequate unless diving is regulated to avoid body collisions. One of the most common injuries on troop swims results from jumping or diving from points above the water onto people in the water below. Proper on-site supervision should prevent accidents of this nature.

### **Lifeguards on Duty**

Explain the duties of a life-

guard and describe the training needed to qualify to be one:

The primary responsibility of the lifeguard is to provide for the safety of the participants using an aquatics facility. Knowing how to prevent accidents is more important than knowing how to rescue someone who is drowning. Depending upon whom you ask, the duties of a lifeguard can vary considerably. Some responses might include

- A supervisor who watches people in and around the water to assist anyone in trouble
- A disciplinarian who enforces rules and regulations
- A maintenance person who helps to maintain a clean and safe aquatics facility
- A teacher who gives swim lessons
- A person trained in lifesaving and first aid

In reality, a lifeguard might perform all these roles at one time or another to some degree. Lifeguards must understand that they are responsible for providing the safest possible conditions in their area of authority. The ability to recognize a hazardous situation and to prevent an accident or further injury is vital to a lifeguard. The lifeguard must be able to supervise bathers, minimize danger, educate participants in safety, enforce rules and regulations, render assistance, prepare records and reports, and perform whatever additional administrative duties are required. The position of lifeguard has become one of authority and responsibility.

The ideal, minimum required ratio of lifeguards to swimmers is one to ten.

entry for diving from the edge of a pool, pier, or floating platform. Additional depth is required from a board or raised platform. Most authorities recommend 10 to 12 feet of water depth beneath a 1-meter diving board. Be sure to check with state and local regulations. Diving areas should be separated from swimming areas. A lifeguard should be posted at the diving board.

**Beach area.** Beaches should be raked to remove glass, rocks, sharp objects, or trash. All holes should be filled.

**Water temperature.** Water should be 70° F or above. Reduce exposure time in the water if the temperature is below 70° F.

**Water purity.** Water should meet minimum water quality standards (bacterial and chemical) established by the state for water-contact activities. In the absence of state standards, swimming-water quality standards established by the United States Public Health Services should be applied. Water quality should be monitored and confirmed by sample analysis before the swimming activity and retested periodically thereafter.

**Water clarity.** Activity in turbid water, where a 12-inch white disk at a depth of 3 feet is not visible from above the surface, shall be limited to surface swimming. Underwater swimming, headfirst entry, and board diving should not be permitted in turbid water. Clear water exists when a 12-inch white disk at a depth of 8 feet is visible from above the surface of the water.

**Equipment.** Reach poles and heaving lines should be readily available. Use the buddy system for checking out and checking in equipment.

## Lookout

Discuss the importance of having a lookout on duty:

The lookout maintains a view of the entire aquatics area and, when he identifies problems, the lookout immediately notifies the lifeguard. The lookout does not have to be a trained lifeguard, only someone who can maintain an overall view of the area.

## Swimming Ability Groups

Explain swimming ability groups and the needs for them:

All participants in BSA aquatics activities are classified into three categories of swimming ability: nonswimmers, beginners, and swimmers. This is done primarily to group individuals with similar abilities when they are at the beach or pool and to limit aquatics to a water depth safe for the participants.

- *Nonswimmers* have not passed any swimming test. They are restricted to areas no deeper than 3½ feet. This allows them to practice floating and swimming with the option always available to put their feet on the bottom and stand high enough in the water to breathe without difficulty.
- *Beginners* can pass the following test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, swim 25 feet on the surface, stop, turn sharply, resume swimming as before, and return to the starting place. Total distance is 50 feet.

The entry and turn demonstrate the beginner's ability to reverse direction in deep water without assistance or to push off from the side or bottom. The swimming can employ any stroke, but no underwater swimming is permitted. The stop assures that the swimmer can regain this stroke if it is interrupted. This test demonstrates that the beginning swimmer is ready to learn deep-water skills and has the minimum ability required for safe swimming in a confined area where shallow water, sides, or other support is closer than 25 feet from any point on the water. This individual has minimal skills, but probably has the ability to get out of trouble if necessary. Reward this beginner with the opportunity to swim in deeper water. Give him the challenge of knowing that the surface is over his head when he stands on the bottom. The maximum depth of a beginners' area is 6 feet.

- *Swimmers* must pass the following test: Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming. Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of these strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl. Then swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke. The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn. After completing the swim, rest by floating.

How to evaluate skills in the swimmer category. The test administrator, who must objectively evaluate each

individual's test performance, should keep in mind the purpose of each test element.

*Jump feetfirst into water over the head in depth, level off, and begin swimming.* The swimmer must be able to make an abrupt entry into deep water and begin swimming without any aids. Walking in from shallow water, easing in from the edge or down a ladder, pushing off from the side or bottom, or gaining forward momentum by diving does not satisfy this requirement.

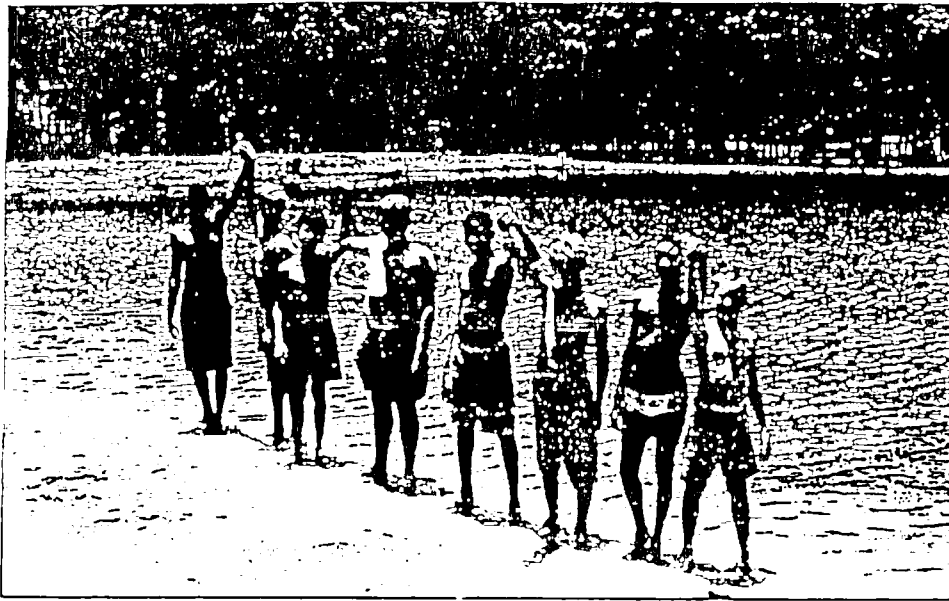
*Swim 75 yards in a strong manner using one or more of these strokes: sidestroke, breaststroke, trudgen, or crawl.* The swimmer must be able to cover distance with a strong, confident stroke. The 75 yards or 25 meters (depending on the facility being used) must not be the outer limit of the swimmer's ability; completion of the distance should demonstrate sufficient stamina to avoid undue risk. Dog-paddling and strokes repeatedly interrupted and restarted are not sufficient; underwater swimming is not permitted. The itemized strokes are inclusive: Any sidestroke or breaststroke or any strong overarm stroke (including the back crawl) is acceptable.

*Swim 25 yards using an easy, resting backstroke.* The swimmer must indicate ability to execute a restful, free-breathing backstroke that can be used to avoid exhaustion during swimming. This element of the test necessarily follows the most strenuous swimming activity to show that the swimmer can use the backstroke as a relief from exertion. A change of stroke must be accomplished in deep water without any pushoff or other aid. Any variation of the elementary backstroke is acceptable. An overarm back crawl may suffice, if it clearly provides opportunity for the swimmer to rest and regain his wind.

*The 100 yards must be swum continuously and include at least one sharp turn.* The total distance is to be covered without rest stops. The sharp turn simply demonstrates the swimmer's ability to reverse direction in deep water without assistance or pushing off from the side or bottom.

*After completing the swim, rest by floating.* This critically important component of the test evaluates the swimmer's ability to float in the water indefinitely even if exhausted or otherwise unable to continue swimming. Treading water, or swimming in place, will tire the swimmer further and is therefore unacceptable. The duration of the float test is not significant, except that it must be long enough for the test administrator to determine that the swimmer is in fact resting and could likely continue to do so for a prolonged period of time.

A swimmer is permitted full use of the swimming facility, but must still be accompanied by a buddy. It is recommended that the swimmer be tested annually to reinstate the classification. Persons who have not been swimming for years, or even months, might find that their stamina is not quite what it was, or they might have forgotten how to perform some of the skills.



## Buddy System

Discuss the buddy system:

The purpose of the buddy check is to remind each swimmer always to remain near his buddy and be aware of his buddy's situation so that he can lend immediate assistance if needed. Pair every person with another of his own ability group. Buddies check in and out of the swimming area together. As soon as all are checked in and before a swim activity actually begins, a buddy check is called to be sure that everyone went to the area they checked into and that there is no confusion as to who is whose buddy. After swimming begins, buddy checks are held at about ten-minute intervals and just before all swimmers get out. The signal for a buddy check is usually a single blast of a whistle, bell, or horn followed by the call "buddies" by the lookout guard. He counts slowly to ten, and by then all swimmers are to have joined and raised hands with their buddy, and stay still and silent until all guards have checked their areas and have reported. Each report is acknowledged and confirmed by the individual responsible for the "in" board. A two-blast signal means to resume swimming. When all cooperate quickly, you can take your buddy check in a very few seconds, losing very little swimming time.

Remember that the mechanical procedures are not the buddy system, but are used only to assure that every Scout is fulfilling his responsibility to his buddy. The buddy system is two people enjoying aquatics activity together while providing a critical margin of safety for each other. Bells, whistles, horns, and tags accomplish nothing—buddies do!

## Discipline

Explain the elements of good discipline, the rules needed to conduct a safe swim, and the adult role in discipline:

Almost every accidental drowning can be attributed to the violation of one or more basic rules of water safety. Most incidents easily might have been prevented by following safe swim practices. "Qualified Supervision" and "Discipline" are the first and last elements of the Safe Swim Defense, because all other points depend upon them. All aquatics activities must be supervised and every Scout must know, understand, appreciate, and respect the rules of water safety. Rules should be fair, simple, and applicable to all, including aquatics staff and leadership.

## Pool and Surf Swimming

The Safe Swim Defense applies to swimming at the beach, private or public pool, wilderness pond, stream, lake, or anywhere Scouts swim. Here are some additional points for the pool and the surf.

**Pool**--If the swimming activity is in a public facility where others are using the pool the same time, and the pool operator provides guard personnel, there may be no need for additional designation of Scout lifeguards and lookout.

The buddy system is critically important. however, even in a public pool. Remember. even in a crowd, you are alone without protection if no one is attentive o your circumstances.

The rule that people swim only in water suited to their ability and with others of similar ability applies in a pool environment. Most public pools divide shallow and deep water, and this may be sufficient for defining appropriate swimming areas. If not, the supervisor should clearly indicate to the participating Scouts the appropriate areas of the public facility. Although such procedures add a margin of safety, their use may not always be practical when the swim activity is conducted at public facility where non-Scouts are present. A responsible adult supervisor, who understands his or her responsibility and the elements of safety, can exercise discretion regarding certain procedures while maintaining safety.

**Surf**--The surf swimming environment of wave action, currents, tides, undertow, runouts, and sea pests like stinging jellyfish requires precautions for safe swimming that aren't necessary in other environments. A swimmer's physical condition is very mportant and should enable the swimmer to recover footing in waves, swim vigorously for at least five minutes without becoming exhausted. and remain calm and in control when faced with unexpected conditions.

Designated swimming areas are marked by flags or pennants that are easily seen. Beginners and nonswimmers are positioned inshore from the standing lifeguards ipped with reach poles. Better swimmers are permitted seaward of the lifeguard but must remain shoreward of anchored marker buoys. The lifeguard-to-swimmer ratio should always be 1-to- 10, with a rescue team stationed at the beach area nd supplied with a rescue tube or torpedo buoy.

Safe Guide to Scouting, 1999 (Blue cover), Pg 8.

## Diving and Elevated Entry

"Diving" refers to any water entry where the feet are not making first contact with the water. "Elevated entry" refers to any water entry from a height more than 18 inches above the water. According to BSA Safety Afloat standards, no diving or swimming activity of any kind is done in water with a depth greater than 12 feet.

All water entry must be feetfirst where the water has less than 7 feet of unobstructed depth. A leaping entry is recommended where water is at or above head level; a step-down or jump-down entry from a sitting position is recommended for shallow water.

No diving is permitted in water with less than 7 feet of unobstructed depth. Diving is permitted in clear water over 7 feet deep from a dock, pier, or platform that is no more than 18 inches above the water surface. For elevated entry from 18 inches high but less than 40 inches above the water surface, clear and unobstructed water depth must be at least 9 feet. The water must be clear enough to enable supervisory and guard personnel to see the diver at the deepest part of the plunge.

Board diving is permitted only from boards, mounted on a fixed (not floating) platform or deck, no more than 40 inches (approximately 1 meter) above the water surface. Clear water depth below the board should be 9 to 12 feet. A guard or supervisor should be positioned where the diver can be seen at all times beneath the surface. There should be no other surface or underwater activity or obstruction for at least 15 feet on either side of the board and 25 feet in front of the board. Diving should always be done straight ahead from the board, never to the sides.

Any elevated entry from a height greater than 40 inches must be feetfirst and only from a fixed platform or solid footing no more than 60 inches above the water surface. Clear water depth should be 10 to 12 feet. Other protective measures and distances are the same as for board diving.

**Safe Guide to Scouting, 1999 (Blue cover), Pg 11.**

## Example A

A scout troop has been hiking for six hours in the mountains of Northern Arizona. By mid-afternoon, they have arrived at their destination, a small mountain lake at about 7,000 feet. It is mid-June. Although a swimming activity was not planned, the boys all want to go swimming. All the boys recently passed the swimmers test during a swimming merit badge clinic and one of the adult leaders is a good swimmer who has recently attended a Safe Swim Defense Class.

How would you apply the eight points of the Safe Swim Defense Plan to this situation?

Qualified Supervision

Physical Fitness

Safe Swim Area

Lifeguards

Lookout

Ability Groups

Buddy System

Discipline

## Example B

A cub scout pack decides to have a pool party next month (assume summer month). The pool belongs to the pack's cubmaster. His son is a BSA Lifeguard who his father has volunteered to lifeguard the activity. The pool is about 30 feet long and 20 feet wide. It has a shallow end (3 1/2 feet) and a deep end (9 feet) with a one meter diving board. There is also a waterslide on the same end as the diving board.

How would you apply the eight points of the Safe Swim Defense Plan to this situation?

Qualified Supervision

Physical Fitness

Safe Swim Area

Lifeguards

Lookout

Ability Groups

Buddy System

Discipline