

# PLAY



Pennsylvania • League • of • Angling • Youth  
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## DANGERS around the water

This issue of PLAY focuses on how to fish and boat safely. Both sports are a lot of fun, if done properly. Did you know that you are more at risk for serious injury or death riding in a car to your fishing spot than while you are fishing or boating? Still, you shouldn't be careless when fishing or boating. This issue includes important information to keep you safe. It also includes a few safety equipment projects.

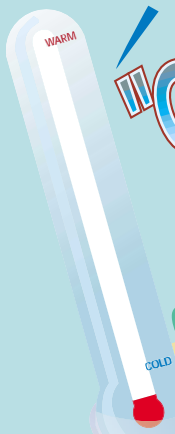
The best item of safety equipment you have is your brain. Before you go fishing or boating, take a minute to think about and prepare for dangers you might run into. Some you can see. Others you cannot. Serious injuries can happen to careless anglers who hook themselves or someone else with a fishhook. This issue includes tips for being safe around fishhooks. We have also included some first aid details in case of an accident with a hook.

Cold water can steal your body heat much faster than cold air. Cold water is one of the biggest dangers anglers and boaters face. Each year in Pennsylvania people die because they either fall overboard or tip the boat over in cold water. Fast-moving water is another danger for boaters and anglers.

Always wear your life jacket when boating. It floats, you don't. If you are a wading angler, the fast current can knock you over. Or you can lose your footing and go in over your head. Read the next pages to find more about preparing for some of these dangers and how to be a S.M.A.R.T. boater and angler.



"COLD WATER KILLS!"



# PREPARE TO FALL IN!

The air temperature in spring and fall can be warm. But don't let that fool you! The water temperature of a stream or lake can still be very cold. Here in Pennsylvania, water temperatures even in summer seldom rise above 72 degrees. Your body temperature is around 98.6 degrees. So if you fall in, you're going to lose a lot of your body heat to the water that surrounds you. No one plans to fall in, but accidents do happen.

That's why you should use the buddy system when fishing or boating. Fishing with a buddy is more fun than going alone. Plus, if something bad happens to you, your buddy may save your life.

What should you do if you or your buddy falls in? Be prepared. Be S.M.A.R.T. Know what to do. Water can rob your body of heat 25 times faster than air. Get out or help them out of the water as soon as possible.



## Issue Web Resources

The National Safe Boating Council has a fun site with pictures you can download and a safe boating quiz.

[www.boatingsidekicks.com](http://www.boatingsidekicks.com)

[www.boatsafe.com/kids/index.htm](http://www.boatsafe.com/kids/index.htm)

provides a list of kids' questions about boating, safety activities and education resources.

[www.coastie.org](http://www.coastie.org)

is the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary's web site. Visit the site and take a boating safety quiz.

Here is a link to the American Family Physician web site for information on hook removal:

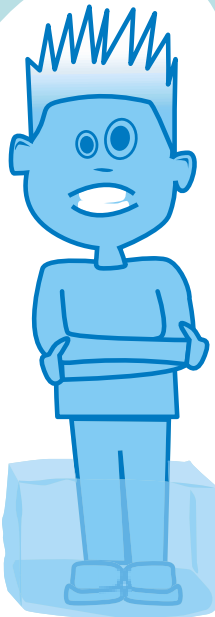
[www.aafp.org/afp/20010601/2231.html](http://www.aafp.org/afp/20010601/2231.html)

Want to learn more about canoeing, rowing or sailing? These sites can help you.

Canoeing - [www.acanet.org/paddling101a.htm](http://www.acanet.org/paddling101a.htm)

Rowing - [www.firstandthird.org/tables/rowing/learntorow.shtml](http://www.firstandthird.org/tables/rowing/learntorow.shtml)

Sailing - [www.sailnet.com/collections/learningtosail/theory/index.cfm](http://www.sailnet.com/collections/learningtosail/theory/index.cfm)



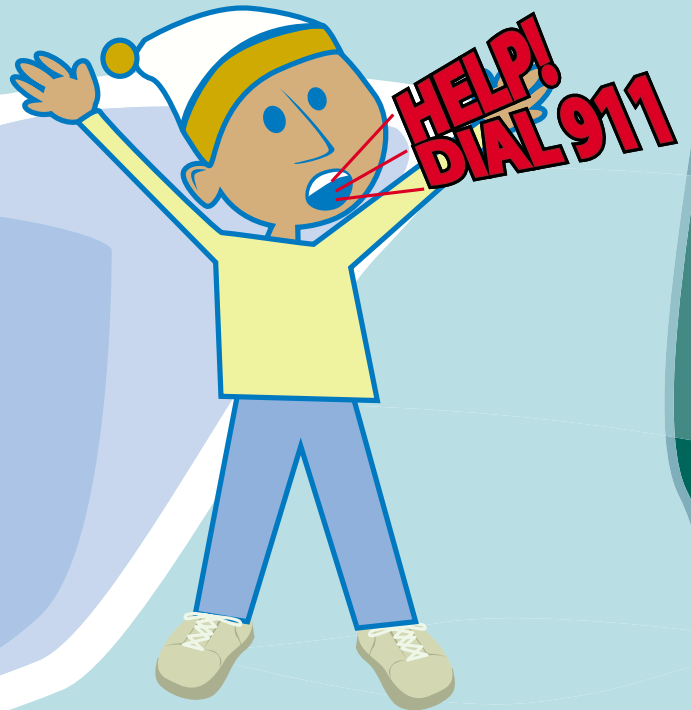
Get out of the wet clothes as soon as possible, too. Keep spare clothes in a plastic bag or other waterproof bag, just in case.

If your fishing and boating buddy is in deep water and can't stand, remember the words, "**Reach, Throw and Go.**" These words could help you save someone—and not become a victim yourself. This is especially true if the water is cold because every second counts.

**"Reach"** something out to the person if your partner is close to the shore or boat. But do not put yourself in danger. Never jump into the water to help. Don't get pulled into the water, either. Lie on your belly and reach out with a tree branch, boat paddle, your hand or a towel and pull the person to safety.

A reaching pole, like the one on page 6, is a great thing to "reach" with.

**"Throw"** something that floats out to your partner if he is too far away to "reach." You can throw a throw bag, like the one on page 6. If you don't have a throw bag or other rope, look around. Toss something, anything that floats. Even your closed tackle box or a cooler will work. Your partner can hang on to it and stay afloat while you go for help. **"Go"** call 911 or find an adult to help.



**NEVER** go in yourself. Make sure you stay on the line when the 911 operator answers. You will need to tell the operator about your emergency and where you are. Stay calm. Your buddy needs you to be at your best. Always go for help.

# Hook Safety & Removal. Don't Get the Point

Fishing is a fun activity that allows people of all ages to enjoy the outdoors. Keep in mind, however, that safety should always come first.

- \* Carry your rod in an upright position.
- \* Always secure your hook when not fishing.
- \* When casting, stay clear of other people and objects, like trees.
- \* Handle hooks and fish carefully. Keep hooks pointed away from you and others.

**WARNING:** Only an adult should attempt this procedure. Do not try this procedure if you are uncomfortable with this technique. Do not attempt this procedure if the hook is embedded anywhere in the face or neck. Tape the hook in place so that it cannot be snagged and take the victim immediately to see a doctor.

## Hook Removal

If you've had the misfortune to become hooked either by yourself or by a nearby angler, here is a method of hook removal considered by medical experts to be the most painless one available.

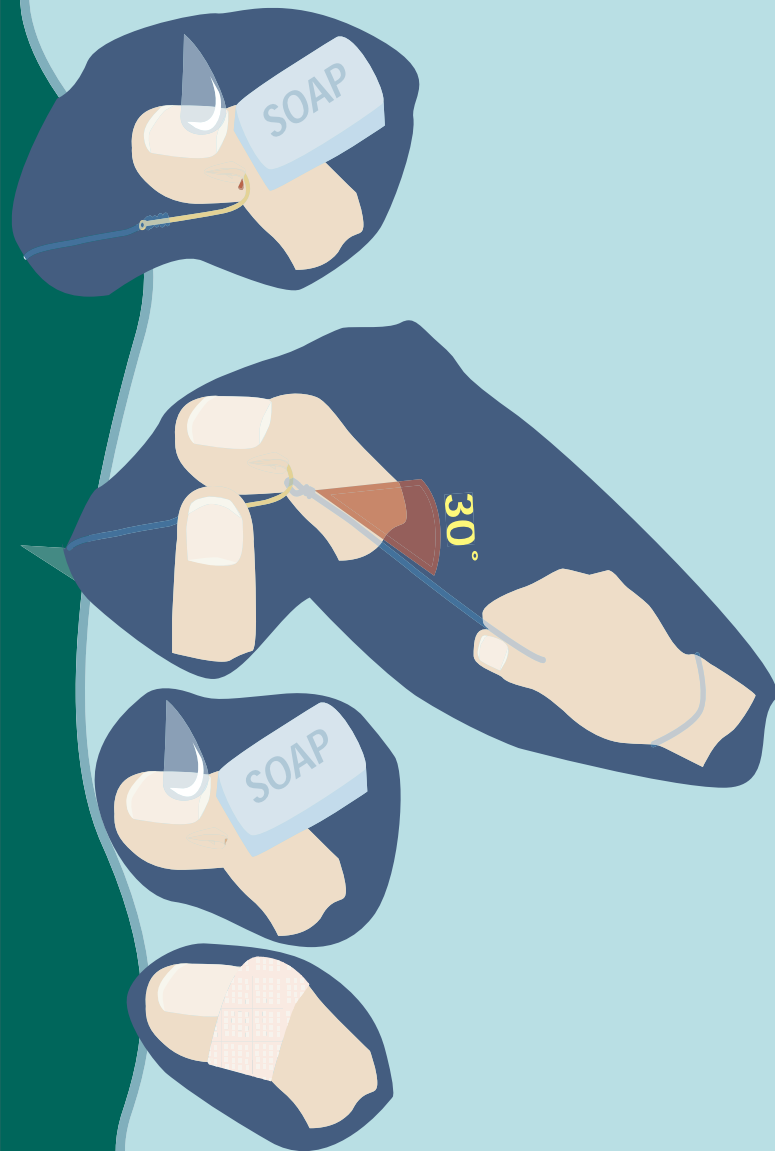
Step 1. Clean the area where the hook has penetrated.

Step 2. Create a loop in a 2-foot length of fishing line, and anchor the loop around your wrist.

Step 3. Place the loop around the bend of the hook close to the barb, and hold down the shank with your free thumb. This disengages the barb from the tissue.

Step 4. Give the looped line a short, sharp pull (at a 30-degree angle) and the hook will come out quickly and with as little damage as possible. Take care that the flying hook released from the skin does not impale anyone nearby.

Step 5. Vigorously wash the wound and leave it open with a simple dry dressing. Once the hook has been removed, consult a doctor as soon as possible to counter any potential infection. Most often there is no pain involved whatsoever, with the exception of a little residual pain because of the initial "hook set."



# HOMEMADE WATER RESCUE

With just a few things found around the house, you can make water rescue equipment that could save a life. All you need is an 8-foot long, one-inch diameter pole, tool handle or dowel rod, an empty bleach bottle and at least 60 feet of half-inch diameter polypropylene rope.

To help someone near you who's in trouble in the water, use a reaching pole. To make one, you need a long pole and 3 feet of nylon rope. First, drill a quarter-inch hole near both ends of the pole. The pole can be metal or wood. Its length should be between 8 and 10 feet. Cut off about 1.5 feet of rope and thread it through one of the holes. Next, tie both ends together, making a loop. Do the same to the other end with another 1.5-foot piece. You're done. These poles can be kept on boats and also used on ice.

Throw bags help rescue people farther away from you. You could buy a throw bag at a store that sells canoe and kayak equipment. Or you could make one. To make a throw bag, you need a clean, empty bleach or detergent bottle, 50 to 70 feet of rope and a couple of metal fender washers.

Start by making a half-inch hole in the bottom of the bottle. Place the washer on the outside bottom of the bottle. Pass the rope through the top of the bottle and through the bottom hole. Next, tie a loop knot with the rope. Finally, feed the rope into the top of the bottle and tie another loop knot.

To use the throw bag, hold the loop near the top and throw the bottle, with the rope, to the person in the water. Remember the first rule of rescue: Don't become a victim. If you can't use a reaching pole or throw bag, go for help.



Throw Bag



# A Stringer of Safety Tips

## Fishing with Hip Boots or Waders

Fishing with hip boots or chest waders on can be a fun way to catch fish. Watch your step, though! Felt soles give you more traction on slippery rocks. If you fall down in fast-moving water, never try to stand up. Your foot could become trapped between rocks and the current can push you under. Float feet-first down the stream and back-paddle your way to shallow water.

## Fishing from Boats

If you are fishing from a small boat, always keep your weight low and NEVER stand up. If you do tip over or fall in, and the shoreline is very close, work your way back to shallow water before trying to stand up. If you are too far from shore, don't try to swim for it. Get into or on top of the boat. Keep as much of your body out of the water as possible. This will save your body heat until help arrives.

## Life Jackets: They Float, You Don't

Wear a life jacket. It floats, you don't. Life jackets on boats are like seatbelts in cars. Neither one of them will work if you are not wearing it. There are some life jackets made just for fishing. Besides keeping you safe and warm, they also have lots of pockets for all your fishing tackle.

Life Jackets: It's the law.  
Remember that there must be one wearable life jacket for each person on a boat.

## Who must always wear a life jacket:

- \* Anyone age 12 or younger if the person is on a boat that is 20 feet long or less, or in any canoe or kayak.
- \* Anyone towed behind a boat, including those using water skis, tubes and boards.
- \* Anyone on a personal watercraft –like a Jet Ski®, Wave Runner®, Tiger Shark®, Sea Doo® and others.
- \* All sailboarders.