

Helpful Boating Definitions and Additional Course Description Details

This document is intended to clarify some frequently used terms in the waterfront/boating courses and course descriptions offered at Girl Scouts – North Carolina Coastal Pines (GS-NCCP). It is intended as supplemental information only and does not cover the entirety of definitions used during training.

The volunteer boating facilitator team and GS-NCCP staff members are here to help you with any additional questions you may have.

Definitions

Watcher – “An adult watcher or skilled helper is required for certain size groups. This person should have basic skills in the activity and supports the group by reinforcing instructions. They also watch for possible emergencies and help the instructor with rescues if needed.” (GSUSA Safety Activity Checkpoints p. 135).

GS-NCCP offers an online Watcher Training class. This is not the only route to Watcher status. Minimum Age: 16 years old.

Qualified Assistant – “Assistants do not need to be certified, but they need to understand the curriculum and be able to meaningfully assist in the delivery of a quality course and provide assistance and rescue should an emergency arise. The support of a qualified assistant can increase the participant to boating leader ratio from 6:1 (Canoeing), 5:1 (Kayaking, Paddleboarding) to 12 or 10:2 (leader + qualified assistant).” (Safety Activity Checkpoints, p. 126-132, 142). GS-NCCP offers a Basic Skills class to train Qualified Assistants. There is no Qualified Assistant option for Sailing. Minimum Age: 16 years old.

Program Aide – “As a Program Aide, you’ll turn some of your favorite activities into fun experiences for younger kids. In doing so, you’ll help build their confidence as well as your own.” (GirlScouts.org, Program Aide Award). At the waterfront, Program Aides assist the Boating Leader with a variety of tasks based on their skills, interests, and abilities. These tasks may include PFD fitting, demonstrations, assisting with boat entry and exit, leading games. Minimum GS Level: Cadette.

Course and Session Details

Basic Skills -- In this session, you will learn basic boat handling and basic water rescue skills for canoeing, kayaking, and paddleboarding. This is an introductory level class with two components: 1) instruction and practice time on paddling strokes and maneuverability (e.g., can you use specific steering strokes to go where you intended to go?); and 2) instruction and practice time for boat safety and basic rescue skills. If you are a new or

occasional boater (especially if you haven't been in a boat in a while) and want to refresh your skills, enhance your own boating experience, and/or prepare to take the boating leadership classes, this class is for you.

Watercraft Leader: Council Properties -- In this class, you will strengthen essential boat handling and rescue skills for canoeing, kayaking, and paddleboarding, or sailing. This class has two components: 1) instruction and practice time on paddling strokes and maneuverability (e.g., can you use specific steering strokes to go where you intended to go?); and 2) instruction and practice time for boat safety and boating rescue skills. If you want to "take girls out" on GS-NCCP council properties, this class is for you. Successful demonstration of both paddling and rescue skills, and completing all portions of this class, meets the Safety Activity Checkpoints for leading paddling **activities at GS-NCCP council properties (Camp Graham, Camp Mary Atkinson, Camp Mu-Sha-Ni, and within stated boundaries Camp Hardee)**. This course includes both online (MUST be completed in advance of the skills session) and in-person training that must be completed to be considered certified. Credentials are good for five years from the completion date. This class is a mandatory prerequisite for the Watercraft Leader – NC Waterways training. The primary Watercraft Leader must be 18 years of age or older and GSUSA registered as an adult.

Watercraft Leader: Waterways -- This weekend-long class is intended for experienced watercraft leaders who are interested in "taking girls out" beyond the boundaries of GS-NCCP council properties. This is an advanced-level class. Participants are expected to demonstrate proficiency in essential paddling and rescue skills without additional instruction. Prerequisites: 1) prior boating experience and leading girls in boating activities; 2) completion of Watercraft Leader: Council Properties training (or documented equivalent); 3) proficiency in paddling strokes or sailing skills and maneuverability (e.g., can you name and use specific steering strokes or sailing maneuvers to go where you intended to go). Class participants must demonstrate proficiency upon arrival by navigating a figure-8 course in both a solo canoe (padding on only one side of the boat) and a kayak or sailing a course solo in a sunfish sailboat.

In this class, participants will learn and develop trip planning skills, emergency preparation, and advanced rescue techniques. Completing all portions of this class meets the Safety Activity Checkpoints for leading paddling activities on **any flat water within the state of North Carolina**. This course includes both online and in-person training that must be completed to be considered certified. Credentials are good for five years from the

completion date. The primary Watercraft Leader must be 18 years of age or older and GSUSA registered as an adult.

Watercraft Facilitator -- This weekend-long class is designed for volunteers who are excited about boating and are interested in becoming a paddling facilitator for GS-NCCP. Mandatory prerequisites: 1) Completion of Watercraft Leader classes for both Council Properties and NC Waterways; 2) demonstration of solo canoe and kayak skills by successfully paddling a figure-8 course; and 3) willingness join the Council's training team and co-teach a boating class at least once per season. Sailing facilitator certification may follow by completing a "cross-over" class. The minimum age is 18 OR a high school graduate. The primary Watercraft Leader must be 18 years of age or older and GSUSA registered as an adult.

In this weekend-long class, participants will refine rescue skills, learn how to teach paddling strokes to new boaters, and practice teach elements of the Watercraft Training classes.

Digital access to facilitator materials will be provided prior to the class and participants are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the basic water rescue skills, paddling skills, and rescue skills taught in the Council Properties and NC Waterways classes.