

REQUIREMENTS OF YOUTH SAILORS

All **sailors** are required to:

- Attend the pre-season sailor/parent/ coach meeting
- NOT attend Sailing Club if they have a serious communicable disease (e.g., Covid-19, measles, mumps, plague), or known or suspected exposure to such a disease in the previous 5 days
- Arrive **on time, ready to sail**, and rig cooperatively with the other sailors
- Bring a large towel and dry clothes for after sailing
- Not bring weapons, expensive electronics, or other distractions to the net shed
- Follow **all** instructions of the coaches and instructors, and to ask for clarification if needed
- Wear a Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD, or life jacket) whenever on a dock, sailing, or riding in the coach boat
- Wear coach- or instructor-mandated gear, such as a wetsuit or neoprene booties, in order to be safe in the environment in which activities take place
- Alert the organization to any emergency condition, whether that's a sailor in trouble, an equipment failure, or an outside factor (large boat approaching, weather change, etc.)
 - A sailor should use **any means necessary** to alert the organization, including telling a coach or organizer, telling another responsible adult, telling a fellow sailor who is in a better position to alert the organization, blowing a whistle, pointing, yelling — *whatever it takes* to let someone in charge know
 - Not indicate there's an emergency when they know there isn't one
- Stay within hailing distance of the coach boat, or **regularly** check in visually when out of hailing distance, and not sail beyond where they can get timely help if needed
- Treat equipment with respect; for sailors, the equipment is not only the way we sail but also our safety equipment
- Help everyone de-rig, so that **all** boats are de-rigged and put away **before leaving**
- Participate within their limits, and alert the coach or instructor whenever they believe those limits are being pushed or exceeded (but be willing to stretch their edges!)

REQUIREMENTS OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF YOUTH SAILORS

All **parents/guardians** are required to:

- Attend the pre-season sailor/parent/ coach meeting; this is the deadline for registering and paying for participation in Sailing Club (note that financial aid is readily available)
- Provide program leaders with cell phone numbers of responsible adults who can speak and act on their children's behalf and who are immediately available to answer calls from the program leaders during the entirety of the time when the children are in the SJISF's care
- Provide their children with (or arrange for SJISF to help provide):
 - Appropriate sailing gear, which will be communicated each season and will change as the weather changes
 - Pre-sailing snack or lunch, as sailing is high intensity and sailors get cold and hangry if they don't eat before heading out
 - High-density food they can pack in their PFD (like Clif Bar, Goo) that can be eaten on the water
 - A dry towel and dry clothes for after sailing
 - An insulated mug and a spoon for post-sailing cocoa, especially when it's cold (if your child is lactose intolerant, please send them with an alternative)
- Drop their children off **on time** and **check in** with coaches before leaving to verify pickup time, as this can change according to weather conditions and other factors
- Pick up their children at the appropriate time
- NOT permit their children to attend Sailing Club if their children have any of medical conditions listed above, in the section on sailor responsibilities
- Inform program leaders of all health concerns of their children, including changes to their children's health, in order that program leaders can provide appropriate precautions and, if necessary, make appropriate decisions on their children's behalf
- Communicate any concerns regarding health and/or safety to the program leaders, in order that they may take appropriate action.

SPECIFIC SAFETY ISSUES

Prevention

The SJI Sailing Foundation takes the risk of any form of injury very seriously and works diligently to reduce risk for all participants.

That said, part of what we are teaching young sailors is adaptability, handling adversity, physical and mental strength, problem solving, cooperation, and improvising. It's not all just tacking and gybing, as sailing takes place on natural bodies of water and is subject to the vagaries of weather. We look carefully at weather apps and at the sky and sea, but we are not gods, and nor are the sailors. We teach them to sail well and to adapt as needed, and we will stretch their edges. It is the only way to improve, and these skills will stay with them their whole lives.

The Foundation will provide power safety boats operated by trained leaders on the water at all times that sailors are outside the sheltered bay between the net shed and the end of the Jackson Beach peninsula. Sailors are not to leave that sheltered area until such supervision is available and ready.

The number of safety boats on the water on any given day will be determined by the head coach, in his or her discretion, based on the wind and water conditions, the number of sailboats on the water, the skill and number of sailors, and any other relevant factors. The general rule of thumb is that a second safety boat is required when the number of boats is greater than or equal to four or five.

The Foundation will provide at least one on-shore support person at all times that sailors are on the water. The on-shore person will maintain verbal contact with all coaches via VHF radio and/or cell phone, and will be equipped with binoculars. Any decision to contact emergency services will be made by the coach and on-shore support staff.

Certain medical conditions may increase a person's risk of harm when sailing. Most of these — asthma, musculoskeletal conditions or injuries, or cardiovascular conditions — are challenges for a participant in any physical sport. Dinghy sailing requires physical exertion — it's not just sitting in a sailboat and steering — and although it's suitable for people of all sizes, it does take effort. It requires sudden and controlled whole-body movement.

Done correctly, sailing will — at least some of the time — result in discomfort (such as being cold), soreness, bruises, abrasions, and cuts. The injuries associated with dinghy sailing are within or below the normal range one can expect from high school sports.

Concussions and head injuries

Participants in dinghy sailing do face some risk of concussion and traumatic brain injury. The US Sailing Sports Medicine Committee reviewed data and information on severe brain injuries in competitive and recreational sailing, and investigated whether helmets should be worn when sailing. The committee concluded:

There is no data to confirm that helmets will prevent concussions. Helmets have been shown to reduce the incidence and severity of facial and skull fractures, contusions and lacerations, but not concussions. Concussions seem to occur more easily in pre-teen and teens. We also need to be aware that wearing a helmet makes the head a “larger” target and could possibly lead to more head strikes.

Therefore, it is the position of the Sports Medicine Committee of US Sailing that helmets should be considered and encouraged but not mandated for aggressive competitive sailing, crew positions at increased risk for strikes to the head, and sailors who are learning the sport and thus unfamiliar with the position and movement of rigging and equipment.

Following this advice, the SJI Sailing Foundation emphasizes that the decision to wear or not to wear a helmet should be a thoughtful choice made by each sailor with their parents.

The Sailing Foundation has a number of helmets of varying sizes available for student-sailors to borrow and try, in order to determine whether wearing a helmet is the appropriate choice. The helmets the Sailing Foundation provides to student-sailors are available solely to assist the sailor in determining if he or she wishes to wear a helmet. The Sailing Foundation stresses, though, that **sailors who decide to wear a helmet while sailing are responsible for purchasing and wearing their own personal helmet**. It is only in this way that the sailor can be secure that the strap adjustments are set correctly and are not changed; that the helmet is properly cared for; and that the helmet is replaced if it is dropped or damaged. Additional information about concussions can be found here:

- <https://tinyurl.com/USSailing-helmets>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/index.html>
- <https://www.rya.org.uk/knowledge-advice/safe-boating/look-after-yourself/Pages/Concussion.aspx>

SJISF does not make recommendations on what head safety gear any individual sailor should utilize. However, if a parent informs the Sailing Foundation’s representatives that their child is required to wear a helmet, the staff and volunteers will endeavor to enforce the parent’s requirement and will deny the student-sailor sailing privileges if they fail to don the helmet.

Drowning

Drowning is fortunately extremely rare in youth sailing activities. Nonetheless, sailors must pass a swim test in cold water prior to participating. And sailors are required to wear **Coast Guard approved PFDs** whenever there is risk of falling in the water.

DO NOT RETURN THIS TO SJISF. This is for your information. Please retain it for your reference.