

Local Information

Tutorial **24** /24
EVENT PLANNING SERIES

Background for the Volunteer:

Why have rules? When the Europeans first colonized America they relied heavily on hunting and fishing for food supplies. Within just a few years colonists had depleted the wildlife within a day's walk of their settlements. At the time they had two choices: either move to a place where the wildlife population had not been depleted, or begin to rely more on domestic animals and limit the numbers of wildlife taken. In a continuing effort to have both people and wildlife in America, we have set up rules that both conserve wildlife and still allow us to connect with our wildlife heritage and catch some of our food.

Fishing regulations protect fish, help managers control and improve fish populations, and distribute the catch among anglers. It is your responsibility to know about the rules in your jurisdiction.

Fishing regulations can specify at what age licences are needed. Usually children are not required to have a fishing license but may be required to fish with a licensed adult. Rules vary widely: be sure you are informed about yours. Check with your local fish and wildlife agency or www.catchfishing.com

It is important to know where to go fishing. Distributing this information is one of the simplest ways to promote participation.

Some jurisdictions offer fishing tackle loaner programs. These sites are often operated by civic clubs, libraries, community centres, schools and others, to provide entry-level equipment to borrowers at no charge.

For classes to show you how to improve your fishing skills, look for information at your local fishing tackle store. A simple handout for the participants with these local resources listed is very helpful. If possible, make copies and send home with each participant.

OBJECTIVES:

At the end of this station participants will:

- Understand there are fishing regulations and know where to get them,
- Know places to go fishing nearby,
- Be able to identify some local fish,
- Know there are courses in fishing skills available and where to locate them,
- Understand that respect for private landowners and their property benefits access to public waters.

Catch Fishing®

READ BEFORE THE EVENT

Canadian National Sportfishing Foundation
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Fax: 705-742-4038 www.catchfishing.com

It is impossible for this national program to cover all of the richly diverse and popular regional ideas for fishing. Your area has special customs and activities that other areas don't have that may require special equipment. We have provided time in the second part of this station to include regional activities. Making the program relevant to your area is of the utmost importance, so time is built in for the Event Host to customize to your local needs. He/She might consider inviting a special guest to make the program relevant locally.

When special methods and equipment are required, it is a good idea to include a demonstration so participants can see firsthand what is involved. Your invited specialist should be informed of the length of presentation that will fit into the designated timeslot (10 minutes) and that hands-on activities are recommended. On the other hand, if a local topic cannot be set up, we have included a fish identification activity. You might want to continue this activity in that timeslot. Identifying fish gets easier with experience but fish, like all animals, have characteristics that vary a little from individual to individual. Look for clues by comparing the fish to the pictures by general shape, fins, color, and patterns (stripes, spots, and other identifying marks).

Artists' illustrations sometimes make all of the fish on a page the same size for convenience, assuming that we all know that an adult channel catfish is not the same size as a bluegill. This can be confusing for a beginner. Fish do have wide ranges in size but still have maximums and minimums. Channel catfish can be up to 58 pounds but are more typically 5 to 10 pounds: Bluegill can be up to 4 pounds but are typically much less than a pound.

Ten minutes of this station is intended for your own local emphasis with a topic important in your area. If you do not want to use this time for a special local topic, then you may want to add the Fish ID activity we have provided after the program script and outline. Have fun.

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Teaching Tips for Local Information

Local Information requires some concentration and an opportunity to look through your regional regulations booklet. Although this Program was written with 10-year-olds as a target audience, it is intended for families of all ages to share these experiences. The regulations booklets are usually printed in tiny type and require searching to find a specific answer. Parents need to assist with this activity. As soon as they arrive at your station, invite them to sit down with their kids and get involved. Seat your audience on the ground or on a tarp, facing you.

Sometimes the regulation booklets have tables of contents. If you are going to have the participants search through the booklet, point out where the table of contents is and help them decide where to look for the answer.

You might have a map of your region as part of the information about where to go fishing. It would be helpful to approach this topic assuming that your audience has never used a map before. That way, even the youngest in the group can participate.

- The easiest way to handle the map is to place it on the ground in the middle of where everyone is sitting. If that isn't possible, then enlist a couple of participants to help you hold the map so everyone can see.
- Do not hand out individual maps to kids. Unfolding and folding becomes a major task, and a distraction.
- If your map is on the ground, orient it so north points north.

It is tempting to give the participants copies of maps, booklets, and special materials as you are talking about them at this Station. Unfortunately, it is very cumbersome to haul these items around while visiting the remaining Stations. Most programs distribute "goodie bags" at the end so participants can take home special giveaways. If you tell the participants they will get a free copy later, it will satisfy their need to collect. If you distribute anything to use in your activity, do it one item at a time. Kids get overwhelmed with too many things at once.

Make sure all of the needed teaching tools and equipment are handy. Lay them out so you can find them easily. Prepare in advance. If you need the script for the first couple of times through, you might want to put it on a clipboard with a rubber band to keep it from flapping in the wind. Have some rocks or weights on hand to anchor your props in case a breeze comes up.

The logo for Catch Fishing, featuring the words "Catch Fishing" in a blue, cursive script font.

A simple Handout for the participants listing local resources is very helpful. Check with your Event Host to see if this feature will be included for your Event. Make copies to send home with each participant at the end of the event. You may want to include some or all of the following information on the Handout:

Angler Education Courses

Fishing licence requirements and where to obtain the licences

Fishing Tackle Loaner Program sites

Life Jacket Loaner Program sites

Local rental sites for boats or fishing

Disabled access sites

Local clubs sponsoring novices

Local places to participate in fishing

Materials needed:

- Comfortable and attractive life jacket for the presenter to wear throughout the program

Rules for Fishing

- 12 copies of your area's rules booklet (or regulations) for fishing
- Regional fish identification poster/s or 12 fish species identification booklets from your local fish and wildlife agency
- Current fishing licence from your jurisdiction
- Regional map showing local access to fishing
- Handout you or your Event Host has made with Fishing Instruction Classes and other resources available in your area
- Use one laminated fish cutout to identify with your rules booklet or regional fish identification poster or species booklet. Choose a common fish kids might catch in your area from the list of the available fish images.
- Make up 2 or more questions to ask participants to find answers in the rules booklets. Customize these questions for your booklets. Note the page number of the answers so you can give hints later if needed. You might ask:

How old should I be before I need to buy a fishing licence?
How many (select species of fish) can I keep if I fish on the (fill in) River?
Are there legal lengths for the fish I catch from the (fill in) River?
Do you need to wear a life jacket in a boat?
Are there any Free Fishing Days?
Are there special programs I can sign up for?

SCRIPT STARTS HERE

Estimated time for the **Rules for Fishing and Boating** section: 5 minutes

Presenter says the words in bold,
participants answers appear in italics;
Presenter and participants do the actions in the boxes.

OBJECTIVE:

Know places to go fishing nearby

Spread your regional map on the ground in the middle of the participant group.

Put a big "X" where we are.

Teaching Tip

If you cannot spread your map on the ground, either have two participants hold it up so the group can see it, or tape it to a tree or table edge where everyone can see.

We have lots of places to fish and boat in this area.

I'm (your name) and I'll help you figure out where to go and what you need to know to have fun.

Take a look at this map to see if there are places close to where you live where you could try fishing.

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**The map key will show us what the symbols on the map are about.
What color would a lake (or river or ocean) be on this map?**

Where are we on this map?

What color was the lake (or river or ocean)?

Can you find a lake (or river or ocean) near where we are?

What do you think people do at that lake?

swimming, boating, fishing, etc.

Can you see other places on this map where you could go fish?

If you know of special activities at that body of water, talk about them. Is it a life jacket Loaner site? Can you rent fishing equipment, a canoe or a fishing boat?

OBJECTIVE:

Understand that respect for private landowners and their property benefits access to public waters

I will show you some places with what we call “public access.”

**Sometimes you must cross private land to get to public waters.
These places are called “public access” points.**

Landowners have made agreements with our wildlife agency so we can get to the water by crossing their land. They should be treated with respect.

What would you do when crossing other people’s land to treat the landowner and the landowner’s property with respect?

Stay on the path

Leave the gate in the same position you find it

*Don’t litter. **We call that “Carry in, carry out!”***

Go quietly if there are homes nearby

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OBJECTIVE:

Know that there are courses in fishing skills available and where to locate them.

If you do NOT have a local presentation, continue with Fish ID.

Materials needed:

Make up 3 additional questions to extend the time spent for the Rules for Fishing.

Possible Questions:

- How old do I need to be before I must buy a fishing licence?
- How many (select species of fish) can I keep if I fish on the (fill in) River?
- Are there legal lengths for the fish I catch from the (fill in) River?
- Do you need to wear a life jacket in a boat?
- Are there any Free Fishing Days?
- Are there any special programs I can sign up for?

OBJECTIVE:

Be able to identify some local fish

I have 5 fish and there are 10 of you. That's two people per fish.

Use the laminated fish of species that the participants are most likely to catch in your area.

Teaching Tip

Use one of the smaller versions of either the Bass or Trout, whichever is more common in your area or has length restrictions for a nearby fishing area.

Take one with a partner and see if you can figure out what kind of fish this one is by matching it to your booklet (or poster).

- Look at the fins
- the general shape of the fish
- spots and special markings
- the color

See if you can find one that is the same or almost the same as your fish.

Does anyone know what your fish is? How could you tell? Let's match them up with our booklet.

Great job, now you'll know how to figure out what kind of fish you are catching.

OBJECTIVE:

Understand that there are fishing regulations and know where to get them.

Where do you keep the identification booklet? *(In my tackle box)*

You might need to know something else. How big must your fish be to keep it?

We want to put the small ones back so they can grow and be caught again some other day.

Let's look in the rules booklet again and pretend we are fishing:

On the (fill in name) River, for (local fish with size limit), you caught this one.

Look on page () for the regulations for the River.

Action

When they have identified the fish, trade with someone else and try another one. Watch the time. Trade until you have used the allotted time for this activity.

How big should the (fill in fish type) be for you to keep it?

(Participants supply the length from the booklet)

Here is a measuring tape. Who wants to measure our catch? Then we'll decide if it is a keeper or we should let it go.

You might want to let it go no matter what size it is.

It's a good idea to carry a camera so you can catch-photograph-release (CPR) too.

We should keep only the fish we are going to eat.

But, if you keep it, make sure it is of legal length.

Fish biologists limit the sizes so they can help us have a healthy fish population.

Is that one to keep or let go? *(Participants decide)*

- Choose a volunteer to measure your fish
- The participant gives the length of the fish.
- Have the others measure their fish and decide if they would be legal to keep or they would put them gently back into the water.