



# Lifejacket!



Submitted by Coach George Young on 05-17-2011

***Never thought I would even think about this.....***

For the past 20 days or so I have been weighing the concept of lifejackets policies for public pools and also rethinking the back yard pool usage of lifejackets. From my very first day as a lifeguard/swim instructor I had a stand down closed outlook on lifejackets in public pools...."NO lifejackets"! Please note public pools and back yard pool are different than open water, lakes, rivers and general boating recreation.

I always felt a lifejackets should never substitute an older responsible adult (Prefer a certified lifeguard) watching over the users and making sure the pool rules are followed. I always felt lifejackets can build a false awareness of safety. I also felt by using a lifejackets would create a slow down to learn to swim circle of learning how to swim. Well I could write another ten or so "I always felt" negative comments concerning lifejackets.

I never thought I say this.....With proper policies in place lifejackets will save lives! Proper policies in my eyes are simple straight forward rules that work at your pool to protect the welfare of every participant. For back yard pools a very firm straight forward landmark approach is needed. OK, what has made me change my outlook?

With the help from the Pool Safety Campaign-supplemented by the federal Government, the National Notes and Float Program, the US Corp of Engineers and a few articles written by the pioneer lifejacket promoter Dr. Tom Griffiths, I have open my eyes and views on how lifejackets will help stop drowning. Many organizations are viewing the general concepts in a science of pure #'s. Let's review this concept of science of pure #'s: the American Red Cross (ARC) policies and guidelines for CPR has change big time due to looking at the pure #'s. (In the beginning of the ARC changes, I did not see eye to eye with the changes. What watered down CPR!?) As the ARC moved forward and actually did an outstanding job blending the science of pure #'s in its classes and my general opinion has changed. The ARC offers classes that more people can and will take with the blend of old school methods and newer streamline

methods. The common thought is for more people to learn and be willing to perform CPR. Whether it's hands only CPR or the old school vintage method with rescue breaths it does not matter....the science of pure #'s.

There is still a # of individuals that will perform CPR the old school way and there is a new group of individuals willing to learn and perform CPR with no rescue breaths and just using hands only. In 5-10 years we will be able to review more of the pure #'s that the new policies and procedures the ARC has put in to place and hopefully the #'s will reflex what I believe will happen: a slight drop in the certification of the old school CPR with rescue breaths but the total # of people being certified in all the various CPR classes being taught will be increased. The science of pure #'s!

MORE to Come!