

Making Your Education Program the Best in the Nation

This Info Sheet gives a brief overview of the wealth of helpful information you can find in *Best Practices Workbook for Boating, Fishing, and Aquatic Resources Stewardship Education (Workbook)*. See the back for details.

Tools are available to help you! See the *For More Information* box on the back to order your copies.

Best Practices are meant to enhance, not replace, existing efforts.

What would it take to make your education program among the best in the nation? The instructions to help make that happen are ready and waiting in the *Best Practices in Boating, Fishing, and Aquatic Stewardship Project*.

► Need For Best Practices

Each year, millions of people attend boating, fishing and aquatic stewardship education programs. How do these programs benefit sponsoring agencies and organizations? Does participation in events contribute to agency revenues, image, or mission; or to increased license sales; or to a greater stewardship ethic among participants? There is little direct evidence that these and other program goals are being achieved. The aquatic education community has identified this as a major need and concern.

The Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) and its partners have engaged in the *Best Practices* project to help meet this need. Tools developed in this project are designed to help educators build, enhance, and evaluate their programs based on research and practices shown to be effective. These tools serve as evidence to decision-makers, administrators, and publics that Best Practices do exist and that educators are accountable for using them.

► How Can Best Practices Help You?

Materials developed for the Best Practices project do not constitute a “program” unto themselves. Rather, they are tools, based on current research, you can use to make your programs more effective and defensible. Incorporation of Best Practices will maximize your effectiveness in:

- Planning, developing, and implementing programs.
- Conducting program evaluations at all levels of development and implementation.
- Providing ongoing professional development.
- Identifying relevant research to further understand and improve the educational process.

► What Tools are Available?

A series of materials have been completed as part of the *Best Practices* project and are available from RBFF:

- *Workbook*—A comprehensive, interactive guide to incorporating research-based, tested, effective ideas into your education efforts. Exercises in the *Workbook* help you develop a plan to make your program among the best in the nation.

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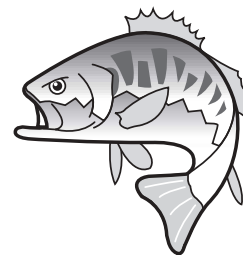
- Information Sheets—Ten more information sheets like this one give a brief overview of various Best Practices and how they benefit educational efforts and sponsoring agencies and organizations.
- PowerPoint Presentation—A comprehensive presentation with segments on various aspects of the Best Practices. It is designed to be customized for use with numerous target audiences, to communicate the importance of Best Practices.
- Trainer's Guide—A “cookbook” for conducting a one- or two-day, train-the-trainer workshop, teaching trainers how to walk end users through the *Workbook* and motivate them to adopt Best Practices into their programs.
- Newsletter—A Best Practices newsletter features case studies and articles about effective aquatic education programs, information on new resources and grant opportunities, and other information pertinent to aquatic education efforts.
- Best Practices Monograph—A 190-page collection of research papers on Best Practices (*Defining Best Practices in Boating, Fishing, and Stewardship Education*, Anthony J. Fedler, editor) was published by RBFF in 2001. It is available online at www.rbff.org/educational/.

In addition to the above tools, a nationwide directory of educational programs, events, and curricula is available online. This database allows stakeholders to locate appropriate programs in their field of interest or in a particular geographical location. A system is in place to maintain and update this database over time. The database is available at www.rbff-education.org.

► About the Best Practices Project

In 2000, RBFF commissioned 11 aquatic, environmental, and outdoor education professionals to develop summaries of existing research and recommendations for the development of best professional practices for boating, fishing, and aquatic stewardship education. These professionals presented their findings to a group of 25 researchers and educators at a workshop. The resulting document, *Defining Best Practices in Boating, Fishing and Stewardship Education*, is the foundation for all the tools developed through this project.

The *Workbook* also contains additional research from various sources, and has been reviewed by 30 professionals with a variety of backgrounds including educators, researchers, administrators, and practitioners.



FOR MORE INFORMATION...

This information sheet is just the tip of the iceberg. MUCH more information on planning, developing, and evaluating education programs can be found in the *Best Practices Workbook for Boating, Fishing, and Stewardship Education*. The more Best Practices you can incorporate into your program, the greater the chance that your program will achieve the goals you set for it.

To review and/or order copies of this and other Information Sheets, the *Workbook*, or other Best Practice tools and materials, go to: www.RBFF.org/educational/bestpractices.cfm or contact RBFF at: 601 N. Fairfax St. • Ste. 140 Alexandria, VA 22314-2054 • 703 519 0013