



Clubs & Grassroots Organizations

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.

Some clubs and grassroots programs have much more impact than others. The most effective efforts are based on guidelines called Best Practices in education.

Offering programs that introduce people to fishing, boating, or stewardship of our aquatic resources provides many rewards for your club/organization. You are directly helping people spend quality time with friends and family, increasing awareness of and appreciation for the need to protect and conserve natural resources, and showing what true sportsmen and sportswomen are all about.

► Make Your Programs Effective!

Some clubs and grassroots programs have much more impact than others. Why? The most effective efforts are based on guidelines called Best Practices in education. Best Practices are recommendations based on what has been observed, documented, or researched to be effective at helping programs achieve their educational objectives.

► Use the Workbook

An extremely useful and easy-to-use compilation of Best Practices (*Best Practices Workbook for Boating, Fishing, and Aquatic Resources Stewardship*) has been developed to help those who conduct education programs in these areas be more effective.

The *Workbook* was designed to provide useful information to a broad array of interests—from local fishing and boating clubs, to state natural resources agencies and schools, to national conservation organizations and federal agencies. Some of this

information may not apply to you, but the *Workbook* is organized so you can easily scan through it to find those Best Practices that apply to your situation. Each Best Practice includes a detailed explanation and/or examples of how it can be applied.

The *Workbook* also will help you see how your programs might fit into a bigger picture. Partnering with local, state, or federal agencies and/or with other clubs or conservation organizations might make the time and money you spend create even more impact than doing programs independently.

► What is Covered in the Workbook?

The *Workbook* provides a wealth of helpful information for clubs and grassroots organizations, such as:

Know Where You're Going—The chapter on Planning Ahead helps you make a plan that is relevant to your club, clearly define the purpose of your program with goals and objectives, consider resources needed to operate your program, and involve potential partners in your planning.

How to Develop a Program—The chapter on Building a Program provides tips on how to make your programs instructionally sound, such as teaching how to think, not what to think; empowering learners; considering how different ages develop and learn; providing hands on and outdoor experiences; and the importance of understanding the social context of the learning.

How to Train Members—An entire chapter of the *Workbook* is devoted to training. If your club is going to partner with an agency or organization, you can request training. This chapter may assist you in selecting members to send to trainings. If members of your club receive training to become instructors, they can also train other club members.

Reaching Diverse Audiences—This chapter provides advice on how to effectively involve diverse audiences (i.e., racial or ethnic minority populations or females), including involving them in the planning; making them feel welcome; helping them to overcome barriers; involving positive role models; and helping to create social support for their activities.

Welcoming Persons with Disabilities—Research shows that persons with disabilities have the same motivations and educational needs as others wanting to participate in outdoor recreation. This chapter helps you consider ways to make your programs inclusive; see people with disabilities as people first; eliminate or lessen constraints to involvement; and make fishing, boating, and stewardship accessible.

Enhancing Fishing Education Programs—This chapter helps you understand the different phases that an individual goes through on the journey to becoming an angler. It shows how awareness and having an initial experience are usually not enough for someone to become a life-long angler. Newcomers need opportunities to develop skills and knowledge, have access to equipment and a place to fish, and they must have social support for the activity.

Enhancing Aquatic Stewardship—This chapter defines environmental stewardship as “informed,

responsible action/behavior on behalf of the environment.” It describes how you can offer stewardship as part of an angler or boater program or offer stewardship as a primary course using angling and boating to enhance your efforts. It also discusses ethics, the importance of taking participants outdoors, eliminating constraints, and the importance of effective curricula.

Enhancing Boating Education Programs—Most boating education programs have safety as a primary focus. This chapter provides a list of standards for boating safety, ideas on how to get more people to act on what they learn, and a list of resources for additional information.

How to Know If Your Program is Working—A chapter on evaluation discusses setting up systems to help you assess whether your proposed program has achieved the objectives you set for it, helps you make mid-course corrections as you implement it, and helps you determine whether it worked or not upon completion.

► Your Club’s Involvement Makes a Difference

Every club that offers educational programs helps make a difference for the future of boating, fishing, and stewardship of aquatic resources. By following Best Practices, you can enhance your programs even more.

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