

## Lives Saved!

Our state's effort in reducing incidence of childhood drowning has created a positive program for Alaska and other states to implement. The Kids Don't Float program is a nationally award-winning program. The National Safe Boating Council and National Safe Kids have adopted the Kids Don't Float program for national promotion.

The biggest sign of success is the report that 24 young lives have been saved due to the use of a Kids Don't Float life jacket.

## Q&A

**How do I find out where KDF boards are located and who are the sponsors?** You will find a list of active communities posted online at [www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov](http://www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov). For more details, call 907-465-4170.

**Does it cost anything to use a life jacket from a loaner board?** No, life jackets are free of cost. We only ask that you return the life jacket after your use so the next person can benefit from the program.

**Is there water safety training available?** There are several organizations that specialize in boating and water safety training programs. Contact **Kelli Toth**, Education Specialist for the Alaska Boating Safety Program, at 907-269-6042 or **Mike Folkerts**, Recreational Boating Safety Specialist, with the US Coast Guard at 907-463-2297.

👉 **2004 in Cooper Landing a raft with 3 kids and an adult flipped in the Upper Kenai River, they were dunked into the cold currents and the kids were caught under the raft. They were rescued and all wearing Kids Don't Float PFDs.** 👈

– Saved by Kids Don't Float life jackets

## Do you want to Sponsor a Loaner Board? It's easy!

1. Organize/identify a coalition of folks who are interested in setting up a Kids Don't Float Loaner Board.
2. Identify potential sites in your area where children boat or swim.
3. Get permission to install a loaner board at the site, or find a facility to store personal flotation devices (PFDs) to be checked out.
4. Contact the KDF program online at [www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov](http://www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov) or call (907) 465-4170.
5. Once your loaner board is up, let the community know all about it. Encourage them to use and return the pfd's.
6. Have a designated person check the boards regularly for maintenance and replacements.
7. Report annually to Kids Don't Float program administration to stay up to date, report any changes and needs.



[www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov](http://www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov)

👉 **We have experienced people taking PFDs, leaving children's outgrown PFDs, and returning PFDs to different sites. We see this as a success as they are obviously using them.** 👈

– Loaner board sponsor

# Alaska Kids Don't Float



Give them something that does... a PFD!

[www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov](http://www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov)



## About Kids Don't Float

Water surrounds us everywhere in Alaska. We work, play, live and harvest much of our food from the water. In the last ten years there have been 454 drowning deaths in Alaska; 11% of the drownings were children under the age of 15 and 42% were boating related. The Kids Don't Float (KDF) Program was developed in response to Alaska's high rate of childhood drowning.

The Kids Don't Float program has two components. The first component is a PFD (personal flotation device) Loaner Board Program that allows the public to borrow PFDs free of cost, from loaner sites which are located at harbors, lakes, rivers and any open body of water for recreational use. The second component is the Peer Education Program designed for educators, parents or anyone involved with children to teach them about cold-water exposure, PFD use and drowning prevention.

## What is a PFD?

**A PFD is a Personal Flotation Device. Our PFD Loaner Program provides Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs) for kids to use at harbors and boat ramps.**

## Check the Facts!

- The fatality rate in Alaska, is 4-5 times higher than the national average.
- Most drownings in Alaska occur in open skiffs or canoes.
- Over half occur in lakes and rivers.
- Over 90% of fatality victims are not wearing life jackets.
- In Alaska drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death for children and the third for teens.



## Find Out More



Go to our website:  
[www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov](http://www.kidsdontfloat.alaska.gov)



Connect with us on Facebook, search for: **Alaska-Kids-Dont-Float**



Contact the PFD Loaner Board Program:  
**Maria Bailey: (907) 465-4170**

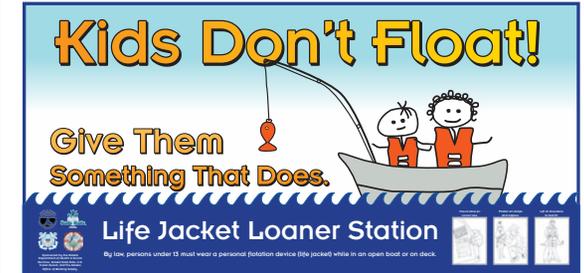


Contact the Peer Education Program:  
**Alaska Boating Safety**  
**Kelli Toth: (907) 269-6042**  
**United States Coast Guard**  
**Mike Folkerts: (907) 463-2297**



## Sponsors and Partners

Partners are made up of state and federal agencies, Alaska Native corporations, youth groups, non-profit organizations, private businesses, legal firms, medical services, harbor masters, Safe Kids chapters, community citizens and many other community groups and volunteers.

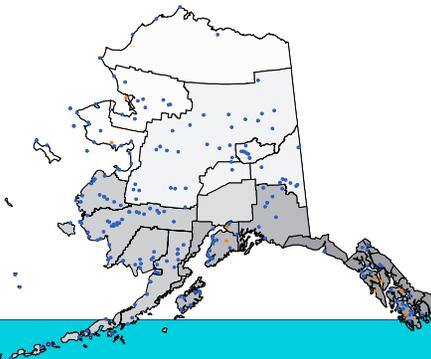


## Statewide!

In the Spring of 1996, fifteen loaner boards were set up by a group of safety advocates in Homer and the surrounding communities of Kachemak Bay, Alaska. As of 2015, there are 223 participating communities with 663 life jacket loaner boards on lakes, beaches, and riverbanks in every region of Alaska.

## Kids Don't Float Loaner Boards and Saves

- **Loaner Boards - 663**
- **Reported Lives Saved (1998-2015) - 24**



## Boating Safety Laws

The Alaska Boating Safety Law was signed in May 2000. A portion of the boat registration fees now collected by the state are used to purchase life jackets for the Kids Don't Float loaner board program.

## State and Federal Personal Flotation Device (PFD) Laws

ALL children under age 13 must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device when in an open boat, on the deck of a boat or when water-skiing.

ALL boats must carry a U.S. Coast Guard-approved PFD for each person on the boat.

Except for canoes and kayaks, one U.S. Coast Guard-approved Type IV (seat cushion or throw ring) device must be carried by all boats 16 feet and longer.