



Age Group Guides

Participants and Parent Resources

Updated May 2023

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Introduction

What's Nippers?

Nippers is a junior activities program that introduces children aged 5 to 14 to Surf Life Saving. It's a great way for children to make friends, be active & learn how to enjoy the beach safely. Nippers first learn about surf awareness & safety. As they progress through the various age groups, nippers will undergo lessons in wading, running, ocean swimming, board paddling & lifesaving skills as well as learning the basics of resuscitation & first aid.

The Nippers program is delivered by one of the individual surf lifesaving clubs located around the country. In most states, Nippers runs from October to March, & usually on a Sunday morning, but this does vary from club to club so check your local club for details.

Age Group Development Pathway

The specifically designed program progressively introduces knowledge & skills learning outcomes through lessons that are tailored to each of the age groups; ensuring the content is relevant, in line with lifesaving & surf sports' most up to date training standards and most of all exciting! Each age group has its own individual set of lessons – between 10 and 16 depending on the age group. The program pathways learning towards the Surf Rescue Certificate which members can begin training towards from the age of 13.

AGE GROUP	AGE	AWARD	NUMBER OF LESSONS
Under 6	5	Nil (Surf Play 1)	10
Under 7	6	Nil (Surf Play 2)	12
Under 8	7	Surf Aware 1	12
Under 9	8	Surf Aware 2	12
Under 10	9	Surf Safe 1	12
Under 11	10	Surf Safe 2	14
Under 12	11	Surf Smart 1	16
Under 13	12	Surf Smart 2	16
Under 14	13	Surf Rescue Certificate	

Other Key information

When are lessons?	Usually weekly on Saturday or Sunday, but check with your club
What equipment is needed?	Bathers, club cap (including their age group), long sleeve t-shirt or rash top, a sun hat, towel & sunscreen. Most clubs have stocks of their apparel
What age group is my child?	The age group is calculated by age as at 30 September each year
Who coaches my child?	An Age Manager takes responsibility for the instructions of a particular age group throughout the season. All Age Managers are qualified & screened
What happens after Nippers?	The program is designed to gradually introduce children into the role of a qualified surf lifesaver & assist in patrolling the beaches. Children can continue competing in various competitions at local, state, and national level. Children can also undertake other awards & learn facets of community service.
How can parents help?	Become involved in many areas of club activity. Areas can include – helping with training, coaching, officiating, fundraising, providing water cover (if you gain your SRC or Bronze medallion), cooking the club BBQ etc.

UNDER 6

Stage 1

Learning Outcomes

- Know their way around their surf club & beach
- Understand basic safety practices (incl. signalling for help, importance of supervision & being in a group)
- Understand the types of animals at the beach (incl. Identifying dangerous animals)
- Understand the meaning of slip, slop, slap
- Understand the role of an adult at the beach
- Identify what a lifesaver looks like
- Identify the safest place to swim at the beach
- Enjoy playing in the surf while developing confidence in the water
- Enjoy wading in & out of the water while developing confidence in the water
- Enjoy playing beach flags
- Enjoy Beach Sprinting & participating in beach relays

Activities

- Facility tours
- Beach walks
- Safety discussions
- SunSmart demonstrations
- Shallow water running, jumping, rolling & sitting
- Knee deep wading
- Beach flags
- Beach running & sprinting
- Beach relays
- Fundamental body movements & physical competencies

UNDER 7

Learning Outcomes

- Understanding basic safety practices (incl. signalling for help, importance of supervision & being in a group)
- Know their way around their surf club & their boundaries
- Understand the meaning of slip, slop, slap
- Identify beach dangers (incl. Identifying the difference between natural items & rubbish on the beach)
- Recognise the signs that they are in trouble in the water
- Demonstrate the signal for “assistance required”
- Enjoy wading in and out of the water while development confidence in the water
- Enjoy playing beach flags
- Enjoy beach sprinting & participating in beach relays

Activities

- Facility tour
- Beach walks
- Beach Eco walk/ clean up
- SunSmart demonstrations
- Safety Scenarios & role play
- Wading in & out of water
- Wading races & relays
- Beach races, sprints & relays
- Beach flags
- Fundamental body movements & physical competencies

UNDER 8

Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of surf lifesaving in Australia
- Identify the surf club as a welcoming place
- Understand and demonstrate the SunSmart guidelines
- Understand what happens when they're not SunSmart
- Identify what it means to feel safe
- Identify people to talk to if feeling unsafe at the beach
- Recognise the diverse human and marine communities that make up beach ecosystems
- Identify dangers at the beach
- Recognise the signs that they are in trouble in the water
- Demonstrate the signal for assistance required
- Recognise emergency situations and when & how to dial 000, if an emergency is identified
- Recognise & understand what the red & yellow flags represent
- Attempt or perform catching a wave on a body board
- Attempt or perform wading & dolphin diving
- Attempt or perform a standing beach sprint & beach flag start

Activities

- Facility tour
- Beach walks
- Beach Eco walk/ clean up
- SunSmart demonstrations
- Safety Scenarios and role play
- Wading in & out of water
- Wading races & relays
- Water based games
- Learn to body board
- Learn to catch a wave
- Dolphin diving
- Wading & dolphin diving relays
- Beach races, sprints & relays
- Beach flags
- Fundamental body movements & physical competencies

UNDER 9

Stage 2

Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of surf lifesaving in Australia
- Identify the surf club as a welcoming place & who they can ask for help
- Identify natural & manmade objects in the beach environment
- Recognise the environmental impact they can have on the beach
- Recognise the importance of hydration, nutrition & exercise
- Identify a surging. Spilling & plunging wave
- Recognise the dangers swimmers can be exposed to with a changing tide
- Identify the 5 beach safety tips using the F.L.A.G.S acronym
- Identify different safety signs on their beach & their meaning
- Understand the three different sign shapes & colours
- Recognise an emergency & how & when to dial 000 (incl steps when dialing 000)
- Attempt or perform positioning on a nipper board
- Attempt or perform paddling on a nipper board
- Attempt or perform body surfing on a wave
- Attempt or perform basic running technique on sand
- Attempt or perform diving for a beach flag

Activities

- Safety Scenarios & role play
- Beach eco walk & clean up
- Beach runs, stretching & warmups
- Walks discussing surf education
- Water based games
- Body surfing
- Beach running, sprinting, racing & relays
- Beach flags (incl. diving)

UNDER 10

Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of surf lifesaving in Australia
- Identify the surf club as a welcoming place & who to ask for help
- Identify times when they might have felt unsafe
- Identify and demonstrate SunSmart guidelines
- Understand the consequence of skin damage caused by sunburn
- Understand the natural water cycle & water collection methods
- Identify ways in which water usage can be reduced/ recycled at the surf club
- Identify how rips are formed & what they look like (incl. how to escape a rip)
- Understand the basic principles of resuscitation
- Demonstrate surf related signals
- Recognise unsafe behaviour at the beach
- Identify the actions of a beach user in an unsafe situation
- Develop an understanding of preventative actions
- Attempt or perform carrying & dragging a nipper board into the water
- Attempt or perform the bunny-hopping a nipper board into the water
- Attempt or perform sitting over a wave on a nipper board
- Attempt or perform paddling through a wave on a nipper board
- Recognise how body boards can be used to assist a distressed swimmer
- Demonstrate skills required to assist a distressed swimmer
- Recognise a rescue tube & when to use it
- Attempt or perform a beach relay baton change

Activities

- Clubhouse and facility tour (incl boundaries)
- SunSmart discussions & role play
- Surf club water audit and walk
- Rip identification
- Perform the basics of resuscitation (incl. DRSABCD)
- Signal games
- What are preventative actions
- Entering the water with a board
- Bunny hopping
- Sitting over a wave
- Paddling through a broken wave
- Body board rescue
- Rescue tube relay
- Rescue tube rescue
- Baton relay



UNDER 11

Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of surf lifesaving in Australia and identify the surf club as a welcome place
- Identify who can help if feeling frightened, lost, upset or bullied & the importance of persistence
- Recognise beach signage and understand the importance of safety signage around the beach
- Recognise the difference between renewable and non-renewable energy and ways to reduce consumption
- Recognise 'at risk' people in a beach environment
- Identify actions that can be taken to help 'at risk' people avoid dangerous situations
- Recognise the different types of interpersonal communication used in a beach environment
- Identify why interpersonal communication is an important skill for a lifesaver
- Identify the principles of DRSABCD
- Recognise & manage patients suffering from cuts and abrasions, bleeding from the nose, sprained muscle ligaments & sunburn
- Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques
- Attempt or perform a dismount from a nipper board
- Attempt or perform catching a wave on a nipper board
- Attempt or perform a board relay race
- Understand the techniques of surf swimming
- Demonstrate an ability to swim through surf, parallel to surf & back to shore
- Attempt or perform a crouching beach sprint start & a beach sprint finish
- Attempt or perform an ironman/ women race transitions
- Attempt or perform a Cameron relay race transition

Activities

- Facility tour
- Safety & hazard signs/ beach observation walk
- Reporting & persistence role play
- Energy source discussion & brainstorming (incl. a surf club energy audit)
- Workshop on communication styles & techniques
- First aid basics
- First aid role play
- CPR scenarios & role play
- Controlled nipper board dismount
- Races involving dismounts
- Catching a wave
- Party wave
- Board relay
- Surf swimming
- Beach sprinting (incl. focused coaching on starts and finishes)
- Junior ironman/ Ironwoman transition
- Cameron relay transition



UNDER 12

Stage 3

Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of surf lifesaving in Australia & identify the surf club as a welcome place
- Understand rights & responsibilities as a member of Surf Lifesaving SA
- Understand how weather can affect both the beach environment & beach users
- Identify natural & man-made causes of erosion & their impact on the beach environment
- Identify the consequences of not being SunSmart
- Identify what skin cancer is & what causes it
- Recognise that staying fit & healthy is important as a lifesaver
- Identify ways to stay fit & healthy during junior activities
- Identify the four different types of rip currents
- Identify how to manage rips in a beach environment
- Identify how to use rip currents to assist in surf swimming & rescues
- Identify the role of the body's circular, skeletal, respiratory & nervous system
- Understand how the body's major organ systems relate to First Aid scenarios
- Identify the principles of DRSABCD
- Recognise & manage basic patient management techniques
- Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques
- Demonstrate the basic signals
- Identify the role of a beach patrol & lifesavers during a patrol
- Attempt or perform rolling under a wave on a board
- Recognise how a board can be used to secure & support a conscious patient
- Demonstrate the skills required to secure & support a conscious patient
- Attempt or perform diving under waves
- Develop a beach sprint arm & leg drive technique
- Identify different beach flags race strategies

Activities

- Facility tour
- Beach tour, SunSmart discussion & skin cancer workshop
- Beach games
- Rip out, swim across, surf in
- Board races & heart rate monitoring
- Board races & skeletal system usage tracking
- First Aid treating & role play
- Provide CPR & role play
- Beach & patrol related games
- Signal training & role play
- Rolling under & riding over waves
- Board rescue basics
- Diving under waves
- Beach sprint fine tuning
- Beach flags fine tuning

UNDER 13

Learning Outcomes

- Understand Surf Lifesaving in Australia & the basics of SLSA Membership & their Wellbeing Policy
- Identify the surf club as a welcoming place
- Understand Global Warming & Climate Change & its impact on surf lifesaving
- Identify how to minimise the risk of cross infection when delivering first aid & resuscitation
- Identify & understand the 10 SLSA beach safety tips
- Recognise the importance of communicating with beach users & different communication strategies
- Identify the role of the body's circular, skeletal, respiratory & nervous system
- Understand how the body's major organ systems relate to first aid scenarios
- Identify the principles of DRSABCD
- Recognise & manage basic patient management techniques
- Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques
- Identify volunteer & professional emergency services in the local area
- Demonstrate board skills in a board race & board rescue event
- Demonstrate surf swimming skills in a surf race event
- Demonstrate surf swimming & beach running skills in a run-swim-run event
- Attempt or perform swimming in surf with a rescue tube
- Attempt or perform a tube rescue for a swimmer in distress
- Demonstrate beach sprinting skills in a beach sprint & beach sprint relay event
- Demonstrate beach flag skills in a beach flag event
- Demonstrate beach running, surf swimming & board skills in an ironman/ironwoman event
- Demonstrate beach running, surf swimming & board skills in a Cameron Relay event

Activities

- Facility tour
- Climate Change workshop (focusing on the impact on Surf Clubs)
- Role playing different communication skills & styles
- Understanding the human body
- Basic emergency care
- Role play CPR scenarios
- Accessing emergency services in the local area
- Board races
- Board rescue events
- Paired board races
- Reverse board rescue race
- Surf races
- Run-swim-run races
- Navigating the surf with a rescue tube
- Tube rescue in water
- Beach sprints & relays
- Beach & water flag events
- Ironman/ Ironwoman races
- Cameron Relay races