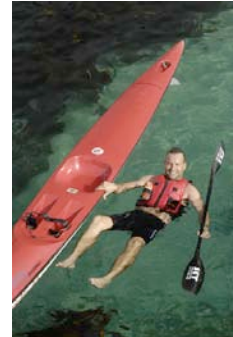




## Buckle Up!

Mark Bayly, presenter of Survivor SA, loves his surf ski. He paddles around the Atlantic seaboard, enjoying the splash of the cold water and the gorgeous sunsets. He is passionate about the ocean and wants all South African youngsters to have as much fun in the sea as he does.

Mark never goes to sea without his life jacket – he calls it his seatbelt.



### **ACTIVITY:** **Life Jacket Fashion Show.**

Assemble a number of life jackets – big ones, small ones, old ones, squashed ones. Write on the black (or white) board: Size, Fit, Colour, Condition

When the children are all seated, throw the life jackets around the room – usually the children will grapple for a jacket and want to put it on. Encourage this, and while they are becoming fashion models, talk to the other children about life jackets.

Introduce the idea of Size, Fit and Colour. Point out that brightly coloured jackets are easier to see in the water. Talk about crotch straps and grab handles – make the kids say the words – they'll giggle when you say, "crotch strap" – but they'll remember it!

Make a little competition to see whether the boys or the girls remember the words, Size, Fit and Colour better. Make them chant the phrase – it helps to set it in their minds.

Now turn your attention to your fashion models – help those who need help, but if they've managed to do up the straps and think they have it right, present them to the rest of the class. Get them to parade up and down in front of the others, and encourage a swagger and a bit of acting.

Now, as the MC, announce each child, and discuss his or her "outfit". Get the class to help you in terms of Size, Fit, Colour – check the straps now – most children do not make them tight enough.

Check for size and fit by having your model turn sideways, while hooking his thumbs under the shoulder seams and pulling up on the life jacket. If the jacket rises more than 10cm, it doesn't fit or may be the wrong size. Tighten the straps and try again.



Explain what could happen if the straps aren't tight enough – choking, the jacket rising up and forcing the arms above the head, keeping the hands afloat, but not the head.

Make sure that one of the jackets is so large, that you can just whip it up over the child's head. Point out that this child will drown.

Have your last model appear with no life jacket, and introduce him or her as a famous swimmer, but someone who is going to die. Describe the torso reflex (you can call it a gasping reflex if you prefer) Then remind the children of people they may know who say things like, "I don't need a life jacket – I can swim" or " I don't like wearing my life jacket – its uncomfortable."

Point out again that people who have the torso reflex never surface and thus never get the chance to show off their superior swimming skills.

That's why EVERYONE needs to wear a life jacket.

.../end