

18

EVERYONE CAN BE A LIFESAVER



Royal Life Saving

ROYAL LIFE SAVING SOCIETY - AUSTRALIA

FACT SHEET No.18

Rescue Safety

Q. When should I attempt a rescue?

A. In any rescue situation, your personal safety should remain paramount. There are many types of rescues which do not involve the rescuer entering the water. Assess the situation to determine which rescue is most suitable. Remember, if you enter the water without first assessing the situation and get into trouble, you will not be able to assist anyone and may even need rescuing yourself.

Q. What should I do if I see someone in trouble?

A. Royal Life Saving encourages people who find themselves in a rescue situation to follow the 4 A's of rescue:

Awareness: recognising an emergency, accepting responsibility

Assessment: making an informed judgement

Action: developing a plan, effecting the rescue

Aftercare: giving an aid until medical help arrives

Q. How do I attempt a rescue?

A. When assessing a rescue situation there are a number of means by which the rescuer can try to assist the person in trouble, before they undertake a swimming rescue themselves. These include: Talk, Reach, Throw, Wade, Row and Tow rescues. Before entering the water, assess the situation – is there something on hand which you could use to reach the person, such as a rope, stick, or towel? Is there something you could throw to the person to aid their buoyancy, such as a life jacket, kickboard, or esky lid?

Q. Is there a risk in undertaking a rescue?

A. Yes. On average, 5 people lose their lives each year while attempting to rescue people in trouble. Often when you approach a person in difficulty they may be in a state of panic, and can easily drag you under in their attempt to stay afloat. It is important not to put yourself in danger; reassure the person whilst encouraging them to kick in themselves. Or if the person requires towing, you should take an aid out to them, and use this to tow them back.

Q. Where can I learn more about undertaking rescues?

A. Depending on how old you are you can participate in Swim and Survive and/or Bronze Medallion educational programs. More information about these can be found at www.royallifesaving.com.au.

Real Life Story - Teenager drowns trying to save mate

A teenage boy has drowned in rough seas after trying to save a friend. A group of teenagers were playing at the ocean when one boy got into trouble. Two friends jumped in to save him but one did not emerge from the water. His body was found by police when the tide went out later that evening.

ROYAL LIFE SAVING HAS DEVELOPED A NUMBER OF FACT SHEETS ON WATER SAFETY ISSUES IN AUSTRALIA.

Contact Royal Life Saving on: **1300 737 763**
or download them from: **www.keepwatch.com.au**



Rescue Safety Checklist:

- Practiced performing a reach rescue with a branch, stick, umbrella, towel etc
- Practiced performing a throw rescue using a kickboard, esky lid, PFD, bucket, rope, or even the garden hose
- Assessed the situation before performing a rescue
- When performing a rescue calmed person down, explained to them what you are doing and what they should do to help. Stayed away from them to maintain own safety

SELF PRESERVATION IS KEY IN ANY RESCUE.

Proudly Supported by



Australian Government

Department of Health and Ageing