



## GUIDELINES FOR DAY CAMPS/ DAY CARE CENTERS/ CHILDREN PARTIES OR YOUTH GROUPS USING PALM BEACH COUNTY BEACHES

1. Please notify Ocean Rescue as far in advance as possible when bringing a group of children to a County Beach Park.

**North District: (561) 694-7480      South District: (561) 629-8770**

- A. Characteristics of beach and contact names will be provided if requested.
- B. Call the **Beach Conditions** information report line before leaving for the beach.

**North District: (561) 624-0065      South District: (561) 629-8775**

**Website: <http://discover.pbcgov.org/parks/Aquatics/Beaches.aspx>**

Click on the north or south link under Beach Conditions to the right of the page.

2. A copy of the master list designating the swimming ability of each child and emergency contact names and phone numbers should be carried by counselors during swim trips.
3. When arriving at the beach, the head counselor or adult guardian should check in with the lifeguard tower. The lifeguards will warn of any hazards and recommend the best area for the group to swim.
  - A. Provide the number of children in the group, the number of non swimmers and the location on the beach where the group will be during the duration of the visit. A business card with the agency (day camp) name and number is helpful.
  - B. Non swimmers and young children should be accompanied by adult supervision at the water's edge or preferably, an adult should be in the water at all times.
  - C. Inform the lifeguard if any children have health conditions they should be aware of.
4. There should be at least one counselor or adult guardian for every 12 children. 1 per 8 for children under 6 or those with disabilities. The ratio is also 1:8 when the seas are greater than 1' and/or when rip currents are present.
  - A. Counselors / adults must be in the water with the children**
  - B. Counselors / guardians should be good swimmers.
  - C. Counselors / guardians should station themselves on the perimeter of the swimming area.
  - D. Counselors should be watching the children, not standing side by side talking, or playing with children.
  - E. Counselors, guardians and children must be wearing swimming attire.
5. Obey all lifeguard instructions and review the rules and warnings posted on the 'Daily Conditions' board. Especially, "NO THROWING OF OBJECTS", including sand. Lifeguards will direct you to areas outside the guarded area where activities such as surfing, skim boarding, and fishing are allowed.
6. Roll call should be taken by counselors or an adult guardian upon arrival, periodically while at the park and prior to leaving. Immediately inform lifeguards of any missing children. Children should be escorted to the restrooms, picnic area and all other locations.
7. A safety check system should be employed about every 15 minutes while the children are swimming.
  - A. Employ the buddy system - assign each child to a buddy and make frequent "buddy checks".
  - B. Establish a safe place (an area children know where to report in the event they become lost).
8. Counselors are encouraged to seek training in Red Cross Water Safety courses.
9. Counselors are asked not to use whistles, as they cause confusion and conflict with the lifeguard whistles.
10. The lifeguards may on occasion inform day camps that a beach is at its maximum swimming safety capacity. The lifeguard staff will offer alternative beach locations to visit.