
Junior Development Resource – Educating and developing our youth

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Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) has over 150,000 members of which approximately 40% are Junior Activity Members (Nippers) between the ages of 5–12 years. This membership category continues to experience ongoing substantial growth. The Junior Development Resource designed to ensure that children from the ages of 5–12 have fun at the beach while participating in lessons that will pathway them to becoming a lifesaver. It was developed by SLSA and has been implemented nationally over the past two seasons for the use in the delivery of nipper activities.

The Objectives of the Junior Development Resource are to:

- To provide the best possible lifesaving experience for all juniors with the view to encouraging long-term active participation
- To provide opportunities for juniors to participate in and enjoy lifesaving and competition in an aquatic environment by offering a wide variety of activities suited to the skill and maturation levels of all juniors
- To ensure the juniors are safe on Australia's beaches through the provision of surf safety education programs
- To develop a team based philosophy encompassing leadership, camaraderie, teamwork, and fun
- To promote social, emotional and physical growth and development in a healthy and safe environment

The Junior Development Resource pathways knowledge and skills learning outcomes through lessons that are tailored to each of the age groups; ensuring the content is relevant, in line with lifesaving and surf sports most up to date training standards and most of all, is exciting! The program is based on participatory evaluation and not assessed on competence; this means participants must only be actively involved in each of the lessons to be eligible for the award for their age group. This introduces juniors to surf life saving where fun takes priority over being 'tested'. It covers a variety of topics and activities from surf safety, sun safety, personal safety, first aid, communication, preventative actions, patrolling to the board paddling, surf swimming, beach sprinting, beach flags and a variety of surf sports skills.

The Junior Development Resource comprises of a number of resources for the effective delivery of activities, these include an Age Managers Guide (for those delivering the program), Age Guides (one stop shop for the delivery of activities), Recordsheets, Worksheets, Certificates and a Passport.

The resource has been well adopted due to its flexibility and ease of use particularly for those new to Surf Life Saving. It is currently being expanded with a range of additional resources to assist age managers in the delivery of skill development (swimming, paddling etc), these include photographic flipcharts showing various stages and aspects of each skill and a DVD demonstrating the skills.

This session will explore and share the development, content, implementation and importance of the Junior Development Resource. It will address and demonstrate the delivery of lifesaving sport and development in youth.

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