



Organising a “Try Sailing” Day

One of the most effective ways of getting started or involving more people is to organise a day when people with disabilities can come and try various types of sailing. It could be the turning point in people’s lives but will require careful planning, promotion and publicity.

Consider getting in touch with Yachting New Zealand’s *Sailing...Have a go!* Programme, Local Sailability groups, Halberg Disability Sports Foundation or your local Parafed. All have experience running similar programmes.

Planning

Like all new activities, every effort should be made to ensure that the first experience is a good one:

- Have at least one person with a disability on your planning committee
- Involve the members and council of the sailing club
- Start planning as early as possible; make an action timetable
- Choose the date with care to avoid other major events at the club or in the area
- Survey the sailing area for hazards
- Avoid extremes of weather
- Persuade people to make their boats available
- Check facilities are accessible at the club
- Develop a plan for alternative activities if the weather is bad
- Enlist a team of competent helpers
- Know who will make decisions on the day, particularly in relation to safety and weather

Promotion

To reach as many people with disabilities as possible, contact: Local organisations for disabled sports and other activities, local rehabilitation centres and disability support services, local councils and local Schools.

Publicity

To promote disabled sailing and report on the activity, contact:

- Local newspapers
- Local television and radio
- Community/organisation newsletters.

Advance Information

Make sure that everyone knows:

- What to expect from the day, the programme, club facilities, catering etc.
- How to reach the venue
- To bring spare clothing
- Likely expenses during the day.

Funding

Most 'Have-a-try' days can be put on at almost no cost. Often it's possible to obtain grants from local government or sponsorship from local companies. Funding can be closely linked to promotion, and publicity can be arranged for the day. Consider charging a small fee.



Boats

Almost any craft will do provided it is:

- Reasonably stable
- Designed with a good sized, uncluttered cockpit
- Sensible for the sailing conditions at the venue.
- It's a good idea to have a range of boats available and to offer a choice of sailing activities

Volunteers

A team of well briefed, competent and enthusiastic boat owners and helpers is essential for a successful day. Be sure that they:

- Know what is expected of them in terms of time and activity
- Know how best to help
- Are competent for their allotted tasks
- Can be identified as volunteers with badge, T-shirt etc.

Club Facilities

It is not essential to have perfect, accessible facilities before you host a 'Have-a-try' day.

Much can be done with temporary ramps, rented accessible portable toilets, tents and clear signposting. It is important however, to check that the following can be made accessible for wheelchair users and those with mobility difficulties, visual impairment etc.

- Jetties and foreshores (beaches)
- Toilets
- Change rooms
- Refreshment areas

Extra Equipment

It's a good idea to have:

- Chairs in areas where people may have to wait
- Cushions for protection, comfort and stability

Clothing

Be sure that you have an adequate supply of:

- Buoyancy aids/lifejackets
- Water/windproof clothing. (Unclaimed club lost property is a good source!)

Safety & First Aid

People with disabilities are no more likely to need first aid or medical attention than anyone else. But with extra people at the club, it is sensible to check that you have adequate first aid and rescue facilities.

Follow-up Information. It's useful to prepare an information sheet for people to take away with them. Include details such as:

- Names and telephone numbers
- Places to sail
- Types of sailing
- Cost of sailing
- A brochure on the national organisation for disabled sailing