

# How to Conduct Longfellow's WHALE Tales



## INTRODUCTION

The American Red Cross believes that one way to help reduce drownings in children ages 5–12 is to teach water safety education in elementary schools and other youth programs. The American Red Cross created Longfellow's WHALE Tales to help teachers and youth leaders in teaching children about safe behavior in, on and around the water. The materials in this education packet are designed to give children an awareness of being safe around the water and to help promote healthful aquatic recreation.

Commodore Wilbert E. Longfellow started the Red Cross Lifesaving Corps in 1914 to train volunteers in the methods of lifesaving and resuscitation (Figure 1). His next step was to provide large-scale instruction in swimming. The Commodore's teaching philosophy was to "entertain the public hugely while educating them gently." He did just that. In tribute to Commodore Longfellow, who was known as the "amiable whale," the mascot for the education packet and the video is Longfellow, a blue whale (Figure 2).



Figure 1, Commodore Wilbert E. Longfellow



Figure 2, Longfellow the Whale

## PRESENTING LONGFELLOW'S WHALE TALES

### Leaders

The information and materials in this packet are developed for use by elementary school teachers and youth leaders. No prior swimming experience or water safety training is necessary for an individual to lead the activities in this packet. Responsibilities for leaders are outlined below.

To help leaders in the presentation of information, a video clip of a model demonstration of a Longfellow's WHALE Tales presentation is included on this CD-ROM. The purpose of the video clip is to provide leaders an example on which they can model their presentations.

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## Design and Length

Longfellow's WHALE Tales is designed to be flexible to meet the needs of the students. A leader can pick or choose an activity from any of the safety topics when making a presentation. There is no set format and no minimum or maximum amount of time to present the information.

## Presentation Reporting

Leaders should complete the [Aquatics Leader Activity Report](#). The activity report and the directions for completing the form are included on this CD-ROM. The activity report should be submitted to your local Red Cross chapter. Reporting any presentations helps to document the impact (e.g., number of persons reached) of the program. The collection of participant names and contact information is optional; however, leaders and chapters are encouraged to gather this information so that participants may be contacted and provided with opportunities of involvement with their local Red Cross chapter.

## Awarding Certificates

Leaders should photocopy or print [certificates](#) for each student attending a presentation. Customizable certificates for you to use are found on this CD-ROM.

## Leader Evaluation Form

This [evaluation form](#) allows the leader to provide feedback to the local Red Cross chapter after conducting a presentation. Leaders should complete both pages and return the form to the local Red Cross chapter.

## EDUCATION PACKET DESIGN

Before you conduct a presentation, familiarize yourself with the contents of the *American Red Cross Longfellow's WHALE Tales K-6 Educational Packet*. The packet includes the following components:

- **Safety Topics.** Lessons for 11 safety topics include key terms, objectives, equipment and supplies list and a format that facilitates instruction. The format consists of an introduction, activities with recommended grade levels, suggested activity sheets and a review.
- **Fact Sheets.** Fact sheets provide the leader with additional information. The fact sheets can be used to expand the lessons if desired.
- **Activity Sheets.** Sixty one reproducible activity sheets support the safety topics. Leaders can choose activity sheets best suited for their students' needs. Activity sheets can be used as an activity in the classroom or the students can take the sheets home as an assignment.
- **Posters.** Eleven color posters provide visual support and reinforcement for each safety topic. The images on the posters are also provided electronically on this CD-ROM and can be used as a handout to students or be projected on a screen using an LCD projector.

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## **Educational Packet Contents**

The *Longfellow's WHALE Tales K-6 Water Safety Educational Packet* contains a CD-ROM and a set of 11 color posters. The CD-ROM contains the following:

- Eleven safety topic lessons for the leader
- Safety topic fact sheets for the leader
- Sixty one reproducible activity sheets and answers
- Electronic versions of the 11 color posters
- Certificates
- *Aquatics Leader Activity Report* form
- A model demonstration of a Longfellow's WHALE Tales presentation video clip

## **Supporting Materials**

In addition to the *Longfellow's WHALE Tales K-6 Educational Packet*, the *Longfellow's WHALE Tales DVD* and stickers are resources available to support and reinforce presentations. These optional resources are listed in the materials, equipment and supplies section of appropriate safety topic lessons.

## **Longfellow's WHALE Tales DVD**

The *Longfellow's WHALE Tales DVD* supports and provides a visual presentation of nine of the safety topics. It contains the following segments:

- Swim with a Buddy in a Supervised Area
- Be Cool, Follow the Rule
- Look Before You Leap
- Reach or Throw, Don't Go
- Don't Just Pack It, Wear Your Jacket
- Think So You Don't Sink
- Too Much Sun Is No Fun
- In Your House and in Your Yard, Watch for Water, Be on Guard
- Wave, Tide or Ride, Follow the Guide

## **Longfellow's WHALE Tales Stickers**

The stickers support the safety topics and activities in each lesson. The stickers can also be used for safety fairs or other events to promote water safety and as recognition awards.

## **LEADER RESPONSIBILITIES**

Your responsibilities when conducting a Longfellow's WHALE Tales presentation are to—

- Provide for the health and safety of participants by always ensuring that—
  - Participants know that they should consult with you if they have concerns about their physical ability to perform or participate in any of the skills.

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- The classroom and practice areas are free of hazards.
- Be familiar with the presentation materials and training equipment, and know how to use them effectively.
- Be familiar with the local Red Cross chapter services and be able to provide participants with information on training and volunteer opportunities with the Red Cross. Additional information is also available at [www.redcross.org/en/volunteertime](http://www.redcross.org/en/volunteertime).
- Create a non-threatening environment that encourages participants to achieve the learning objectives.
- Adapt your teaching approach to match the experience and abilities of the participants.
- Be prepared to answer participants' questions or know where to find the answers.
- Provide a positive example by showing healthy habits when interacting with participants.
- Sign the *Leader Agreement and Code of Conduct*. The *Leader Agreement and Code of Conduct* is signed by both the leader and a chapter representative. The general purpose of this agreement is to provide both parties with an outline of the mutual expectations, rights and responsibilities of the leader and the local Red Cross chapter.
- Report any presentations conducted to the local Red Cross chapter.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This CD-ROM includes the history, mission and structure of the American Red Cross. [To learn more about the Red Cross, click here.](#)

For more information about American Red Cross and to learn more about American Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety, Lifeguarding and First Aid and CPR/AED programs, visit the Red Cross Web site at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org).