

Knowledge that lasts a lifetime: Ellie Boyles (age 11), Ultán Gillespie (age 6), Cormac Lyons (age 8) and Jack Boyles (age 9) collect their certificates at the Port a Chabhlaigh Summer Week, Kilcar, Co. Donegal.

**BETTER SAFE
THAN SORRY**



Photo: Deirdre Kennedy

Calendar 2022

A Message from the Chair of Water Safety Ireland

**BETTER SAFE
THAN SORRY**



On the 8th of December, I was delighted and very proud to accept my appointment as Chair of Water Safety Ireland. When making this announcement, the Minister for Rural and Community Development, Heather Humphreys TD, paid particular tribute to our organisation's rich history of volunteerism and the deep commitment shown by volunteers who teach swimming and lifesaving and promote drowning prevention initiatives nationwide.

We can certainly be proud of the fact that we are consistently to the fore in raising awareness of the

dangers of drowning and this is so well reflected in communities nationwide in which our members educate and train thousands of people in water safety best practices.

My objective is to continue our efforts to bring drownings down further by promoting the necessary rescue skills, attitudes and behaviours. I very much look forward to working with the WSI Council and engaging its Commissions, our thirty Water Safety Area Committees nationwide and the members, Local Authorities, and other Agencies to develop policies and projects that help encourage more participation and engagement at all levels. Over the next five years as Chairperson I look forward to providing leadership to the Council in the continued delivery of Ireland's National Drowning Prevention Strategy 2018-2027, and the strategic development of the organisation. Overall drowning rates have continued to decrease over the decades and in addition to your efforts in this regard, I thank the outgoing Chair Martin O'Sullivan for his commitment to the many tasks at hand and the WSI staff for the support they give to drowning prevention.

This calendar captures some highlights from the past twelve months and is brought to you with the kind support of several sponsors. I wish to thank you for the tremendous voluntary work you have undertaken nationwide over the last year and for many years previous. The last two years have been especially demanding due to the challenges of COVID-19, which affected our teaching, training of Lifeguards, summer weeks,

lifesaving sport and all our other activities. I would again like to thank our outgoing Chair leading the organisation in a very professional manner during these challenging times. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, we still managed to do quite a number of our activities, albeit at reduced capacity in some cases. The Sports Commission managed a national outdoor competition – our National Lifesaving Championships – at the beginning of October in Kilkee, Co. Clare. Our Water Safety Area Committees managed to run summer weeks following a new standard operating procedure and while numbers were curtailed, thankfully some venues were able to operate. We made changes to our Lifeguard training regime to ensure that beaches, pools and waterways had trained qualified Lifeguards on duty. Our winter courses are also proceeding following Government guidelines and a specific standard operating procedure agreed by our Technical Committee. From this perspective I especially wish to highlight the excellent work of our Winter and Summer Course Organisers over many years and look forward to meeting as many of you as possible throughout my tenure.

The number of lives saved and aquatic accidents avoided as a result of the work carried out by all of our active volunteers can never be fully enumerated, although one figure that brings home the importance of this work is the number of rescues performed by Lifeguards each year, a figure which reached 473 this summer. These same Lifeguards, trained and assessed by Water Safety Ireland, administered first aid on over 6,000 occasions and reunited with their loved ones, more than 500 children found wandering alone by the water's edge.

I want to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to each of the Committees, Commissions and Working Groups, who have remained focused throughout the year.

While Covid-19 continues to present challenges, the Inshore Rescue Boats Commission provided safety cover for our surf championships and organised two I.R.B courses throughout the year. WSI's Lifeguard Commission modified the Lifesaving and Lifeguard Syllabi for use during the Covid-19 period, and tailored the Local Authority Beach Lifeguard Tests for nationwide use in both pool and open water settings.

Risk Assessments were a priority activity for the Rescue Commission in 2021, particularly on Blue Flag Beaches, as well as reviewing the VAT inspection process in line with recent SAR developments.

I would like to recognise the Education Committee and Strategic Marketing

Committee for targeting at-risk groups with initiatives to highlight best practice so that drownings are reduced. These initiatives and public awareness campaigns endeavour to keep water safety in the public consciousness all year round. Through continued government funding and sponsorship, we were able to reinforce our 'Better Safe Than Sorry' brand message across audio, print and digital promotions. One such initiative this year is our "Hold Hands" programme for Early Learning Centres which empowers creches to start teaching water safety at a very early age.

An important and indeed historic day for the drowning prevention community in Ireland during 2021 was the approval by the United Nations of the first ever resolution on drowning prevention which will be marked annually on the 25th of July. We are grateful to the many Lifeguards, parents and children, heritage sites and the range of buildings and organisations that in some way went blue to mark the occasion. We hope that you will engage with this initiative and help it to grow in the years to come.

At this time of year in particular, our thoughts are with the families of those members who have passed away. I am also conscious of the number of members who have lost family members themselves. We extend our deepest sympathies to all families who are feeling their loss. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha.

I wish to thank each member of the Council for their commitment and dedication to ensuring that 2021 projects were successfully completed. I look forward with confidence to the continued growth of our organisation and a future free of Covid-19 related hinderances.

The staff of Water Safety Ireland's Head Office provide essential support all year round. Without them we could not deliver on our objectives. I would like to thank them for their continued hard work and especially in adapting to the new arrangements resulting from Covid-19.

As we conclude 2021, I wish you and your loved one's good health and happiness for the festive season. I hope you enjoy the fellowship of friends new and old and cherish the company of family, in this season of loving and sharing.

Clare McGrath

Chair
Clare McGrath

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January 2022

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Amanda Cambridge, early learning water safety advocate pictured at the launch of Hold Hands at Government Buildings, Water Safety Ireland's new education programme for Early Learning Centres. Find out more at www.holdhands.ie. Photo: Julien Behal

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
31 Deadline for WSACs to submit year-end financial reports					1 New Year's Day	2
3 Public Holiday	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21 The Holiday World Show, Belfast	22 The Holiday World Show, Belfast	23 The Holiday World Show, Belfast
24	25	26	27	28 The Holiday World Show, Dublin	29 The Holiday World Show, Dublin	30 The Holiday World Show, Dublin

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February 2022

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A surf ski training session for Junior competitors takes place at Brittas Bay, Co. Wicklow. Photo: Heidi Shiel

Notes:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	1	2 Council Meeting	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17	18	19 National Pool Championships, UL Sport Arena, Limerick – Junior, Senior & Masters	20 National Pool Championships, UL Sport Arena, Limerick – Junior, Senior & Masters
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						



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March 2022

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Aoibheann Kearins, Dionne Tims, Christopher Nicholson, Eimear Kearins and Holly Davis pictured during a Summer Week at Aughris Pier, Co. Sligo. Photo: Lisa Dunne

Notes:

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	1 Shrove/ Pancake Tuesday	2 Ash Wednesday	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day – Leinster Nippers Stillwater Championships, NAC, Dublin	18	19 Munster Nippers Stillwater Championships, UL Sport Arena, Limerick	20
21	22 World Water Day	23	24	25 Irish Skipper Expo 2022	26 Irish Skipper Expo 2022	27
28	29	30	31			



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April 2022

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Private Aaron Behan receiving his National Instructor Award at the Curragh Camp Swimming Pool, Co. Kildare from Graham Malone, Chairman of Water Safety Ireland – Defence Forces.
Photo: Graham Malone

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6 Council Meeting	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 Good Friday Nippers National Pool Championships, NAC, Dublin	16	17 Easter Sunday
18 Easter Monday Public Holiday	19	20	21 Water Safety Development Officer's Conference, Kerry	22 Water Safety Development Officer's Conference, Kerry	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30 IRB Training Course/ Revalidation, Venue TBC	

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May 2022

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Instructors Hannah Sheahan, Caoimhe Teahan, Amy Fitzgerald and Catriona O'Shea pictured alongside parent volunteer John Fitzgerald and area contact Marian Kelly at Coonanna Summer Week, Co. Kerry. Photo: Amy Fitzgerald

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
30	31					1 IRB Training Course/ Revalidation, Venue TBC
2 Public Holiday	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 European Maritime Day	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29

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June 2022

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*Spectators offer their encouragement to the competitors at the National Lifesaving Championships, Kilkee, Co. Clare.
Photo: Simon Lazewski*

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
		1 Council Meeting	2	3	4	5
6 Public Holiday	7	8 World Oceans Day	9	10	11	12
13 National Water Safety Awareness Week	14 National Water Safety Awareness Week	15 National Water Safety Awareness Week	16 National Water Safety Awareness Week	17 National Water Safety Awareness Week	18 National Water Safety Awareness Week	19 National Water Safety Awareness Week
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27 Nationwide Summer Classes Commence	28	29	30 Deadline for WSACs to request grant			

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July 2022

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Westport, Co. Mayo goes blue for World Drowning Prevention Day on July 25th. Photo: Patricia Flynn

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 World Drowning Prevention Day	26	27	28	29	30	31

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August 2022

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Children participate in classes at Loughrea Lake Summer Week, Co. Galway. Photo: Eleanor Burke

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
1 Public Holiday	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Council Meeting	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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September 2022

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Odhran Savage and Tom Breen, both Co. Waterford compete at the National Lifesaving Championships at Kilkee, Co. Clare.
Photo: Simon Lazewski

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 World Suicide Prevention Day	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy to 3rd OCT.
19 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	20 National Ploughing Championships, Laois	21 National Ploughing Championships, Laois	22 National Ploughing Championships, Laois	23 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	24 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	25 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy
26 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	27 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	28 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	29 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	30 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy		

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October 2022

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Marking World Drowning Prevention Day on July 25th were –
(l to r) Gary Knox (Chairperson, Water Safety Ireland – Kilkenny),
Claire Dunphy (PRO, Water Safety Ireland – Kilkenny),
Lisa Power (Secretary, Water Safety Ireland – Kilkenny) and
Andrew McGuinness (Mayor of Kilkenny). Photo: Claire Dunphy.

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
31 Public Holiday Halloween					1 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	2 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy
3 World Lifesaving Championships 2022, Riccione, Italy	4	5 Council Meeting	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

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November 2022

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Three generations of Co. Cavan lifesavers pictured at Fitzpatrick Shore Loch Gowra during the Summer Swimming Programme – (l to r) Courtney Corcoran, Lorraine Partington and Helen O'Hara.

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29 National Awards Ceremony	30				

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December 2022

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Pictured at an event for National Services Day 2021 were – (l to r) Sean O’Keeffe (Deputy Chairperson, Water Safety Ireland – Cork), Taoiseach Micheál Martin TD, Anne Curtin and Eoin O’Driscoll (Chairperson, Water Safety Ireland – Cork).

Notes:



MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
			1	2	3	4
5 World Volunteer Day	6	7 Council Meeting	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day
26 St. Stephen's Day	27	28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve	

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Water Safety Ireland

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...the statutory, voluntary body and registered charity established to promote water safety and reduce drownings in Ireland.

Our focus is on Public Awareness and Education. Tragically, an average of 115 people drown in Ireland each year, almost ten every month. We strive to reduce these fatalities by increasing water safety awareness and by changing attitudes and behaviours so that our aquatic environments can be enjoyed with confidence and safety.

WHAT WE DO:

1. Education:

- a) An education syllabus that teaches swimming, lifesaving, water confidence, safety, survival, rescue skills and basic life support;
- b) Courses are provided nationwide to the general public and also to children as part of the primary school curriculum in classrooms, pools and open water nationwide;

- c) Many qualifications such as our Pool and Beach Lifeguarding Awards are recognised internationally;
- d) Beach Lifeguards are trained and tested by our examiners for the Local Authorities prior to the annual summer season each year;
- e) Trained Lifesavers compete in provincial and national Lifesaving Championships and at International level;
- f) Risk Assessments on bathing areas and waterways nationwide that may pose a particular risk to the public, in order to make them safer;
- g) Train and examine rescue boat crews for the Community Inshore Rescue Services and administer associated VAT refunds.
- h) Water safety training for those working near aquatic environments in the public and private sector.

2. Promotion:

- a) Research, analysis and publication of drowning statistics that inform policy and enable effective targeting of those at risk of drowning;

- b) National and local media to build a public awareness of coastal and inland water safety;
- c) Publications, courses, advice and campaigns in print and online that promote water safety and target at-risk groups in all aquatic activities so that the public adheres to best practices;
- d) Supporting the work of over 5,000 volunteer members and those volunteering and commercially delivering swimming, lifesaving and basic life support training;
- e) A National Water Safety Awards Ceremony that includes the "Seiko Just-In-Time" Rescue Award and other awards that recognise volunteerism and partnerships that promote water safety at national and local level.

3. Partnerships:

- a) Local Authorities, state agencies, private enterprises and coroners on matters relating to water safety, the provision of Public Rescue Equipment and Lifeguarding locations nationwide;
- b) The Marine Safety Working Group and the Irish Marine Search and Rescue Committee to promote maritime safety;

- c) A range of organisations to help reduce the high number of drownings by suicide;
- d) Conferences, lectures and demonstrations to Local Authorities, Government Agencies, NGO's, schools, Colleges and members of the public.



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