

Kids to the Rescue

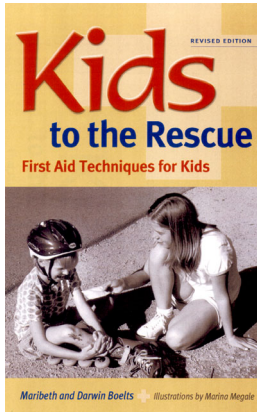
First Aid—Even for First Graders: Teaching Tips for the Classroom

by Maribeth Boelts and Linda Carlson

Objectives:

- Introduce the concept of first aid;
- Teach basic first aid skills;
- Use humor to relieve fear of medical emergencies;
- Introduce community resources; and
- Reinforce lessons for greater effectiveness

Background for instructor:



Learning first aid is both important and interesting to children. And it's not hard to teach—to kids of almost any age.

If a 5-year-old can skip, balance on one foot and write a name, why shouldn't she be taught to dial 9-1-1? Is there any reason he shouldn't be taught to apply direct pressure to a cut? As they are learning the names of the parts of their bodies, why shouldn't young children be taught to take care of these bodies?

Kids are excited about learning first aid because it's one more step in becoming independent. It's also a lesson that is best taught with hands-on exercises—and what could be more fun?

In one elementary school, groups of third and fourth graders acted out all of the first aid situations in *Kids to the Rescue* in a school assembly. Using gauze, tape, a couple of bikes and the “stove” from the kindergarten classroom—along with many dramatic expressions—they both amused and instructed their youthful audience. The actors learned a lot, too.

That doesn't mean you need an acting minor to teach first aid in your class. You don't need any medical training, either. As a matter of fact, you don't even have to be a teacher.

Written so parents and kids can learn together, *Kids to the Rescue* makes first aid easy to understand and practice, regardless of your background. It's an excellent refresher course for adults who learned basic first aid years ago. Whether you're a teacher, the school nurse, or a classroom volunteer, here are some suggestions on incorporating *Kids to the Rescue* in your curriculum. (If you're a Cubmaster, Camp Fire leader, or home-schooling parent, you'll find several ideas you can use, too.)



Maribeth and Darwin Boelts, authors of *Kids to the Rescue: First Aid Techniques for Kids*. For more information about them, see www.ParentingPress.com/media.html.

Curriculum suggestions:

1. Use *Kids to the Rescue* in the science or health units that cover the human body.
2. When you're launching a first aid unit, allow time for kids to talk about their injuries. You'll generate excitement for the material if you let students describe their casts, stitches, scrapes and emergency room visits.
3. Kick off or conclude your first aid unit by inviting the school nurse, a paramedic, firefighter, emergency room doctor or nurse or a Red Cross volunteer to speak briefly and explain his or her first aid supplies.
4. If emergency personnel such as paramedics and firefighters can't come to you, arrange a field trip to the local fire station, hospital ER room or emergency dispatch center.
5. Create skits about emergency situations and appropriate first aid treatment. Skits are so much fun—and what better way for kids to learn first aid and practice writing and public speaking?

Creating these one-act plays also lets kids develop teamwork, artistic and dramatic skills. (Just imagine the moans, groans, fainting spells and catsup “blood!”) The repetition involved in researching, writing and then presenting first aid information will reinforce the lessons, too.



Skit #1: “Help!”

Help your students create skits using the accident situations presented in *Kids to the Rescue*. Then invite other classes (or another Cub Scout or Brownie group) to your presentation.

If desired, use posterboard to create signs to introduce each skit topic: “Cuts,” “Burns,” or “Shock.”

Each emergency situation will take three to five minutes. Allow about an hour, including introduction, set changes and conclusion, if you’re demonstrating seven to 10 first aid treatments.

Scripts can follow the scenarios outlined in *Kids to the Rescue*. Or, as kids on stage experience an emergency and wonder out loud what to do next, an actor planted in the audience can stand up and exclaim, “Stop! Let me help!” and run up to administer the correct first aid. This will be more effective if done only once or twice. Alternately, the kids on stage can be about to administer the wrong first aid (for example, touching blood) when someone shouts, “No, stop! Remember not to touch!” The actors on stage can reply, “Thanks! Now we remember,” and go on to demonstrate the correct treatment. Or the actor in the audience can leave his or her seat to go to the stage.

Skit Variations

- When the skits are over, have one of your students dress up as a doctor and test the audience using the quiz at the end of *Kids to the Rescue*.
- immortalize kids’ creativity by videotaping their skits. Put a copy of the video in the school library, so it can be used for years to come whenever health is taught. Make sure there’s a copy available to show at parent open houses, too.
- Encourage careful attention to skits by scheduling your own “Academy Awards,” with ballots handed out before the performances so kids can vote on best script, best actor and best special effects. This works especially well if you have skits by several different groups.

Suggested materials

- Copies of *Kids to the Rescue*, revised edition, published by Parenting Press (800-992-6657, www.ParentingPress.com)
- Appropriate props for each emergency situation, including:
 - Catsup or other red liquid for “blood”
 - Watch or clock with large face
 - Garden hose
 - Tissue, handkerchief or garment such as sock to press against “wound”
 - Telephone

Optional

Posterboard and pens for signs

Additional equipment for doctor’s quiz

- White lab coat or white dress shirt (long or short-sleeved)
- Toy or real stethoscope
- Clipboard and copy of pages 67-69 from *Kids to the Rescue*, revised edition

Additional equipment for videotaped variation

- Video camera
- Videotapes
- VCR and television

Additional equipment for “Academy Awards”

- Ballots
- Certificates or trophies for award winners

Skit #2: Broadcast News

Combine theatrics and journalism by creating your own “Evening News: Health Alert” broadcast-style skit.

Have students interview staff, faculty, parents and other students about how to handle the accident situations presented in *Kids to the Rescue*. The news “hook” could be a statistic such as the increase in accidents during the summer vacation from school or the number of accidents that occur at home. (Older kids might do an Internet search for applicable information.)

If you’d like to include video clips in your news program, videotape the interview subjects. Then have the kids write up a first aid how-to story and present it with a news-style skit, complete with anchors at a desk.

Variation: Have two or three sets on your stage for a skit your students have scripted. Anchors sit at their desk in the middle set and ask for “on location” reports from the journalists doing live “man in the street” interviews on the other sets.

Here’s an idea to get your script started:

Anchor 1: “Accidents involving children increase significantly once school is out.”

Anchor 2: “Tonight, on our exclusive Health Alert, we’ll poll local residents about first aid techniques.”

Anchor 1: “You’ll see how important first aid is, especially this time of year—and [sternly] how many of us need to improve our first aid skills.”

Anchor 2: “Let’s cut to Reporter Rick, on location, as he discusses cuts and burns with passersby.”

Lights shining on anchors dim and they brighten on Reporter Rick, on another set. (Optional scenery: backdrop of ocean and beach umbrella)

Reporter Rick: “Running on the beach: it’s fun, but what happens when you cut your foot on a piece of glass or sharp shell?”

He thrusts the microphone at a second actor (optional costume: swimsuit) . . .

If this actor describes the correct first aid treatment for cuts, Reporter Rick should praise him and then say, “Back to Health Alert for more first aid questions.” If this actor describes an incorrect treatment, Reporter Rick can turn to another actor walking through the set and ask the same question.

As time permits, the anchors can alternate between Reporter Rick and a second set, with each reporter discussing a different first aid situation. Optional: as the light on Reporter Rick and other reporters goes out each time, their backdrops can be changed to indicate different locations.

The skit should end with a conclusion by the anchors, referring to whether your community is well or poorly prepared for first aid situations. There could also be a commercial for a real or mock first aid class or a commercial for *Kids to the Rescue*.

Suggested materials

- Copies of *Kids to the Rescue*, revised edition, published by Parenting Press (800-992-6657, www.ParentingPress.com)
- Large table or desk and chairs for anchors
- Real or toy microphones for anchor desk
- Steno pads and pens for each reporter
- Earphones for each reporter on location

Optional

- Poster with broadcast station logo for behind anchor desk
- Video camera, VCR and television
- Lights for each set: floor lamps or powerful flashlights
- Location scenery such as painted backdrop of water and sand, beach chair and umbrella; painted backdrop of brick buildings and street sign; or sidewalk cafe with small tables and chairs, painted menu on wall or easel.
- Costumes for reporters (business suits) and those interviewed

Props for commercial:

- Copy of *Kids to the Rescue*, revised edition
- First aid kit
- Class registration form from local first aid course