

Risk Assessment: Lowering the Minimum Age Limit for Dragon Boating in Australia

Introduction:

The proposal is to lower the minimum age limit for dragon boating from 12 years old to 10 years old across Australia. This risk assessment will identify and evaluate the potential risks associated with this change.

Hazards and Risks:

1. **Physical Safety:** Dragon boating involves physical exertion and can be physically demanding, particularly for younger children. Risks include potential for injury, such as cuts and bruises, and possible drowning.
2. **Health and Well-being:** Young children may be more susceptible to illness or heat exhaustion, particularly in the warmer months. This could result in harm to their health and well-being.
3. **Psychological and Emotional Safety:** Children may feel overwhelmed or anxious when participating in dragon boating, particularly if they are not used to physical activity or if they are in a competitive environment.
4. **Skill and Ability:** Children may not have the necessary skills or abilities to participate in dragon boating safely, particularly if they have not had adequate training or experience.
5. **Equipment and Environment:** The boats and equipment used in dragon boating may not be suitable for younger children, and the environment may not be safe for them.

Control Measures:

1. **Physical Safety:** All participants, regardless of age, should be provided with appropriate personal protective equipment, such as life jackets and helmets. A trained and qualified first aider should be present at all times.
2. **Health and Well-being:** Participants should be encouraged to hydrate properly and to seek medical attention if they feel unwell. Parents or guardians should also be encouraged to monitor their children's health and well-being.
3. **Psychological and Emotional Safety:** Participants should be made aware of any potential psychological or emotional risks associated with dragon boating, and support should be available for anyone who may feel overwhelmed or anxious.
4. **Skill and Ability:** Children should receive adequate training and instruction prior to participating in dragon boating. This should include safety training and instruction on how to use the equipment.
5. **Equipment and Environment:** All equipment used in dragon boating should be checked regularly to ensure it is in good working order and safe for use. The environment should be checked to ensure it is safe for all participants, including younger children.

Conclusion:

By implementing the control measures outlined above, it is possible to lower the minimum age limit for dragon boating from 12 years old to 10 years old across Australia while minimizing the potential risks to participants. It is important to monitor the effectiveness of these control measures regularly and make any necessary adjustments to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants.