



St. Joseph Junior Foundation Parent Information Guide

Welcome to SJJF Sailing School!

We're excited to have your student sailing with us. The information below will help you and your child prepare for a successful and enjoyable week on the water. Please feel free to contact us at any time with questions:

info@sjjf.org

General Program Information

- Students learn to sail in their own boat or with a peer in an exciting hands-on program.
- Sailboats are assigned based on **student age, weight, and skill level**. Final placement is determined by the Director or Head Instructor. Students may be paired in multi-person boats by the Head Instructor.
- **No makeup** sessions are offered for missed classes. Due to the 4-day format, absences cannot be rescheduled.
- Follow us on **Facebook** for photos and announcements:
<https://www.facebook.com/StJosephJuniorFoundation>

Weather & Communication

- Please check with the director or head instructor upon arrival for changes to the day's lesson plan if weather appears to be a factor.
 - You may also call ahead: **269-983-5441**
- During storms, we often conduct an **extended indoor class** and plan to sail once conditions improve.
- All-day rain or storms may alter lesson plans and class duration.
- **Rain alone does not cancel class.**
 - Games and enrichment activities are often used during rain delays.
- **Air Quality Policy:** According to the EPA Air Quality Index, SJJF will implement an optional attendance policy for staff and students when the Index enters the Orange Level (Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups) and will cancel all classes for the day when the Air Quality Index reaches Red (Unhealthy) and above.

What to Bring on the First Day

Please have your student arrive prepared with:

- A **swimsuit and towel** — a swim check is conducted during the first class
 - The swim test requires students to tread water for 2 minutes and swim the length of the pool with a life jacket on.
- **Footwear that may get wet** or splashed
 - Footwear is required around the sailing school and docks
 - Students may go barefoot while in the boats
- **Sun protection:**
 - Sunscreen
 - Hat
 - Rash guard or long-sleeve shirt
- Optional:
 - **Snack or water bottle** for the end of class

Life jackets are provided.

Students are typically on the water for **2.5–3 hours** during most classes.

Daily Routine & Safety

- Each class begins with a short “**chalk talk**” introducing the day’s skills and goals.
- Instruction is hands-on, and student boats are always accompanied by instructors in **safety boats**. Help is always readily available.
- **Life jackets are required at all times:**
 - On the water
 - On the docks
 - During setup and cleanup
- **Setup & Cleanup** are part of the learning experience:
 - Students assist with rigging their boats
 - Students help derig boats and fold sails
 - Everyone participates — teamwork is expected

Facilities, Swimming, and Sailing Areas

- There is **one bathroom on site**.
- Students should wear **comfortable boating clothing**.
 - Long sleeves are sometimes needed for warmth or sun protection.
 - Footwear must be worn around dock areas at all times.

- Students should be **comfortable swimmers**.
 - A swim check is completed during the first class.
 - A capsize drill is taught during the first or second lesson.
 - Final participation decisions are made by the Director and Head Instructor.
- Sailing locations vary based on conditions:
 - Sailors may be towed in at the end of class to maximize time on the water.
 - In certain conditions, sailing may take place on the **river** or the **turning basin** rather than Lake Michigan for safety and instruction.

End of Class Procedures

- Parents may watch sailors return from the **observation deck** - typically about **15–20 minutes before class ends**.
- Please allow students to complete **cleanup and de-rigging without interruption**.
- After cleanup, students return to the classroom for a brief **debrief (3–5 minutes)** with instructors.
- **Class is not over when students return to the dock.**
 - Early departures are disruptive and discouraged.
- Optional enrichment:
 - Consider borrowing a **beginner sailing book** from the library to reinforce learning and comprehension.