

Sagamore Junior Sailing Program



PARENT HANDBOOK



Revision: February 8, 2025

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Welcome to the Sagamore Junior Sailing Program!

These pages are meant to be a parent's and future junior sailor's guide in navigating the child's way through the rewarding sport of junior sailing. In these pages you will find details on recommended equipment for the children to bring to the program, goals the program will focus for your child and the expectations of the parents themselves.

Sagamore Junior Sailing Mission

The Sagamore Junior Sailing (SJS) Fleet's Mission is to provide a fun and educational program for youth interested in sailing and racing. We seek to impart a love of sailing as a life sport while providing the fundamental skills necessary for participants to advance in the sport of sailing as far as their desire, skill and hard work may take them. Our instructors shall provide a curriculum with the most current and effective techniques to create skilled and confident youths who will respect others, care for their equipment and be willing to help fellow sailors on and off the water. Our sailors will be expected to conduct themselves in the Corinthian Spirit during instruction, practice and in competition. All Junior Fleet sailors, whether their interest be in cruising or racing, should emerge with an enhanced sense of self-reliance, knowledge of seamanship and a solid foundation in the sport of sailing.

An Overview of Junior Sailing

Junior Sailing can be like any other full-time sport such as baseball, soccer or tennis – what a child puts into it will determine what a child will get out of the program. Some of the skill sets that will be taught are self-reliance, working towards a goal, personal commitment and accountability. We believe the achievements of the above objectives will grow naturally through your child's competitive nature as their self-confidence is quietly fortified. We will balance the competitive drive with an emphasis on sportsmanship and fun. We also believe that while your child works on the above objectives in a sailing environment, it can only instill the appreciation of the outdoors as weather and the surrounding environment will be part of their sailing each and every day.

We feel that our junior sailing program is for every child that can swim, likes the water, and wants to sail. Rest assured, our program will undoubtedly get children away from screens and into an active, healthy and thought-provoking environment where new friends will be made as your child grows in a sport that is active from these young ages through the college years and well beyond.

Junior sailing is perfect for all children tall or short, young boys or young girls, as wit and tenacity in this sport does not care what age or gender you may be. Sailing is a true co-ed sport even at the college level and beyond. Some of the greatest sailors in the world are women. Presently our Olympic team boasts of some of the highest-ranking women in the sport.

What Junior Sailing has become:

- 1) Opportunity for young children to experience true independence, where they will learn a few skills, get in a boat and will grow as they feel the excitement of freedom and satisfaction of pure individual achievements.
- 2) A worldwide sport with opportunities for every child to excel regardless of gender, financial status or race.
- 3) Avenues to be great at an individual or team sport.
- 4) The beginning of a journey of a true lifelong friendship, where experience with nature is complimented by the high quality of the people that are met along the way.

Starting in the lifelong path of Sailing

Unlike many other sports, sailors have a very long sport lifespan. It is common to see sailors successfully competing into their 70s and beyond. The average span of most other athletes is less than 10 years and most amateurs are fading by the age of 40. An objective of all Junior Programs is to cultivate the love of sailing in children so they may grow in a sport that will warmly embrace their dedication for the rest of your child's life.

Generally, a child will start sailing in an Optimist at the age of 8 and will progress into the RS Feva when they are 11 or 12. Eventually they step up to the Laser (or Club 420) as early as 13 or 14 years old (depending on your child's size and weight) and through their college years. It is also not uncommon for young sailors, after a few years of sailing dinghies, to try out their knowledge as crew on larger boats in the sailing fleets in the harbor. Wednesday nights in Oyster Bay you can find some of these avid junior sailors assisting as racing crew on personally owned sailing vessels or on other days of the week, or through school, in boats from Oakcliff Sailing.



2025 SESSION DATES

The SJS 2025 Summer program will run in 8 week-long sessions from June 30 to August 22.

| Session | Dates |
|---------|---------------|
| 1* | 6/30 – 7/3 |
| 2 | 7/7 – 7/11 |
| 3 | 7/14 – 7/18 |
| 4 | 7/21 – 7/25 |
| 5 | 7/28 – 8/1 |
| 6 | 8/4 – 8/8 |
| 7 | 8/11 – 8/15 |
| 8** | 8/18 – 8/22** |

* There is no instruction on Friday July 4th

** Session 8 is subject to enrollment interest and counselor availability

Each day starts promptly at 9:30 am and ends at 4:30pm.





Junior Sailing Program Director

Christine Briggs

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516-316-3095

We hope the following information will help you and your child prepare for the first day of sailing class. Please reach out to program director Christine Briggs directly with questions and concerns. We're here to help!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Drop-off and Pick-up

Camp is in session from 9:30 am – 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. Drop-off and pick-up is around back of the Sagamore Yacht Club on the lawn.

Because instructors are busy planning and preparing for the day, often out on the water, no drop-off is allowed prior to 9:20 am.

The SYC Junior Sailing Program sails off of the Junior Sailing docks which are moored in Oyster Bay off of Center Island's Brickyard Point. We ferry participants between the SYC dock and the Junior Sailing dock at the beginning and end of each day. Therefore, it is essential that junior sailors do not arrive late. Since we often plan to immediately go out on the water, we cannot accommodate any late drop-off. After ~9:45 am there is a chance, we will already be heading out to the Junior Sailing docks in the mooring field.

Sometimes we spend the whole day on the water, sometimes we return to the club for lunch. Because we cannot leave sailors unsupervised on the water, it is not possible to accommodate any special drop-off/pick-up requests except for days that we return to the club for lunch (there is no specific schedule for the days or times when this occurs). Please coordinate in advance with the Program Director for any special lunch pick-up/drop-off requests and we will let you know if they can be accommodated.

Pick up is promptly at 4:30 pm. Late pick-up will be subject to a late pick-up charge.

For the safety of your children, the staff will not release your child to anyone other than you or a regular alternate without written permission. The parent or legal guardian must “check out” their sailors at Sagamore Yacht Club with the head instructor at the end of each day. There will be a daily sign-out sheet at the Hut where you can note different arrangements.

Daily Essentials

The Daily Essentials are as follows (everything should be labeled with the sailor’s name):

- **A proper-fitting U.S. Coast Guard approved life jacket is required**
- Recommend sailors wear a bathing suit (ok if under shorts/shirt/rash guard) or clothes that will be comfortable if they get damp/wet
- Sunglasses and hat, both with tether
- Non-marking, non-slip, closed-toe shoes (ex. Crocs, closed toe Teva’s, water shoes, not flip flops, open-toe sandals, or any other open toed shoe)
- Sunscreen (to be applied before arrival)
- Water bottle (bring freshly filled each day)
- Towel
- Foul-weather gear (yes, we sail in the rain)
- Extra layers for wind or chill (ex. fleece, windbreaker, rash guard)
- Change of clothes (suggest this is packed into a large ziplock bag)
- Lunch to be brought daily, a refrigerator/cooler will be made available for storage

Rain & Bad Weather

Classes will not be cancelled because of weather. In the case of bad sailing conditions, sailors will participate in alternate on and off-water instruction and games/activities. We will sail in light rain so be sure to bring appropriate rain gear and a change of clothes.

Safety

The Junior Sailing staff will err on the side of safety when making weather-related activity decisions. First aid kits are located on the Opti Dock and in every instructor’s boat. Guests may not participate in regular classes for reasons of safety, skill expectations, and class flow. If your child has medical conditions, please be sure to alert and discuss protocols with our head instructor who will relay this information to your child’s instructors.

Swim Test

During the first day of their first session of the summer, sailors are required to take and pass a swim test. The test is to ensure each participant is comfortable and capable in the water. Sailors will be asked to swim approximately 25 yards and tread water for one minute - while smiling, of course! The proper fitting of their USCG approved life jacket will also be verified on a sailor's first day. Children are required to wear their Life Jacket whenever near or on the water.

Cell Phones

Attention to the instruction and interaction between sailors, on or off the water, is important to us. Cell phone usage is not permitted during session hours except occasionally, for a short period, during lunch if we have returned to the club. If needed, we will let your child call you, but game playing, checking social media, etc. are not permitted during the instructional and programmed activity hours.

Code of Conduct

The Participant **Code of Conduct** should be printed out, signed by the sailor, and brought to their first day of sailing. The **Code of Conduct** can be found on the SJS website at:

<https://sagamoreyc.com/about/events-activities/junior-sailing/#Reg>

Emergency Plan

Sagamore Junior Sailing Program has a formal Emergency Plan to cover any unexpected medical issues. This plan includes how we notify parents and alternate pick-ups and your family doctor.

Communications and Website

Each week our director or head instructor will update the Junior Sailing community with recaps of the adventures of the past week and what the next week holds for the sailors via posts to our [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) pages. Please check the primary parent/guardian e-mail you used for all other announcements.

Sources for Sailing Gear

Remember – we sail even if it is raining and if the wind is from the East it also can be cool on the water!

West Marine
56 New York Avenue
Huntington, NY 11743
631 427 4210

The Dinghy Shop (best place for junior sailing equipment and answers for your questions)
334 South Bayview Ave
Amityville, NY 11701
(631) 264-0005

West Marine
16 Soundview Market Pl
Port Washington, NY 11050
516-944-1729

Frogg Toggs Polly Woggs Kids Rain Suit
(These are the least expensive gear for cold or rainy days we could find, and we recommend them)
<https://www.amazon.com/Frogg-Toggs-Polly-Woggs-Kids/dp/B007AK50K8?th=1>



Optimist Information

- Our primary boat is the Optimist Dingy. Optis are small, single-handed dinghies intended for use by children up to the age of 15. It is one of the most popular sailing dinghies in the world, with over 150,000 boats officially registered with the class. SJS owns a fleet of 16 Optimists
- Sailors who turn 8 by December 31st of the current program year are eligible to enroll in the SJS program. There is no minimum weight requirement for sailing or competing in Optis.
- Program-owned Optis will be available for all participants, but if your child has their own Opti, arrangements must be made to have their boat in the dinghy staging area prior to the first day of class with a complete inventory of required equipment.
- Opti Drop is to be scheduled prior to the commencement of your child's first day of class. Dollies will be on hand to assist in bringing boats down to the dinghy staging area. The launching and towing of these boats to the Opti Dock will be handled by the instructor.
- Be sure to label your boat with your child's name and which class they are participating in so that we can identify your boat.
- Be sure that all removable parts of your boat (rig, blades, etc.) are labeled with last name and sail number.
- Attach a labeled bailer to your boat. Please check your parts inventory against the enclosed Opti description before your first class!

- Space on the Opti Dock is extremely limited. When you are not registered for a sailing session, you need to find a place other than the Opti Dock to store your boat. Limited rack space is available in the SJS dry sail area – contact the SYC Dock Master for more info.
- Please be aware that most Optis on the Opti Dock are SJS owned. Several families have been generous enough to share their boats with others during class. Please do not use someone else's boat outside of class, unless you have the owner's permission and we have been notified by owner.



RS Feva Information

- An International Class with events around the globe, the RS Feva is new but a fast-growing option in the junior fleets around the US. The Feva is intended as a stepping stone for sailors who have grown out of the Opti but are light in weight and experience for a Laser or 420; her modern styling and practical features make the Feva irresistible to young sailors.

- Depending on experience and size, sailors 11 and up are often ready to start learning to sail a Feva.
- The performance and ease of sailing is the secret behind the Feva's success. With six new boats that arrived late in 2021, Sagamore Junior Sailing could not be prouder to be the first club in our area to offer these exciting, new, and fast boats.



Laser Information

- The Laser forms the base of many local, high school and collegiate programs in North America. Simple and safe for young sailors, yet challenging enough for collegiate and Olympic champions, the Laser offers learning opportunities for larger and more experienced sailors.
- If your child wishes to use their own Laser in the program, please contact us so we can arrange for proper storage and security.

The Syllabus – Beginners/Novices

For a beginning sailor, or those who would rather not race competitively, we have no expectations on their ability when starting the program. We expect to teach them:

- How to rig and launch their boat
- How to steer
- How to tack and gybe
- How to sail on a reach, downwind and upwind
- How to avoid other boats
- How to dock the boat safely
- What to do if you capsize
- Sailing/nautical nomenclature

Of course, if they already have some or all of these skills, we will concentrate on improving them, and can easily adjust to their more advanced level, perhaps including them in some of the racing program activities. Our emphasis at this time is on safety, familiarity with being on a boat and having fun.

The Syllabus – Intermediate/Advanced/Racing

For sailors who already have the beginning skills, we offer a more competitive opportunity. Both Optimis, Fevas, and Lasers are suitable for racing. We expect to teach:

- How to sail faster
- Basic rules of yacht racing
 - Avoiding collisions
 - Propulsion
 - Port/Starboard
 - Windward/leeward
 - Overtaking boat
 - Inside boat at the mark (very basic)
- How to avoid collisions
- The race course
- Starting
- Mark rounding
- Finishing
- How to join a tow
- Emergency 101

We will continue, as time and interest allow, with the following:

- Starting tactics

- Upwind tactics
- Downwind tactics
- Mark rounding tactics
- More advanced rules
- What to do if someone breaks a rule
- What to do if you break a rule
- Protest hearing basics
- Marlinspike Seamanship (knot tying)
- Predicting wind and current, and related tactics
- Running a sailboat race
- Spinnaker work

We are most interested in safety, sportsmanship and being able to actually complete a race. And, a little competitiveness. And, having fun is more important than winning each race. For those who do have more advanced skills, we can easily expand the tactics and rules sections, and there is always more to learn regarding boat speed.

As able, we plan to race informally against other organizations in Oyster Bay / Cold Spring Harbor and possibly some Junior Sailing Association (JSA) regattas that we would travel to. Our Program Manager will discuss plans with interested parents and will coordinate travel and transportation. She will also be with the children (and the parents) both on-shore and on the water throughout the summer.

Ready the sails and prepare for a fun summer on the water!

~ Sagamore Junior Sailing Committee ~