

Question: We have a little girl and a Glastron 29-foot cruiser. Our child frightens easily. How can we get her to feel good on the boat?

Sara, Sayville

Answer: Most people (children are little people) are frightened by the unknown. They become less apprehensive when each exposure to the feared experience proves that their expectations were unfounded. Though the old saying "Familiarity breeds contempt" may be true in some personal relationships, the reverse is true in conquering our fears.

The more your little girl comes aboard the boat and finds there is nothing to fear, the more she will become enthralled with the boating experience. Put her PFD on at home. Let her run around the house feeling as though she is a heroine wearing a special garment that transports her into a "world of adventure". Take her to the boat and spend time aboard while it is docked. Let her roam all over it and have her feel that it is her magical vehicle to imaginary lands. Bring toys and washable crayons aboard. I am told that there are crayons that will only color on the coloring book pages that they come with.

My companion, Rochelle, described to me the comparison that a man buys a "mistress" when he buys a boat and the woman in his life has to realize that she must either socialize with the two of them or lose him for periods of time. Likewise, a new "child" is brought into the family with a boat's purchase and the acceptance by the other siblings can be made pleasant or not by how they are introduced to each other.

Play captain and crew with her. Give her little jobs to do that are necessary for boat operation. Inform her of the importance of these jobs and how you trust her to do them well. Let her give out the PFDs to all the guests and crew. Again, reinforce the job's importance.

Let her be the crewman to perform the sniff test before entering the cabin. Remind her each time to tell you if she notices any strange odors emanating from the cabin when she opens the hatch slightly and sniffs before entering. She is sniffing for five odors that should not exist such as battery acid (leaking battery), cesspool odor (leaking head system), smoke (fire), burnt rubber or plastic (smoldering electrical wiring), mold (dampness). Knowing none of the above is present, she can open the hatch fully without fear of a fire flaring up from the additional oxygen



by *Captain Stan Glatzer*

A Child's Fears

Planing, Bow Up or Down

supply, knowing that there is no danger of an asthmatic person suffering from exposure to a noxious agent.

Make her feel important as a crew-member. Have her look at all the fire extinguishers and assure you that all the arrows are "in the green". Let her turn on the blower. If you display an ensign or American flag, let her unfurl and place it in the staff holder. These jobs can be given to any youngster who comes onboard as an introduction to boating.

When leaving the dock, after settling the child in a seat or making sure she is secure enough to remain standing should a sudden movement of the boat cause her to lose balance, make certain that your little girl is aware of everything that will occur. Horn signals are very frightening when sounded suddenly. Have the child sound the horn at home or when needed on the boat. Explain how important it is to use a horn and use it correctly. Heeling, motor sounds, changing rapidly, etc. are all foreign experiences and should be explained ahead of time, before they happen. Don't let anything surprise or shock her. Go Slowly! Eventually the child will say, "Daddy, I know that!", and you will know that your lessons have been worthwhile.

Repetition is the way to make something a habit. Review all lessons each time you come aboard. Your child and your guests will enjoy the cruise more. Many of your guests have the same fears as your little girl and they won't tell you. It's not cool! Remember you crawled before you

walked and walked before you ran.

Question: How do I know if I am up on plane correctly?

Mike, Smithtown

Answer: "Planing" is achieved when the boat has risen above the displacement mode and is riding on top of the water rather than pushing through it. Being up on plane and holding that attitude while at the lowest engine RPM possible provides the most economical gas consumption for your vessel. A misconception by many boaters is that the bow must be "up" so that the boat will ride above the waves. If the bow is up, the stern is down and this produces excess drag and causes slower speed and higher fuel consumption.

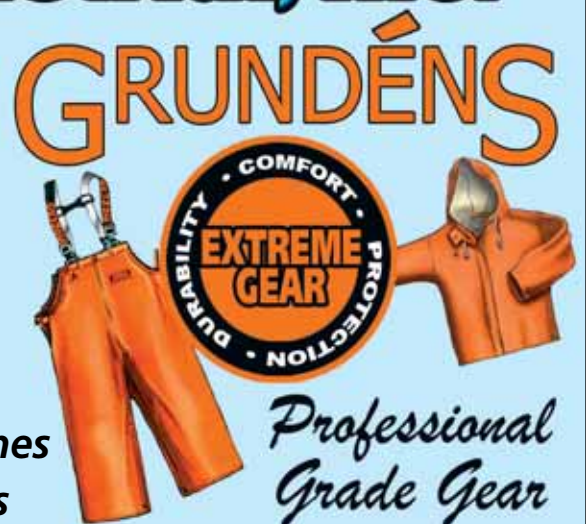
To be properly on plane, the vessel rides in a close-to-parallel line to the water. This usually exists when approximately the aft third of the vessel's hull is skimming the water's surface and the deck is level from stem to stern.

Most vessels today will get on a plane attitude at about 3,000 RPM. You may be able to maintain this position while decreasing the RPM by 100-200. This is your most economical cruising speed. You will notice a change in the engine sound when you reach plane speed, and on an I/O, you use the lower unit trim button to bring the bow down to the deck level position. Inboard engine-powered vessels make use of trim tabs only to change the vessel's attitude. Trim tabs can be raised to initiate a faster rise to planing and lowered to level once plane is achieved, similar to operation of the lower I/O unit.

Note: Use trim tabs to correct bow and stern attitude only. If your vessel is heeling, shift the weight on your boat or check for water below decks. On many cruisers, I have noticed, while at the inside helm, that I can bring the bow rail down to a position where it appears below the horizon. The engine will sound smoother and the vibration at your feet will decrease.

Remember: "A happy boat is a quiet boat." If you are pounding your hull on the water, you are going too fast for the comfort of your passengers. Excessive pounding stresses the hull and can result in hull failure and splitting in half. Be a Skipper (S) and boat with safety.

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