

# Aquatic Adventures

Bringing adaptive watersports to Lake Cumberland



Human Development  
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## Adaptive Watersports Demo Day

The Adaptive Watersports Demonstration Day at Lake Cumberland originated with an idea from Jason Campbell. Jason is a Physical Therapy Assistant from Somerset whose son is a quadriplegic. Jason brought together Easterseals and partners from Wake Cumberland Watersports, Lake Cumberland Marine, and the Physical Therapy Assistant program at Somerset Community College to make it happen.



### Live demonstration day

Easterseals secured funding through the Wellness Edge grant to purchase adaptive water skis and inner tubes for demonstration. Attendees were able to try the equipment on the water and had the Physical Therapy Assistants on site to help them learn to use it.



### Ongoing equipment use

Easterseals worked with the local teams to make this adaptive equipment, along with leisure equipment like adapted kayaks, available for use during the summer months to establish accessible watersports at the lake.

## Easterseals Bluegrass

Easterseals Bluegrass has served Central and Eastern Kentucky for nearly eight decades, and works with the national Easterseals organization to ensure everyone, regardless of age or ability, is 100% included and 100% empowered. Today, Easterseals Bluegrass offers adaptive recreation, adult day health, and the Creative Beginnings Child Development Center.

## Contact Easterseals

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# Assistive technology at the lake

**Activity: Water skiing.** In traditional water skiing, an athlete stands with a ski strapped to each foot (similar to snow skiing). A speedboat pulls the skier along on a rope held in the skier's hands. Skiers with disabilities might have trouble standing, holding the tow rope, or might need some extra support as the boat starts moving. In the 1970s and 1980s, skiers began to develop equipment to allow everyone to participate regardless of their ability level.



One of the earliest and most important developments was the **sit ski**. A sit ski merges the two skis in to a single board, with the beginner skis resembling a surfboard. Modern sit skis are available with different levels of seating support known as **cages**. The cage can help the skier stay upright and prevent them from being pulled off of their ski by the tow rope. Another common adaptation for beginners is the **triple bar**. A triple bar is essentially three tow handles that are attached side-by-side. The athlete holds the center bar while

instructors are placed on either side. As the boat begins to move, the instructors help the skier to gain and maintain their balance. Once the skier is comfortable, the triple bar separates. This allows the instructors to separate gracefully from the skier while the skier remains in position and with a standard-sized tow rope. Some skiers also find an **arm sling** useful. An arm sling is a strap that wraps around the shoulders or torso to help the skier hold on to the tow rope. These slings help skiers with a hand disability or who are missing an arm and are designed to break away from the tow rope automatically when the skier lets go.

**Activity: Tubing.** Another popular lake fun activity is being towed behind a boat on an inflatable.



Tubing is less physically demanding than skiing, requiring less balance and control. The tow rope is often attached to the towable rather than held in the hand which allows an even wider range of people to participate. An easy way to help people with balance or mobility problems to participate is using a towable meant for **two or more riders** like the Super Mable (above, left). By allowing space for more passengers, the

tuber with the disability can have a support person to ensure that they stay in position and help them recover from problems that might occur. Some models on the market include a **cockpit**, a recessed seating area that provides security and support for the rider like the Airhead Mach1 pictured to the right.



## Adaptive recreation at Lake Cumberland

[www.wakecumberlandwatersports.com](http://www.wakecumberlandwatersports.com)  
[www.nationalwheelcats.org](http://www.nationalwheelcats.org)



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Products featured above are intended as examples and are not endorsements or recommendations. Development of this resource supported by US Administration for Community Living grant 90PRRC0001.