**Comments without selecting one of the three survey responses**

Parents should do less, let kids play in boats

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Hitting the problem on all fronts is necessary. The kids experience all at varying times and they often overlap.

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I think everyone is doing all they can to support Junior sailing

The problem is the expense is much more than it was 20 or more years ago. After school years are over and one must work fewer kids can afford the time and expense. The talented kids have so much more to choose from in the way of sports and entertainment.

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How about an option 4 - all of the above - from over 30 years of experience (and raising 3 daughters through Junior sailing/Junior racing/high school racing/college racing) and who are all still sailing - and loving/liking it as adults, we need to make it more affordable (number one priority for young adults), less time consuming (priority number two for young adults), and finally, more fun for them - I suggest free or very inexpensive memberships to yacht clubs for anyone under 30, free junior tuition for any child under age 12 in basic learn to sail programs, and free use of keelboats for qualified junior sailors - I let all my kids take out and race my Mariah 27 and Wavelength 24 with just their friends, and no adults on board, and I am convinced that this helped to get them interested, and keep them interested in sailing big boats as adults.

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Inspiration for sailing comes from the heart. No organization can be a surrogate for that inspiration. Only a person, on his or her ship going boldly beyond the safety of the harbor can feel that inspiration and become a lifelong sailor. What are the key ingredients? A person, a boat, a body of water and the safety of a harbor. There are 7 billion persons on this planet, no problem there. A dinghy can be had for $50 or less, no problem there. 75% of the earth is covered by water, no problem there. A safe harbor... that would be our yacht clubs. Perhaps that's what we should focus on - access to the water. And since yacht clubs are gate keepers to water, yacht clubs could look at how they manage access for the purpose of creating opportunities for a greater swath of the 7 Billion persons to get on the water. Ouch that hurt!

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Get the youth sailors on keel boats day sailing, coastal sailing, navigating, overnighters, anchoring, and having fun sailing in a non competitive alternative.

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Make sailing less all encompassing for kids.

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None of the above is the right answer. There is a problem with surveys that only give you answers the author comes up with - no offense to the author - I just happen to have been well schooled in marketing research. So here is an "open ended question" answer.

US Sailing does a great job on their mission with competitive sailing. They are not designed to promote the sport in general. It is not in their DNA and it is not productive or fair to ask them to change that. Yacht Club management finds their own way based on their perception of the needs of their membership. This will never change, nor should it.

Adults cannot do it alone in a vacuum. Kids stop listening to them at some point. And if kids did not sail at some point early on, the chance of making them sailors once they are of parenting age is slim to none. And once they are 60, well . . . .

My suggestion is to do some real marketing research based on objective surveys of your target audience, people near water, without prejudice to existing organizations, yacht clubs, age or whatever. If you find out what motivates your target audience you win. If you make it an internal argument among existing organizations, all you have is an argument that will not be productive in the long run to get people outside those organizations to become long term sailors whether they want to launch a Sunfish or an ocean expedition someday.

See beyond the horizons without prejudice and you can achieve your dreams.

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There are too many new classes. Fleets that were strong four years ago are dispersing to other boats. How can young sailors not only afford to be a part of one class, but to follow into other classes when their own is shrinking.

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Somehow, some way, sailing needs to become more accessible and more affordable for the average young sailor who comes from a working, middle class family. The fact that there only only 2? or 3? 49'er FX's vying for a spot in the Olympics right now is testament to the fact that the cost of a campaign is formidable for all but the lucky few. Many highly talented young sailors are not fortunate enough to have that level of financial resources. Creative solutions for funding more young, talented athletes is necessary.

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There should be more youth regatta's and most importantly, easier ways to get onto larger boats. I am a high school sailor and frequently sail in 420's and FJ's but find it very difficult to transition to larger boats such as solings, lightnings, etc. getting from 14 ft to 20ft. boats is the biggest hurdle in youth sailing.