



BOATING WITH THE BRADFORDS

Tired of seeing their kids glued to devices, and determined to spend more family time together, the Bradfords (Geoff, Rochelle, Sam, 9, and Taya, 6) set out on a new family adventure by purchasing a new addition to the family – a boat! Miah Dixon spent the day with them hearing about their new toy...

The Bradford's story is typical of many modern families. Both parents work hard to provide for their kids, which doesn't always leave a lot of time for spending together as a family. As a result, the kids spend more time with their devices than their parents, and become disconnected from wanting to spend time "out there doing it".

Geoff and Rochelle, noticing this trend, and wanting to make a real impact on Sam, who is going on 10, decided on the pursuit of a new family adventure to get them out of the house and together more.

Having grown up with boating and fishing, Geoff was drawn back to this particular outdoor pursuit, and the idea of recreating his childhood memories with his own family. With the new family hobby

decided upon, it was time to get into the detail.

Each member of the family had their own wish list when it came to the boat. For Rochelle, it was a hard top, with enough cabin space for the kids to take a nap, but not sacrifice on cockpit space for fishing and other activities. For Geoff, a well thought-out design, which could best utilise the space of a sub six-metre boat was top of



The Bradfords – Geoff and Rochelle – have turned their two children Sam and Taya off the devices and onto boating and fishing as a fun family activity.

the list, followed very closely by a twin set of soft-rider seats. Given that he'd grown up with Mercury outboards, a new Merc also sat on the wishlist. Sam and Taya had simpler requests, such as Sam's desire for the boat to be his favourite colour, red.

However, when it came time to visit the Hutchwilco NZ Boat Show to make a purchase, things didn't quite go to plan.

"We initially went in with the intention of buying a fibreglass boat" says Rochelle, "but

it turned out what we thought would fit our needs for the moment, didn't".

Rochelle's desire for a hardtop on a fibreglass boat extended further than their budget would allow. A further wander around the show and a visit to the Surtees stand to meet friends resulted in a switch from fibreglass to alloy, and the purchase of a brand-new Surtees 540 Workmate (the smallest hardtop boat currently on the NZ market) powered by a Mercury 90HP CT outboard.

The Bradford's chose a sub-six metre boat for ease of handling, both in the water and on the trailer.



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Sea-Ya off on another family adventure.

Fast forward two months and the Bradford's new 'baby' Sea-ya has it's first few trips under it's belt.

The idea of boating being a hobby which is fun, but comes with many responsibilities, is already teaching the Bradford children valuable skills. Despite only having taken Sea-ya out a handful of times, you can already see the kids engaging in their newfound family pursuit. Young Sam boards the boat, dons his lifejacket, and starts helping Mum and Dad set everything up, lowering the motor and fetching

the fenders, while sister Taya watches on.

The family head out of Sulphur Point, for day's fishing beyond the Mount, then return to the shelter of Matakana island for picnics and watersports in a boat that is perfectly suited to their needs. And as for the family bonding time? Rochelle summed it up best: "we pack up the kids, dog and the boat, and head out, just us four, leaving all our worries back on the land".



Family boating is as much about being in the water not just on it.

10 TIPS FOR PLANNING FAMILY TIME ON THE WATER

The following are 10 tips and concepts for you to consider when planning family time on the water...

1. Partners and Kids don't necessary want to catch the biggest fish or the most sought-after species, they want action. Kahawai, koheru, cod and jack mackerel will keep the younger set engaged. It is not all about Kingfish and snapper. This is their time to shine, not yours.
2. Give the youngsters tackle they can handle – light, forgiving rods are better than a heavy duty 'broom stick'. Don't give that newbie young angler your favourite rod, just in case it ends up overboard.
3. Go prepared for boredom – the kids, not yours. Take activities such as books, cards and heaven forbid – the dreaded iPad – to keep the younger crew members occupied when the fish aren't on the chew.
4. Make the day on the water fun, not a marathon. When your crew has had enough, go home.
5. Break the day up – try a little trolling, bait or lure fishing. Stop in a handy bay for a swim or go ashore onto the sand for a picnic or tow the sea biscuit.
6. Be prepared for launching and retrieving. Let all crew members know beforehand what is expected of them when helping at the ramp.
7. At an appropriate moment, give the crew a safety briefing and if they are not wearing lifejackets, show them where they are kept and how to fit them. Don't forget the sunscreen and plenty of water.
8. If the crew are new to boating, everything will be of interest – be prepared for 101 questions on why, how and what. You will need patience.
9. Under close supervision and in appropriate conditions, allow the youngsters to drive, drop and retrieve the anchor etc. If it is just you and the kids, show the most responsible/eldest one how to start the boat, engage the gears and steer. You never know when you may become incapacitated or fall into the tide, and these basic skills become vital.
10. As the kids or a partner's confidence grows, teach them boating basics, including how to operate the VHF or who to call in an emergency. Have Coastguard set as a "favourite" number on your phone or as a contact so it's readily available, or download the Coastguard app. You might even consider doing an Introduction to Boating, or a Day Skipper's course together.

Remember, above all, have fun. Take along your 'inside voice' and limit the fishing and boating to a level your crew will be comfortable with. It's all about taking little steps, but taking them often.

THE NEW 540 WORKMATE HARDTOP. IT'S HARD TO BEAT!

The Surtees innovations keep on coming with an all-new 540 Workmate under a hardtop. The most compact hardtop in our range, the 540's cockpit delivers more fishing area than some boats twice the size. It's easy to tow, easily launched from the beach, and features all the Surtees iQ that's made the brand famous, including water ballast technology, two fully sealed safety buoyancy compartments and one of the strongest hull designs on water. In fact, Surtees iQ makes our newest hardtop an even smarter choice!



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