

Families Can Learn to Sail On Any Budget

(MF) - For those who sit on shore, longing to set sail every time a white sail crosses the blue horizon — no more excuses. Family sailing can bring everyone together for an uninterrupted chance to slow down, talk and enjoy each other. • There are affordable learn-to-sail programs that fit any family and budget — plus you don't even need to own a boat.

There are many ways for families to learn together. Sailing schools and charter opportunities can teach the necessary techniques and skills in a few days. Here are some tips for getting started:

- Join a local sailing club that provides access to a variety of club boats through an affordable family membership.
- Take a sailing vacation with a charter company that provides instructional lessons as you go. You'll enjoy a fun family vacation and come home with a bareboat captain's certification.
- Vacation at a sailing school in the beautiful Caribbean or your favorite vacation city. Most schools offer programs for kids.
- Attend a local boat show for more information on learn-to-sail programs

available in your area.

- Contact the local sailboat dealership. Many offer free introduction to sailing seminars and on-the-water events.
- Charter a sailboat with captain and crew stateside or in the Caribbean. Take advantage of their knowledge and experience to learn everything you can.
- Find sailing and yacht clubs near you. Clubs are very supportive of their hobby and often host open houses to introduce new sailors to the sport.

A comprehensive list of sailing schools, boat shows and charter opportunities is available at www.discover sailing.com. Once you learn the ropes and explore different boats, you'll know how to buy the perfect sailboat for your family's needs.

"Our kids were always begging us to let them go off with friends on weekends — we had to fight for family time. Now they beg us to take the boat out," said Sharon Poulton, a mother of two. "We are now doing our first family charter in the spring."

Remember the journey, not the destination, is the true reward of sailing.

