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When, Where and Why to Teach Young Children to Raft

FAYETTEVILLE, W. Va., April 11, 2018 - [Adventures on the Gorge](#) (AOTG) co-founder Dave Arnold would like put a paddle in every six-year-old's hands for the good of the planet. The adventure resort in Southern West Virginia's New River Gorge region offers a variety of whitewater rafting adventures for young children, and Arnold believes there are numerous benefits of introducing children to the sport at a young age.

"Whitewater rafting fosters teamwork, encourages an interest in the natural world and builds strength, coordination and confidence," said Arnold. "Even very young children can learn to challenge their endurance and overcome fears by paddling age-appropriate waters. And by exposing kids to the beauty of wild places like the New River, a paddling adventure can also help prompt a life-long commitment to preservation."



With smooth water, swimming spots and a few small rapids, the Upper New River is a great destination for kids to learn to raft.



Rafting, kayaking and swimming can help bring families together.



The Upper New River is suitable for kids as young as six.

There's a big benefit to parents of six-year-olds too. It's free. The resort offers free rafting to any six-year-old through its popular [Almost Seven](#) program.

Arnold and his AOTG colleagues have witnessed countless kids begin an adventure nervously and end the adventure with wide, proud smiles. Children are encouraged to leave their screens behind - or at least keep them in a dry bag - so children spend less time documenting their adventures and more time enjoying them. And since each AOTG rafting adventure is captured by skilled photographers, selfie-less children can still proudly share evidence of their splashy accomplishments with friends.

Here is a list of whitewater rafting adventures listed by minimum age: [Six and Up](#). The [Upper](#) portion of the New River features Class I-III rapids suitable for first-time rafters. Groups can enjoy slow water interspersed with periods of manageable rapids and opportunities to use inflatable kayaks known as "duckies."

[Eight and Up](#). An easy step up from the Upper New is the [Glade Creek Canyon](#) section of the New River, complete with a nature hike to a beautiful waterfall and swimming hole. The rafting here is a just little quicker with a minimum age of eight.

[Nine and Up Family Trip](#). When rafters are at least nine years old and water levels are low enough, the [Family Lower New](#) trip becomes available. This trip features oar-mounted boats so that guides control larger rafts and kids get a taste of what awaits them when they turn 12.

[Twelve and Up](#). With rapids ranging from Class I through Class IV, the [Lower New](#) is West Virginia rafting at its best.

[Fourteen and Up](#). Teens who are ready for a bigger and wilder rafting experience can enjoy the [Lower Gauley River](#) in the fall. This 12-mile section of river includes several Class III-V rapids.

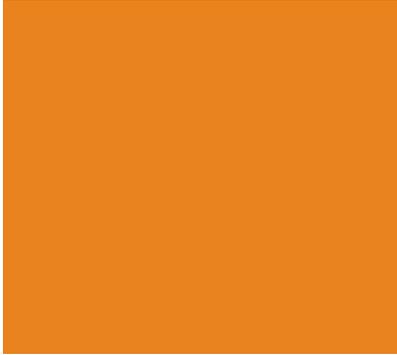
[Fifteen and Up](#). Teens who are good swimmers and have some rafting experience are ready for the [Upper Gauley](#) in the spring or summer. The Gauley River is characterized by multiple heavy rapids requiring tight, technical maneuvering. If teens are seeking even more adventure can earn bragging rights rafting the river during the fall "Gauley Season," when water released from the Summersville Dam, creating the "Beast of the East," with numerous Class IV and V rapids. Adventures on the Gorge offers several Gauley River rafting adventures including the [Gauley River Overnight](#), a two-day expedition that includes overnight camping and gourmet food at the resort's Canyon Door campground.

Adventures on the Gorge also offers challenging, kid-friendly aerial, lake, climbing and other [adventures](#).

More about Adventures on the Gorge

Named one of the top six adventure resorts in the country by [U.S. News & World Report](#) and celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2018, [Adventures on the Gorge](#) features an array of outdoor adventures including whitewater rafting, aerial adventures, rock climbing, kayaking, stand up paddle boarding, fishing, mountain biking and hiking. The resort also offers an array of accommodations, restaurants, bars, shops and a conference center.

Travelers can find out more about Adventures on the Gorge [online](#), by calling 1-855-379-8738, or connecting on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), [Google+](#), [TripAdvisor](#), [YouTube](#), and [Vimeo](#) and signing up for AOTG [e-newsletter](#).



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