

Open Water Drowning Prevention Policy Strategy: Partnerships

BACKGROUND

- Open water safety is everyone's responsibility.
- Cross-agency collaboration and the support of partner organizations are key components of open water drowning prevention interventions.
- Community groups, concerned individuals and governmental agencies have a vested interest in decreasing the drowning rate in open water.

STRATEGIES/OBJECTIVES

- Build partnerships with organizations, associations and coalitions involved in water safety and water recreation.
- Create opportunities for networking and collaboration on drowning prevention, water safety and water recreation.
- Identify policy priorities for the Washington State Drowning Prevention Network.
- Develop, propose and pass a state statute requiring agency accountability for drowning prevention and water safety.
- Establish dedicated funding that includes drowning prevention in the state budget.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

- From 2011-2016, partnerships with water safety and recreation organizations were developed, enhanced and/or maintained, including:
 - Alaska Office of Boating Safety
 - American Red Cross
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - Children's Safety Network
 - City, county and state parks
 - Community health clinics
 - Coroners and medical examiners
 - EuroSafe
 - Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center
 - Head Start
 - Law enforcement (Sheriff, Police, Marine Patrol): Pierce, King, Clark Kittitas, Spokane, Snohomish Counties and others.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES CONTINUED: Partnership Developed

- LifeSaving Signs
 - Oregon State Marine Board
 - Paris White Foundation
 - Pediatric residency program at Seattle Children's
 - Public Health/Health Districts (Spokane)
 - Public pools
 - Recreational boating organizations
 - Safe Boating Council
 - Safe Kids Worldwide, Safe Kids Washington and local coalitions
 - Safe States Alliance
 - Sea Tow Foundation
 - Seattle Parks and Recreation
 - Texas Department of State Health Services
 - Uncommon Solutions
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 - U.S. Coast Guard and U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary
 - U.S. Fish and Wildlife
 - Washington Recreation and Parks Association (WRPA)
 - Washington State Department of Health Department of Epidemiology
 - Washington State Department of Health Water Recreation Program
 - Washington State Department of Health Injury and Violence Prevention
 - Washington State Parks and Recreation Boating Program
 - Washington State Parks Risk Management
 - Washington State University Extension service
 - Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic
 - YMCA of the Inland Northwest and YMCA of the USA
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- Identified Boating under the Influence (BUI) as a policy priority for the Washington State Drowning Prevention Network.
 - Added an injury prevention member to the state Boating Safety Advisory Council.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES CONTINUED

- Coordinated and hosted at least two Washington State Drowning Prevention Network meetings each year from 2011-2016 at Seattle Children's Hospital to coordinate drowning prevention efforts and share research and information with stakeholders across the state.
- Disseminated monthly emails with information about drowning prevention and water safety to Drowning Prevention Network members.
- Created a policy implementation plan template that can be used by state and local organizations and agencies to create an action plan for open water drowning prevention policy change.

IMPACT

- Key water safety and drowning prevention stakeholders worked collaboratively and engaged in drowning prevention safety policy efforts. Many of these groups had not previously worked together. Early and ongoing involvement of stakeholders enhanced identification of needs, barriers, and facilitation of recommended changes.

HEALTH EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

- Many of the drowning prevention presentations made at the Washington State Drowning Prevention Network meetings addressed equity issues related to race, ethnicity and income.

LESSONS LEARNED

- There is strong interest in Washington State to work together on preventing drowning.
- Different sectors are willing to work together around common messages and strategies.
- Policy change is challenging for many partners to address due to perceived or actual job related restrictions or HIPPA regulations.
- System change within organizations is more achievable.

EVALUATION SUPPLEMENT

Implementation Plan template used with partners to coordinate partnership work.

Objective:				
Policy Strategy:				
Actions	Measures of Success	Progress at _/_/___	Completed by _/_/___	Responsible Party

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