

Child Injury Prevention Policy

What YOU can to do prevent open water drowning



CDC grant on Child Injury Policy

- Used open water drowning as the injury issue to learn about using policy to support prevention efforts
- Policy defined in broad terms – policy is more than state laws
- All of us have a role in policy; good policies help support ALL our good programs



Why open water drowning

- Fewer policies for open water than other child injury issues
- Policies now in place need improving
- Known ways to improve open water safety
- No one group/agency “owns” open water
- Drowning Prevention Network and Coalitions in place for years with passionate experts who can mobilize quickly for this policy issue



What is the New

Open Water Safety Policy Guide?

- Comprehensive approach at state and local levels
- Focuses on seven action areas:
 - Water Recreation Sites
 - Life Jackets
 - Boating Under the Influence and funding for Marine Patrol
 - Learn to Swim
 - Physical Barriers
 - Surveillance
 - Partnerships



Water Recreation Sites

- Open water swimming site on lakes and rivers.
- Safety issues include: beach grade, drop-offs, unseen hazards in water (logs & rocks), roped off swim area, lifeguards, rescue equipment, aquatic plants, possible user conflicts, etc
- Other ideas?



Life Jackets

- Enhance the WA state law – now goes to age 12 in boats up to 19 feet long, when underway
- Like to go up to age 18 (cover all 17 year olds)
- In all boats, whether or not underway
- Make loaner programs more available statewide at open water places children, youth, families swim
- Other ideas?

Boating Under the Influence & Enforcement

- Enhance the BUI law so it is more in line with the DUI law
- Now no implied consent law for BUI, is for DUI
- BUIs often become DUIs
- Need more enforcement of all boating laws, and need more dollars for more enforcement
- Other ideas?



Learn to Swim

- To improve youth swimming skills and water safety knowledge
- Increase access to swimming, especially for low-income and culturally diverse children and families
- Establish a process to develop swimming skills and water safety knowledge for all of Washington State's children and youth
- Other ideas?



Physical Barriers

- Perhaps use private pool four-sided fencing building code as a model
- Look at irrigation canals in high risk areas (near schools, parks, child care centers, and where road access caused issues in past)
- Look at private ponds (farm & decorative) and how to reduce risk
- Other ideas?



Surveillance

- Data helps drive good policy and programs
- Add questions on swimming ability and related topics to the Healthy Youth Survey
- Develop guidelines for consistent drowning investigations
- Develop a comprehensive database to track all fatal and non-fatal drowning
- Support continued local Child Death Review



Surveillance

- Develop a mechanism to track drowning that occur at state, county, and city parks
- Support standardized drowning death investigation procedures and improve data collection efforts
- Other ideas?



Partnerships

- Safe Kids Coalitions are vital in this -
- Improve collaboration and partnerships around drowning prevention and water safety
- Build partnerships with organizations, associations, and coalitions that are already involved in water safety
- Create opportunities for networking and collaboration on drowning prevention and water safety
- Expand the role of policy in the Washington State Drowning Prevention Network



Next Steps

- Document this policy development process to be used for other child injury issues
- Develop and use policy implementation plan so we can stay on track with open water drowning
- Update the roadmap and the implementation plan with new data, successful policies, and examples
- Put these documents on the Seattle Children's Drowning prevention website for easy access and updating



Summary

- Good policy supports good programs
- We all have a role in policy at all levels
- Policy work is being emphasized by CDC
- We are the injury prevention experts in our states – we can be the voice for both good policy and good programs for children and youth
- CPSC has dollars for Safe Kids:

Opportunity

- **Safe Kids Receives Pool & Spa Safety Grant from CPSC**
- As part of our work to promote the *Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act*, Safe Kids USA was awarded a grant from the Consumer Product Safety Commission of almost \$560K, with an option for a second year at approximately \$423K. outreach.



CPSC -continued

- The three key components for this grant are coalition-based grants (pilot program to conduct residential pool inspections, rapid response and educational training), the development and distribution of educational materials and associated equipment, and media



CPSC - continued

- This award represents an enhanced partnership with the CPSC and we are excited about the opportunities this grant provides for us and more importantly, the coalition network. More details will be coming soon about how your coalition can apply for a pool and spa safety grant.

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- Although this money is for pools and spa safety, perhaps can be future money for open water drowning prevention.



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