



Introducing the US National Water Safety Action Plan

Kathy Wall

Morag MacKay

Greg Field, PhD



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Morag MacKay, Safe Kids Worldwide
Greg Field, USNWSAP

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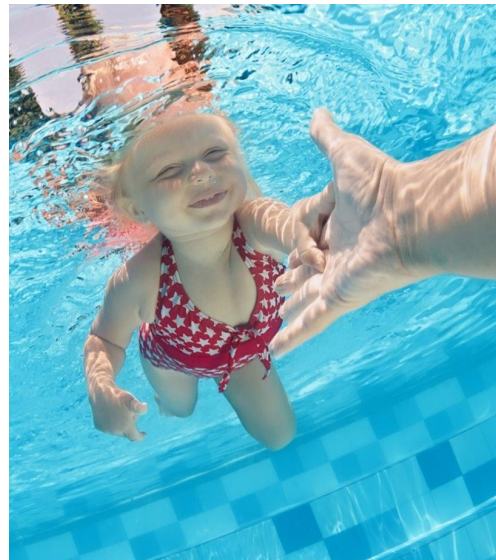


U.S. NATIONAL
**WATER
SAFETY**
ACTION PLAN



Overview

- Background
- What is the U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan (USNWSAP)
- How was it developed
- What is in the plan
- What is coming later in 2023
- More on the Reflection to Action Process
- Reflection Phase
- Questions





Drowning in the U.S.

- Over 4000 Americans fatally drown each year
- Leading cause of death for children ages 1-4 years and the second leading cause of unintentional injury death for children ages 5-14 years
- Males make up 80% of drowning victims
- Black/African Americans and American Indians and Alaskan Natives fatally drown at higher rates than their white counterparts
- Drowning in rural settings is 1.5x higher than urban settings
- Children with autism spectrum disorder are 160x more likely to experience a fatal or nonfatal drowning than their neurotypical peers



World Health Organization (WHO) call to action to Member States

- The first *Global Report on Drowning Prevention* was produced by the WHO in November 2014
 - Drowning is a neglected yet preventable public health issue
 - Call to develop a national water safety plan among 10 recommendations
- *Preventing drowning: an implementation guide* was produced by the WHO in May 2017
- World Drowning Prevention Day was declared by the UN General Assembly in April 2022 (every year on July 25, 2023)
- The 76th World Health Assembly adopted the first ever resolution on drowning prevention on May 29, 2023



What is the USNWSAP?

- U.S. response to the WHO call
- Initiated by Water Safety USA
- Call to action and road map
- Guidance and tools





How Was the USNWSAP Developed?



Values

- **Evidence-informed action** and the **need for evaluation**
- Ensure **equity** is considered during action plan development and implementation
- **Collaboration and engagement** of the water safety community in plan development
- **Local context** in ensuring relevant action





Scope

- 10-year plan
- Focus on 5 evidence-based strategies and data plus the necessary infrastructure and capacity to support implementation of action recommendations
 - Data/Public Health Surveillance
 - Life jackets/Personal Flotation Devices and Other Flotation
 - Water safety/Water competency/Swimming lessons
 - Supervision/Lifeguards
 - Rescue/CPR
 - Barriers/Entrapment and Electrical Safety



Framework

Strengths

- Rich history of water safety and drowning prevention
- Multiple jurisdictions involved in water safety; 1000s of stakeholders
- Enough evidence to provide guidance, encourage standardization, develop minimum requirements and model policies

Challenges

- Size and complexity of the country
- Drowning risks vary
- Drowning data are limited
- Limited investment in drowning prevention





Development Process 2018-2023





Working Groups

- Co-Chairs
- Multi-sectoral
- Subgroups as needed
- Standard process and tools
- Common end point
- Regular report outs





What is in the Plan?



USNWSAP 2023-2032

- Vision and Mission
- Call to action and road map
- Guidance and tools
 - Reflection to Action Process
 - Evidence-informed Action Recommendations
- National implications





USNWSAP Vision and Mission

Vision

- A United States where everyone is safe in, on, and around water.

Mission

- Prevent drowning in the United States through evidence-informed action. Transform the country into a nation where water safety is a natural part of everyday life and people enjoy the benefits of water, safely.



Reflection to Action Process





Evidence-informed Action Recommendations

- 99 action recommendations listed along with Spectrum of Prevention

Focus Area	Number of Recommendations
Data/Public Health Surveillance	18
Barriers, Entrapment and Electrocutation	17
Lifeguards and Supervision	9
Life Jackets, Personal Flotation Devices, and Other Flotation	21
Rescue and CPR	15
Water Safety, Water Competency, and Swimming Lesson	18



Examples of Action Recommendations

- Require the use of four-sided isolation fencing with self-closing and self-latching gates around residential pools and spas as the critical layer of protection to prevent drownings.
- Advocate for lifeguard services at designated open water swimming sites and public pools, prioritizing locations with high volumes of incidents and/or use.
- Require all individuals participating in any activity involving a vessel less than 26 feet in length, including water sports, to wear a properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket, except when below decks or in enclosed compartments.



Examples of Action Recommendations

- Increase access to life jackets for all ages through life jacket loaner stations at boat ramps, open water swimming venues, and designated water access points.
- Recommend lifeguards and water rescue emergency medical system professionals have in-person training, certification, and recertification by an agency approved by a national body or government organization.
- Provide affordable water safety and swim lesson programming to meet the needs of populations at higher risk of drowning.
- Expand the mandate of, and human and financial resources available to, federal government agencies to reduce drownings.



National Implications

- Actions at a national level that will support uptake and implementation of recommendations





Examples of National Implications

- Develop a national drowning surveillance working group
- Develop a multi-year comprehensive coordinated national water safety awareness campaign with consistent messaging to help educate the public. Include topics such as supervision, barriers, life jackets, and water competency
- Develop national minimum standards for educational programs addressing water competency.



Measuring Progress and Impact

- Uptake and progress on National Implications
- Adoption of call to action
 - States, counties and local communities taking up call to action
 - Progress on Reflection to Action Process
 - Progress on implementation and impact of community action plans
- Report Cards
 - Baseline
 - Progress in 5-7 years
- Impact on national drowning rates and inequities





Coming later in 2023

- Guidance on the *Reflection to Action Process*
 - Reflection Process (July 31)
 - Action Planning Process (August/September)
- Glossary
- New website
- Implementation Database
 - Additional details on each action recommendation including rationale, evidence base, implementation implications
- Research Agenda



How to Get Involved

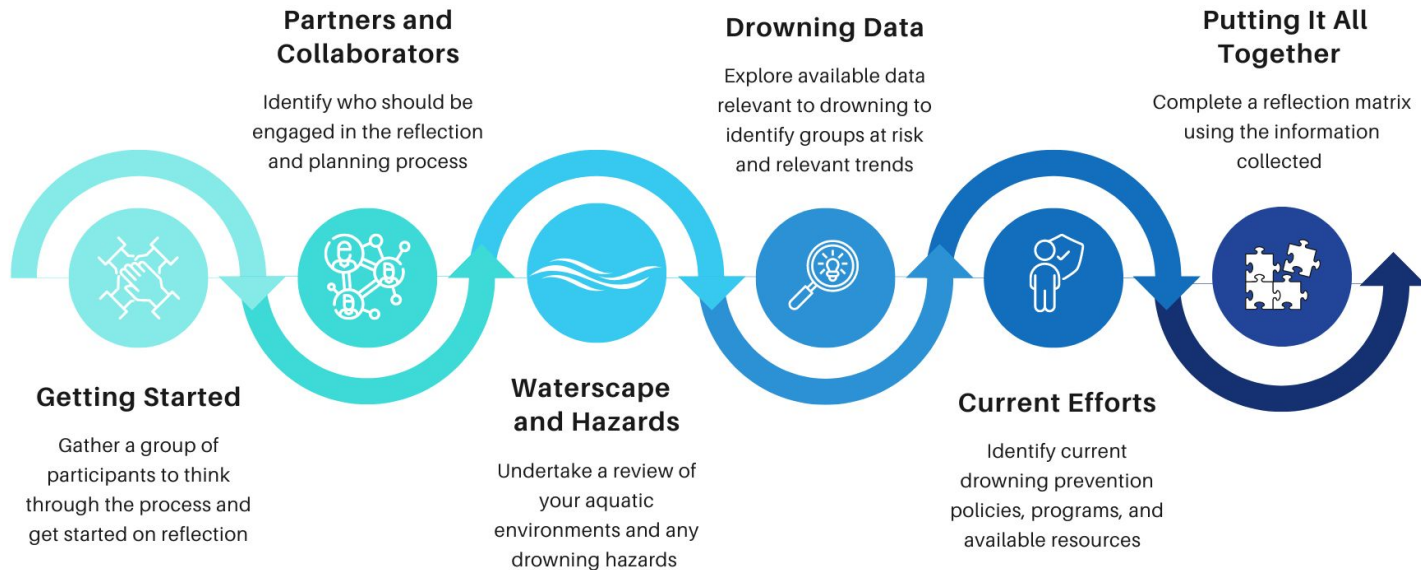
- Help us get the word out about the launch
- Promote what you are already doing in your jurisdiction
- Begin organizing for reflection and action planning in your community, county, or state
- Consider putting your name forward to lead or participate in national implication-related activities
- Sign up for the newsletter to be notified when new resources go live



Reflection Phase Guidance



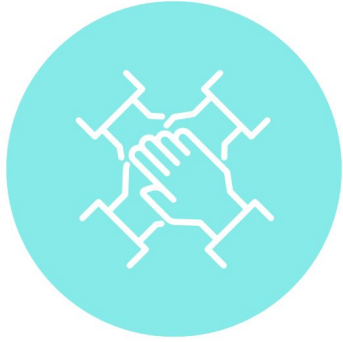
Reflection Phase





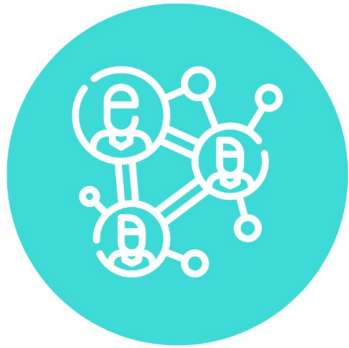
Step 1: Getting Started

- Instigator group
- Conditions for effective action planning
 - Support of partners/collaborators
 - Support of government
 - Open communication
 - Effective decision-making
 - Well thought out planning process
 - Skilled facilitation through the planning process
 - Opportunities for reflection and feedback
- Planning process



Step 1 Activities

- Initiate the initial core group
- Think through 12 step process and particularly Step 1
 - Facilitators of Success Checklist
- Map out initial plan for other 11 steps
 - Reflection to Action Process Mapping Tool



Step 2: Partners and Collaborators

Advantages to involving partners and collaborators in planning

- Provides access to data and knowledge
- Helps identify the needs of groups that have been marginalized and underserved
- Helps identify unsuccessful elements of existing drowning prevention efforts and prevent duplication of efforts
- Helps identify skill sets, resources, and funding sources
- Helps identify and draw out strengths and successes in a community's history
- Provides opportunities to build in sustainability of drowning prevention interventions
- Provides opportunities to coordinate and scale up existing interventions



Step 2: Partners and Collaborators

Challenges to involving partners and collaborators in planning

- Lack of participation due to competing priorities and tasks as part of their existing roles
- May increase the time needed to complete the planning process
- May be reluctant to coordinate and collaborate, and question planning and implementation if there are conflicts with their own goals, values, or their organization's mission
- Potential partners may need funding to participate with planning



Step 2 Activities

- Brainstorm for potential partners
 - List of Potential Partners and Collaborators
- Who are the people in your neighborhood?
 - Who and at what level
 - Explore non-traditional partners
 - When to involve partners
 - How to involve partners
- Enhance planning process by building in engagement with partners and collaborators

Step 3: Waterscape and Hazards

Gain a better understanding of aquatic environments, the populations that engage with these environments, the activities that occur in, on, or around these waters, and the hazards they present.

- Natural water settings
- Machine-made settings
- Seasonal water settings





Step 3 Activities

- Identify geographic scope
- Identify all natural, machine-made, and seasonal aquatic environments within that scope
 - Consider mapping where feasible
- Review each aquatic environment
 - What activities typically occur?
 - What populations participate?
 - What are the hazards?
 - Who owns/manages the waterscape?
 - Who is responsible for water safety/drowning prevention measures?
 - Who is responsible for responding to water-based emergency?



Step 4: Drowning Data

- Key to developing a data-driven action plan.
- Local data allows for more context-specific analysis and planning.
- Total time and effort will depend on your resources and what is already available.
- Data will vary from community to community.
- At a minimum, we advise obtaining data by age, sex, race, and ethnicity for different water settings (e.g., pools and open water).
- Leverage partners who have data or data analysis skills



Step 4 Activities

- Identify relevant data sources
 - Fatal and nonfatal drowning data
 - Sociodemographic data on the community
 - Data on protective factors (availability, affordability, accessibility)
 - Policy data sources
- Break down data and display in user-friendly formats (e.g., graphs, simple tables)
 - Consider numbers and rates
 - Consider 5 years of data when available



Step 4 Activities cont'd

- Synthesize the available data to explore
 - Who is drowning?
 - Where are drownings occurring?
 - When are drownings occurring?
 - Why are drownings occurring?
- Identify groups at greater risk and settings where more drownings occur in your community
 - Drowning data tool



Step 5: Current Efforts

- Explore existing policies, educational and training programs, awareness campaigns, efforts related to the physical built environment, protective devices.
- Identify issues like availability, accessibility, and affordability of preventive actions provides an important baseline for activity.
- The goal of this step is to identify as many of the existing efforts and resources as possible.
- Don't get stuck trying to capture 100% of the current efforts.



Step 5 Activities

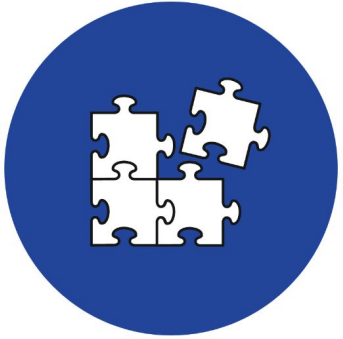
- Identify existing efforts and resources
 - Policies – laws/ordinances and organizational policies
 - Educational and training programs
 - Awareness campaigns
 - Built environment
 - Protective devices

- Synthesize and answers questions related to:
 - Evaluation
 - Addressing inequities
 - Identifying successful efforts
 - Partnership opportunities
 - Obvious gaps



Step 6: Putting It All Together

- The final step in the Reflection Phase is to complete a Reflection Matrix using the information collected through Steps 2-5.
- The purpose is to answer three questions as the foundation for the steps in the Action Planning phase:
 - What are our drowning issues?
 - What are we currently doing to address them?
 - What existing strengths and opportunities can we build on?



Step 6 Activities

- Fill in the at-risk groups from Step 4
- Fill in the waterscapes where more drownings are occurring from Step 3
- Consider each intersection and reflect on what you have learned through Step 5
 - What do you know about efforts to reduce hazards or increase protection for that at-risk group in that water setting?
- Identify strengths, opportunities and assets that can be built upon
- Identify gaps where action needs to be initiated or enhanced

Setting →			
Risk Group ↓			



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Thank You!

www.watersafetyplan.us

info@USNWSAP.org

Thank you.



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