

IMPLEMENTING THE U.S. NATIONAL WATER SAFETY PLAN FOR THE U.S. IS A BIG TASK. WE ARE READY FOR THE CHALLENGE.

Well, it has been a very busy five months since the last newsletter. June was a momentous month as we did a Congressional Briefing in Washington, DC and a week later launched the inaugural U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan (USNWSAP) and the National Implications.

In this 11th newsletter since development of the U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan (USNWSAP) began we provide an update on the activities over the summer and highlight was it to come.

HILL BRIEFING

On June 22, members of the Steering Committee and invited guests presented the USNWSAP at a Congressional Briefing hosted by Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz. Connie Harvey from the American Red Cross emceed the briefing and speakers included:

- U.S. Representative Debbie Wasserman Schultz
- Dr. Chris Jones, Director, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Chair Alex Hoehn-Saric
- Morag MacKay, Chief Research and Network Officer, Safe Kids Worldwide and Chair of the USNWSAP Steering Committee
- Dr. Shaun Anderson, USA Swimming and Norfolk State University
- Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) Commissioner Peter Feldman

The plan was well received and commitments to support the implementation of the plan were made by the CDC, CPSC and Congresswoman Wasserman Schultz. The Congresswoman also called on those present to inform their members of Congress about the plan and indicated she would be looking for members to support future drowning prevention legislation. As opportunities arise to seek support going forward, we will share the asks so that everyone in the field can support advocacy efforts.

USNWSAP LAUNCH AND DISSEMINATION

On June 29, after four years of hard work involving 100s of experts and input from 100s of individuals and organizations survey participants, the first ever National Water Safety Action Plan for the U.S. was launched.

The plan provides a national roadmap for collective action to reduce drowning in the United States and aims to unite the water safety community to help put an end to preventable drowning tragedies nationwide. It sets out a vision of a United States where everyone is safe in, on and around water. And the mission of preventing drowning through evidence-informed action that transforms the country into a nation where water safety is a natural part of everyday life and people safely enjoy the benefits of water.

The call to action is for the water safety communities to come together at the state, county and local levels and collaborate on the development and implementation of a context-specific, coordinated, data- and evidence-informed action plan to reduce drowning and address existing inequities.



Photo courtesy of Adobestock

To support that call, the plan also introduces a 12-step Reflection to Action process and the associated tools and resources that will roll out over the coming months. It also introduces the National Implications, the 99 evidence-informed action recommendations and speaks to some of the challenges we face going forward as well as the strengths we will be building upon. The final section of the plan acknowledges the many contributors to the process and plan.

The plan is available at www.watersafetyplan.us along with the National Implications and a media toolkit to help with dissemination. The tool kit includes social media posts about the plan as well as a talking points and a newsletter article and we encourage you to share the launch with your own networks if you haven't already done so. The Steering Committee is also undertaking efforts to get word out to key organizations and networks who can support implementation and that includes additional social media posts that will be shared on USNWSAP channels but also made available on the website for other organizations to use to help promote the plan.

ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

The 99 action recommendations included in the plan involved hundreds of water safety professionals who donated thousands of hours of time and decades of accumulated expertise to sift through research evidence and current best practices to put forward draft recommendations for action. The drafts went through multiple layers of review and revision before the initial list of 99 was finalized.

We recognize that there are areas where more recommendations are needed, and we also know that evidence will continue to be amassed and that will require new recommendations and/or modifications to existing ones in the future. However, the 99 represent prevention approaches backed by a reasonable level of research evidence or, in the absence of research evidence, expert consensus that they likely do help reduce drowning.

The 99 are listed in the plan by the six areas of focus along with one or two levels of the Spectrum of Prevention that each recommendation most closely aligns with. In addition, the working groups provided further information on each

action recommendation, including the rationale, evidence base, implications for implementation, barriers and facilitators of implementation, potential key performance indicators, and other relevant information which is being organized into a searchable online Implementation Database that will be launched later this year on the USNWSAP website.





REFLECTION PHASE GUIDANCE

On August 3, we released the first of two guidance documents on the Reflection to Action Process. The process is flexible and reflects approaches that have been successful in other high-resourced and low-resourced communities that can be scaled to fit any community. The guidance recommends a practical approach that starts with what people already know and focuses on the six evidence-based areas around which the USNWSAP was developed.

The first provides detailed guidance and tools to support the first six steps of the process, the Reflection Phase. The Reflection Phase is designed as an initial reflection of the current situation to ensure drowning prevention action planning starts from an informed place of understanding, and an exploration of how that situation can be built upon and enhanced. It involves spending time exploring, discovering, and reviewing key factors that influence drowning in a community context, whether that is at the local, county, or state level. That reflection will help those undertaking the process to develop more strategic, meaningful, data-informed actions that are more likely to have the desired impact. The Reflection Phase guidance is available now at www.watersafetyplan.us and the second document on the Action Planning Phase will be released later this fall.

As always, we encourage you to share your concerns, and compliments, with us on Instagram @usnwsap, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/USWaterSafetyPlan, or send us an email at info@usnwsap.org. Your voice will continue to impact the supporting materials, communications plan, and implementation.

WE NEED YOU!

Your involvement makes a difference in creating a culture of water safety in the U.S.

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