Program Example – Drowning

Parachute
PREVENTING INJURIES. SAVING LIVES.

Note: We have created program examples for a number of injury issues that affect children 0-6. These examples are based on best practice and share activities that groups have done or could undertake. These follow the steps of Lesson 6 in the on-line course, Introduction to Child Injury Prevention. They are designed for people who want to develop programs that can be evaluated, or for people who need samples of Action Plans and Evaluation Plans for funding proposals. Other program examples, without this level of detail, but dealing with the same stories (for the most part), are available on the Parachute site, associated with Lesson 5 of the course.

Should you decide to work on this issue in your community, share your experience through our new child injury prevention listserv. You can subscribe by sending an email to: cipg-subscribe@lists.parachutecanada.org.

Introduction:

Why is drowning important? Sixteen (16) children age 0-4 and 5 children age 5-9 died from drowning in Canada in 2009. Sixty-nine (69) aged 0-4 and eighteen (18) aged 5-9 experienced near-drowning and were admitted to hospital. It is the third leading cause of death from injury for those 0-4, after choking/suffocation and motor vehicle related incidents.

Drowning is preventable.

Story:

A number of families were spending the day at the beach. They all knew each other so the children were playing in groups and the caregivers[1] were chatting while laying out the picnic lunch. The youngest children stayed near their caregivers. When they called all the children to come to eat, one 5 year old child was missing. An immediate search was conducted but the boy was not found. His body washed up on the shore several days later.

Problem Statement: To begin a plan to address this injury, you need a short statement of the problem. For this story, it could be: Young children are drowning at local beaches.

Next, you need a goal:

Goal: to reduce the incidence of childhood drowning in our community. **Next, you need to start to identify the key people who can help address this situation in your community.**

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[1] We are using the term "caregiver" to include parents, grandparents, foster parents and anyone who is responsible for the care of a child.

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Potential partners: the Lifesaving Society of Canada, Red Cross, injury prevention organization, Public Health, caregivers and other community members.

You will want to discuss with the caregivers in your programs, whether they see this as an issue and what they know and do regarding how to prevent drowning from happening. They need to "buy into" the idea that:

- Their children could drown when in, on or around the water.
- They can do something about preventing drowning from happening.

Often caregivers believe that an injury won't happen to their child and they just need to tell a child not to do something and he will listen. In fact we know that there are lots of things that influence whether an incident happens, and some of those things are in a caregiver's control and some are not.

The following table shows the risk and protective factors related to a drowning – note the table below is a more complete example than what was described in Lesson 5 in the Introduction to Child Injury Prevention course, but less complicated than the planning model in Lesson 6, Program Planning and Evaluation. It is the planning approach the Red Cross uses and shows all the potential areas that you could address.

	Personal	Equipment	Environment
Prepare	Is the child able to access the water? How close is the caregiver? How closely is the caregiver watching the child? Have you designated someone to watch the child at all times?	Are life jackets available for children to use?	Is there a designated swimming area? Are there trained lifeguards supervising the swimming area? How deep is the water? Does it drop off suddenly? Is there a current/rip tide? Did you check the weather before heading out?
Stay Safe	Does the child know how to swim? Does the caregiver know how to swim?	Is the child wearing a properly sized and fitting lifejacket?	How far away are the lifeguards and are they able to respond?
Survive	Does the caregiver know First Aid and CPR? Do they know where the lifeguard is located? Do they have an action plan in the event that an incident occurs? If they have other children with them, who will take care of them?	Is the life jacket the right size for the child and correctly buckled?	How close is the nearest medical help?

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Once you have looked at all the risk and protective factors that could be involved in preventing a drowning, choose which factors you have the capacity to influence and decide what changes you want to make with your program. Identify what best or promising practices are known to work with this injury situation and incorporate those into your approach.

Risk/Protective Factors that you have the potential to change: knowledge and behavior of caregivers on the prevention of drowning and the provision of appropriate supervision; the provision of a safer swimming environment (designated swim area, lifeguards, swim lessons and lifejackets).

Best practices: The Child Safety Good Practice Guide has identified that community-based education/advocacy around lifejacket use leads to increased use and water safety skills training (including swimming lessons) improves swimming performance.
http://www.parachutecanada.org/downloads/research/reports/ChildSafetyGoodPracticeGuide-CanadianEdition.pdf

Objectives:
These changes are then written as objectives, following this formula:

Increase or decrease …	By what amount	In what timeframe	With whom	What

Objectives:
1) To increase by 50% within the next year, the knowledge of caregivers attending parenting programs of ways to prevent drowning.
2) To increase by 50 % within the next year, the number of children (6 and under) that wear a lifejacket while at our local beach/lake.

Once you have decided your objectives, then you need, with your committee, to decide what activities you will undertake in order for your changes to happen. You also need to decide how you will know if the change(s) happened (success indicators).

Here is a sample story of what a group could do:

After the death of the 5 year old at the beach, a group of concerned caregivers and community members, including the director of the local family resource Centre, came together to discuss what could be done to prevent such a tragedy ever happening again. The local Lifesaving Society member told the group that if young children wear lifejackets and were well supervised by caregivers at the beach, the chances of a drowning would be greatly decreased. He pointed out that lifeguards manage a designated swim area and not the whole beach or lakefront and often, drowning occurs outside the designated swim area. They were told of lifejacket loaner programs that had been successful in other communities. The Red Cross Water Safety program was often a key part of these programs. A sponsor would need to be found to purchase the lifejackets and a system set up for easy borrowing and return and storage. The group spent that fall and winter raising awareness of the effectiveness of

lifejackets and found a sponsor. The lifejackets were purchased and a shed by the beach was used for storage. Parents learned how to find one that fits their child and how to put it on. The program was a great success and very few lifejackets went missing that summer.

The 3 E's that this group decided to address were:
Education – assist caregivers in gaining the knowledge and enabling the behaviour change necessary to minimize the risk of young children drowning at the beach.
Environment –assist caregivers in accessing and learning how to use lifejackets for their children while at the beach.

Your objectives and activities can then be laid out in a project logic model format, or whatever template you currently use for program planning.

Activities:

Drowning Prevention Program Logic Model:

Goal	Objectives	Activities	Outputs	Short Term Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Long Term Outcome
To reduce the incidence of childhood drowning in our community.	To increase by 50% over the next year, the knowledge of caregivers attending parenting programs of ways to prevent drowning. .	Create committee Educate caregivers using resources from Parachute and partners	Committee is meeting and providing direction Number of caregivers educated	Increase in knowledge about how to prevent drowning	Caregivers are more closely supervising their children at the beach.	Reduction in the number of drowning-related childhood deaths.
	To increase by 50 % within the next year, the number of children (6 and under) that wear a lifejacket while at our local beach/lake	Find sponsorship for lifejackets Create a lifejacket loaner program	Sponsor is found. Lifejacket loaner program operational	Caregivers have started using lifejackets for their children at the beach.	More caregivers are consistently using lifejackets for their children at the beach.	Reduction in the number of drowning-related childhood deaths.

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Here are their activities and success indicators, written in a format that could be used in a funding proposal. In this approach, the group has indicated their success indicators – the things they will measure to show their results.

Drowning Prevention Action Plan:

Actions/ Activities What we will do and how will we do it	Target Group Who are we trying to influence	Responsibilities and Timeline Who will do it and when will it be completed	Resources What will we need to do it	Success Indicators How will we know if we have done it
Identify the key people to be on the committee. Create committee to oversee project (all objectives)	Internal and external partners	Manager week 1	Time	A committee is in place including Centre staff, Lifesaving Society/Red Cross, Public Health, caregivers and members from other organizations.
Find sponsor to pay for lifejackets (obj 2)	Local businesses	Staff Month 1	Staff Time,	Corporate sponsor(s) found
Prevention images and messages downloaded and delivered in parenting program (obj 1) Create visual displays of lifejackets and how to fit them. (obj 1 and 2)	Caregivers Caregivers	Staff Month1-6 Staff Month 1-6	Time, print copies of images Time, cost of lifejackets	Number of caregivers attending, increase in knowledge measured pre and post attending Self reports regarding changes in behaviour.
Lifejackets purchased. Storage space found for lifejackets and procedure for loaning established.	Caregivers	Month 2-12	Time to set up location for storage/loan and procedure for loan. Cost of storage space?	Number of lifejackets available Convenient storage space Loan procedure is functional
Lifejacket loan program is launched and working.	Caregivers	Month 6-12	Time to monitor usage	Number of children wearing lifejackets at beach.

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Evaluation:

Finally, you need to think about how you are evaluating what you are doing. This is very important because too often you know something is working (or not working) but haven't built in a way to measure the success (or pinpoint the problem). If we don't have concrete evaluations of programs, it is harder to share what worked with others who work with caregivers on these issues. It is also harder to identify what did not work, and then change your activities to address the problem. There are different types of evaluations and the list below shows how you use each of them in your planning process.

Evaluation Plan

Needs Assessment: *establishing a need*
Q: Is there a need for drowning prevention? Yes, every year children drown.

Developmental evaluation: *identifying best practices*
Q: Are there programs already in existence for this target audience that increase the knowledge and change the behavior of parents to prevent drowning? Yes – lifejacket loaner programs have proven successful in many parts of Canada.

Formative evaluation: *testing program plans, messages, materials, modifications, strengths or weaknesses before they are put into effect.*

Q: Do the parents understand how drowning can be prevented and what they can do to prevent it? There are resources/messages available through Parachute and other organizations that help caregivers understand what to do to prevent drowning.

Process evaluation: *tests whether the program's procedures for reaching the target are working as planned.*

Q: Are caregivers still attending the program? – tracking attendance. Caregivers are participating in the discussion/problems solving around barriers to keeping their children safe in and around water.

Impact evaluation: *assess the program's progress towards its goal i.e. measuring changes in target audience's knowledge, attitudes and beliefs that may lead to injury-prevention behaviour.*

Q: Do the parents retain the knowledge? The pre/post tests will show any change.

Outcome evaluation: *measures changes in preventive behaviours and injury-related morbidity and death.*

Q: Will this program ultimately reduce drowning in this population? That would be the intent but the program would have to be on a large scale in order to be confident that any reduction in drowning could be attributed to your program.

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Q: Do the parents self-report changes in their behaviour? Is there any way to verify these changes? You should be able to measure lifejacket loans and observe use at the beach. Direct observation of lifejacket use is quicker than surveying parents and more accurate. Self-reports alone are unreliable as caregivers may just tell you what they think you want to hear (and what they would like to be true).

Collecting the information:

Track the numbers of caregivers attending sessions and the number of lifejackets loaned. Conduct a simple pre-test to find out caregivers' current knowledge, conduct a post after the program is finished. Sample pre and post questionnaires are located on the Parachute website (www.parachutecanada.org/child-injury-prevention). Staff delivering the program will do the tracking and conduct the pre/post surveys. The loan tracking will give you the number of lifejackets loaned. Before starting the program, do an observation of the number and approximate ages of children wearing lifejackets at the beach at a given time (e.g. Saturday between 1-4) and then conduct a few observations at that same day and time period (in good weather) to record lifejacket usage. The Child Injury Prevention section of the Parachute website has sample observation forms you can adapt.

Share the results of your evaluation with others working with caregivers. Even if you find that your program did not make any change, this is good information to know and you can work with your committee to figure out why the program did not work, and make changes to future programs

Drowning Prevention Evaluation Plan

Objective	Activities	Outputs	Measurement Tool	Outcomes	Success Indicators/Results
To increase by 50% over the next year, the knowledge of caregivers attending parenting programs of ways to prevent drowning.	Identify the people to be on the committee and Create committee to oversee project Prevention images and messages downloaded and delivered in programs Displays and interactive activities	Committee formed and operational Caregivers attend sessions that discuss drowning prevention	Notes from meetings Pre and post knowledge quiz	Committee has undertaken all activities of the project Caregivers more knowledgeable	Program has been delivered to caregivers 50% increase in the knowledge of caregivers on how to prevent drowning.

Adapted by Parachute from the Canadian Injury Prevention Curriculum for the on-line course, Introduction to Child Injury Prevention found at www.parachutecanada.org.

	created and conducted.				
To increase by 50 % within the next year, the number of children (6 and under) that wear a lifejacket while at our local beach/lake	Local businesses identified and approached regarding providing lifejackets. Process developed for the loaning and storage of lifejackets.	Sponsor found and lifejackets purchased Loaner program in place Convenient storage location found	Number of lifejackets purchased Number of lifejackets loaned Observation of the number of lifejackets worn on the beach/lake	Lifejackets are readily available for loan. Caregivers are accessing the lifejackets and children are wearing them correctly	Enough lifejackets have been purchased to meet the need at the local beach. 50% increase in the number of lifejackets being worn by children at the beach.

Other resources:

- Parachute web site – www.parachutecanada.org/child-injury-prevention

- Lifesaving Society - http://www.lifesaving.org/public_education.php?page=674

- Red Cross website – www.redcross.ca/swim

- Information on a range of injury topics can be found in A Million Messages:

  http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/7607.asp. Check your provincial injury prevention organization to see if they have adapted A Million

  Messages for your region.

- www.preventable.ca deals with a number of injury topics