

Community-based Drowning Prevention Coalitions

Framework for Action



Are you passionate about drowning prevention? Do you know others in your community who are equally passionate? If yes, you have the makings of a drowning prevention coalition.

Actions and impacts are best achieved by individuals in their own communities. Community-based drowning prevention coalitions have existed for years. A request for the formation of more community-based drowning prevention coalitions across Canada came from Canadians following the launch of the first edition of the Canadian Drowning Prevention Plan by the Canadian Drowning Prevention Coalition in October 2017. What can you do to prevent drowning in your community?

What are the unique key focus targets in your own community? Choose a leader, survey your environment, and when ready dive in! Created in 2016, the Canadian Drowning Prevention Coalition, led by a Steering Committee, created a list of key focus targets for drowning prevention in Canada. This list is based on research and is presented in the first edition of the Canadian Drowning Prevention Plan launched in October 2017. It identifies the best and most achievable impact areas and messaging for the country. These may or may not be relevant to your specific community. Review fatal and non-fatal drownings that have occurred in your community over the last 5-10 years. Examine who is drowning, how they are drowning, and where they are drowning. Identify areas that are easy to change and areas that will take longer to impact in an effort to prevent future drowning in your community.

Reach out and into the community to identify the stakeholders you need for each issue. Bringing multiple sectors within your own community together is the most effective and sustainable way to undertake drowning prevention activities specific to the needs of your community to achieve short and long term goals. For example, the Canadian Drowning Prevention Coalition brings together many stakeholders in the Canadian drowning prevention effort. You too can bring together stakeholders from local/regional government, safety agencies (police, fire, and rescue services), academics, health, education, recreation, culture and civil society representative etc. to provide broad multi-sectoral input and leadership to this effort. Who do you need on your team?

Work undertaken by community-based drowning prevention coalitions will take a public health approach to the drowning problem in Canada (they aim to provide the maximum benefit for the largest number of people). To make this happen, differences and biases need to be reduced, culture needs to be respected, and a commitment to learn from marginalized communities needs to be made. Who better to understand cultural needs than members from within each community?

The aspirational long term goal of community-based drowning prevention coalitions, the Canadian Drowning Prevention Coalition, and the Canadian Drowning Prevention Plan is for zero drowning deaths in Canada in 50+ yrs. Shorter-term targets will be used to measure interim success and impact. **Start small, think big, move forward!**

The Canadian Drowning Prevention Coalition would love to hear about your community-based drowning prevention activities and initiatives. Please share with us via info@cdpcoalition.ca.