

U.S. NATIONAL WATER SAFETY ACTION PLAN

JANUARY 2023

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

Drum roll please! We are in the final quality and consistency review of the U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan (USNWSAP)! Within the next few months you'll be receiving information on how to access the plan, followed later in the year by an Implementation Guide.

TURNING IDEAS INTO ACTION

Good ideas which sit on a shelf have little value. For drowning rates to drop, the recommendations in the upcoming USNWSAP need to be translated into action. A recent article, ['Turning Crisis into Change'](#) in the Hopkins Bloomberg Public Health Newsletter identifies actions which led to the creation of the CDC's Environmental Public Health Tracking Program. Adopting similar strategies, such as "generating political will to invest in and implement expert recommendations", should foster success of the USNWSAP.

BLUE RIBBON PANEL OUTCOME

In our last newsletter, we introduced the Blue Ribbon Panel (BRP) members. Again, we are deeply grateful to the BRP members for their expertise, rich discussion, and time commitment in providing an additional layer of expert review to the recommendations developed by our expert Working Groups.

In addition to completing the surveys on the full roster of over 130 recommendations, the BRP met over two days in early December to review 23 recommendations which, based on the public survey results, did not fall decisively in the 'include' or 'dismiss' range. A Likert Scale of 1-7 was used in the survey, with 7 being 'accept' without discussion. Recommendations which ranked below 5.25 were pulled for discussion.

The meetings were convened by a professional facilitator, to ensure that a fair evaluation process was used and all voices were heard. Our sincere thanks to the Center for Disease Control for funding the BRP meetings. On the first day, after meeting as

a whole, the BRP panel members and Working Group Chairs formed sub-groups to engage in deep discussion of 4-5 of the recommendations. Steering Committee members were facilitators and note-takers. At the end of the discussion, the group voted whether to include or dismiss the recommendation. Extensive note-taking ensured that the issues discussed were captured to inform the next round of review, and to document any decisions to change the wording or dismiss recommendations. Groups rotated to provide a second pair of eyes for a different set of 4-5 recommendations, again including discussion and voting. Every opportunity was provided to defend or challenge each recommendation.

On the second day, recommendations with no clear consensus were reviewed by the full BRP and Working Group Chairs, and additional voting was conducted. The Steering Committee again acted as facilitators and provided background information, where needed.



Photo courtesy of Adobestock





Photo courtesy of Adobestock

FINAL STEP

The Steering Committee is meeting in January to review all the recommendations over several marathon sessions. The focus will be on ensuring consistency in language, identifying and integrating any overlapping recommendations, and providing a final overview for cohesiveness and logical flow.

We are also in the process of writing the supporting information with the plan, so that as soon as the recommendations are in final form, we can move quickly to producing and distributing the plan.

Our deep appreciation to SafeKids Worldwide for donating their stellar graphics team to create the final USNWSAP. In addition to the logo and graphics on the website, they will be creating the layout of the plan.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

A key section of the Implementation Plan will include guidance on developing a situational analysis. Our intrepid Project Manager, Greg Field, is doing a literature review, and is reaching out to state, county, and community groups to learn what is being done currently. If you or your stakeholders have conducted a situational analysis, please contact us. We would like to learn from your experience. Email us at info@usnwsap.org

Identifying stakeholders is critical to implementing any public health program. Start now by playing a round of 'Who are the people in your neighborhood?' Start with the obvious, people and organizations working in aquatics, government entities, and public health professionals.

Extend beyond the core to other groups which touch the issue. Some examples: individuals directly impacted by drowning; for-profit entities which sell products and services supporting aquatics; ad agencies; local news outlets; and cultural institutions which support communities at higher risk.

CONFERENCE UPDATE

NDPA National Water Safety Conference February 13-16. Click here for more information. <https://ndpa.regfox.com/2023-national-water-safety-conference>

WE NEED YOU!

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

Please download and share this newsletter by clicking here for the .pdf. We also hope you'll visit our website at www.watersafetyusa.org/nwsap, like our page and follow us on Facebook at:

[https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/USWaterSafetyPlan)

[USWaterSafetyPlan](https://www.facebook.com/USWaterSafetyPlan)

and follow us on Twitter at: **@USWaterSafetyP1.**