

Everyone Swims!

Changing Policies to Increase Access to Swimming and Water Recreation

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Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW)

- CPPW is a federally funded project focused on policy, system and environmental change to improve nutrition and physical activity, and decrease tobacco use and exposure.
- Links to drowning prevention *and* obesity prevention



Everyone Swims!

Everyone Swims! GOAL:

Increase access to swimming and water recreation in Seattle and King County among low income and diverse populations

Policy and System Change Priorities:

- (1) water recreation scholarships
- (2) swimming ability screening in clinics
- (3) referral to water programs from clinics
- (4) special swim programs



Swimming Access– Part of Statewide Policy Strategy

Aligns with Washington State Open Water Drowning Prevention 5 year policy strategy for children and youth

Focus areas:

- ❖ Safer water recreation sites
- ❖ Life jackets
- ❖ Alcohol use
- ❖ Surveillance
- ❖ Swimming access/ability
- ❖ Physical barriers
- ❖ Partnerships



Everyone Swims! Partners

- ❖ 10 Water partners representing 28 pools, 8 beaches, 2 rowing houses and 9 public or private organizations
- ❖ 8 Community health clinic partners representing 27 community health clinic sites
- ❖ Water and clinic partners are matched based on geographic location
- ❖ Focus areas have higher rates of poverty, obesity and less access to physical activity choices



Swimming – Combines Safety and Physical Activity

- ❖ Swimming is a lifetime skill – impacts jobs, recreation, and physical activity¹
- ❖ Taking formal swimming lessons associated with an 88% reduction in drowning risk²
- ❖ The ability to swim correlates strongly with household income and whether parents can swim³
- ❖ Drowning 2nd leading cause of unintentional injury death for children aged 1-14 in the United States²

1. Centers for Disease Control. Fact sheet for health professionals on physical activity guidelines for children and adolescents. June 2009. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/pfs/Fact_Sheet_Children.pdf

2. Brenner R, Taneja G, Hayne D, et al. The association between swimming lessons and drowning in childhood: a case-control study. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.* 2009; 163(3):203-210.

3. Irwin R, Dwyer J, Irwin C, Ryan T, Southall R. Constraints Impacting Minority Swimming Participation. Memphis, TN: University of Memphis; 2008. Available at: <http://swimfoundation.org>



Swimming – Combines Safety and Physical Activity

❖ Drowning rates among minority populations occur at higher rates. Fatal drowning rates among 5-14 year old African Americans are 3.2 times higher than for whites¹



1. Irwin R, Drayer J, Irwin C, Ryan T, Southall R. Constraints Impacting Minority Swimming Participation. Memphis, TN: University of Memphis; 2008. Available at: <http://swimfoundation.org/>

Stakeholder Interviews

32 Interviews

- 13 water partners
- 16 clinic partners
- 3 public health

Themes

- Need for improved scholarship process
- Clinics need up to date resources
- Informal clinic referrals (web-based searching), few formal programs
- Clinics identify providers who act as champions
- Clinic-water partnering enables special programming
- Water sites want to increase use among minority groups and are willing to do special programs



"We don't know what families from these populations need because we haven't been serving them."

–Water Partner

Everyone Swims! Focus Groups

5 Focus groups conducted

51 participants

5 race/ethnicity groups



Themes

- Don't know where to go, how swimming lessons are organized
- Don't know about scholarships/scholarship process feels uncomfortable
- Clinic providers trusted source of information
- Parents think children less embarrassed if there are other kids like them
- Hispanic and Vietnamese parents expressed concern about clean water
- African-American parents expressed concern about discrimination at pools
- Somali women said they can only go to gender-specific swims-children can swim with mixed gender until age 7

"I could never afford swimming before, and it is a huge effort to get here. I had to make a huge life change."

-Odessa Brown Community Clinic Parent



Priority Setting

- ❖ Developed and prioritized 40 policy and system changes based on needs assessment and best practice
- ❖ Used Delphi method to set priorities– all partners participated



Policy Priorities- Scholarships

- Child on low income assistance qualifies
- Swimming information standardly at clinics
- Partner with others to offer swim programming
- Scholarship information online, in multiple languages
- Scholarship applies to other physical activities
- Scholarship form meets guidelines for readability
- Scholarship applications reviewed right away



Policy Priorities- Referrals from Clinics

- Clinic actively gives out swimming and water recreation information
- Clinic has scholarship forms –helps family apply
- Clinic fills out a “referral form” and sends to pool
- Clinic provides list of referred families to pool



Policy Priorities- Swim Ability Screening

- Clinic has standard tool to assess swim ability at the 5 or 6 year old well child check
- Doctors recommend swimming as physical activity
- Clinic has standard tool to assess patient interest and barriers to swimming and water recreation
- Clinic makes referral to water recreation and swimming
- Doctors screen for swim ability for other ages



Policy Priorities- Systems for Special Populations

- Health clinic and water organization partner to offer special programming
- Pool offers child and parent beginning swim program
- Pool offers gender swim (men only or women only)
- Pool/clinic partner to offer special program for overweight children, teens, adults



Everyone Swims! Successes to date include:

- ❖ Swimming ability screening question added to Electronic Medical Record (EMR) at one partner clinic and in process at 4 others
- ❖ Pool offering gender only swims
- ❖ Pool piloting swim for teen students on federal lunch program
- ❖ Scholarship forms and process revised at two pools
- ❖ Pediatric residents at Seattle Children's have prioritized *Everyone Swims!* as their advocacy project for the next year
- ❖ Clinic partners pilot 10 new partnerships with water partners



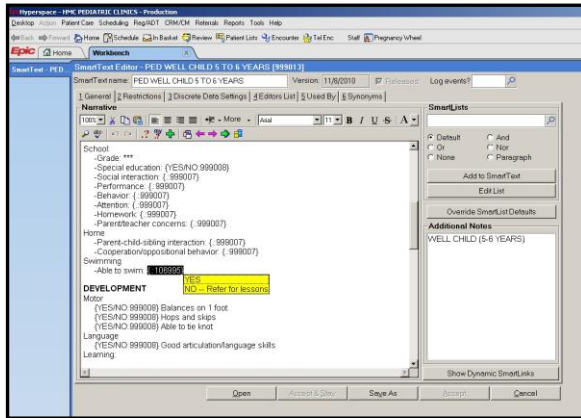
Example Success

- ❖ Pediatric Residents at Seattle Children's Hospital prioritized *Everyone Swims!* as their advocacy project for the next year



Example Success in Swim Ability Screening

❖ Electronic Medical Record (EMR) at Harborview Children's Clinic:



Thank You!

We want to thank the our water and clinic partners for their commitment to the health and safety of children and families.



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To learn more about Everyone Swims:

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For more information about
CPPW visit:
www.kingcounty.gov/health

