

**NYS TEMPORARY COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD DROWNING  
FRIDAY, June 30, 2023**

**9:30-11:30 AM**

**Minutes:**

Reminder to start the recording of the meeting

Call to Order

Commissioners Present

- Marrick McDonald
- Kevin Clark
- Brian Tobin
- Heidi Reiss
- Gwen McNamara
- Mike Switalski

Other Guest

- Reggie Chatman
- Dr Steve Langendorfer
- Rich Alden
- Michael Bauer
- Shawn Slevin
- Tim Shay
- Jennifer Maglienti
- Brendan O'Melveny

Reminder: Commissioners need to be on camera. The volume needs to be unmuted. Your complete name needs to be displayed.

Guidelines: - Public Participation

Approval of Minutes from the previous meeting

Motion to accept the minutes from the June 16, 2023, Meeting

First Kevin Clark

Second: Mike Switalski

With no objections, the motion carried

Commission Extension through 12/2024 - pending Governor's signature

On the Governor's desk for final signature. If the motion carries on the Governor's desk then our final report deadline will be 12/20/24

### Open Meeting Law: Extraordinary Circumstances Hearing

Two minutes may need to be adjusted due to not everyone being in open meeting location, still awaiting confirmation of any additional actions required.

### Hospital Bill

Passed on both sides of the legislature and on the governor's desk  
Was moved to the next legislative session and there may be value in the commission releasing a statement demonstrating support for the bill.

Motion to update the commission recommendation letter

First: Brian Tobin

Seconded: Mike Switalski

With no objections, the motion carried

### World Drowning Prevention Day - Gwen

Gwen had the privilege of attending a lunch held by UNICEF in advance of World Drowning Prevention Day held on July 25. At this event were delegates from countries including Ireland, Germany, Bangladesh, Iran, Guatemala, Thailand, and others. Learning about the drowning deaths in other countries where the issues center around other social inequities brought a pointed understanding of how important our work here is.

Gwen was able to share work being addressed in the United States, including the Centennial Swim Program and preliminary data showing a 10% reduction in the drowning rates in cities that are hosting the Centennial Program and that it has been approved to increase from 50 cities to 100 cities nationwide this year.

In addition, Gwen shared the great work in New York State in regard to the Hospital Bill on the Governor's desk for Swim Safety.

The attendees at the luncheon appreciated the insights into what is happening in the states and asked if there would be any interest in the Governor becoming involved in global efforts to aid in drowning prevention. Gwen will be seeking a conversation to explore that opportunity.

### **Discussion: - Where are we on each Goal?**

Goal A-1 & A-2: Age & Standards - Marrick

Goal B: Feasibility & Effectiveness - Brian, Heidi

Working on Foil request of locations throughout the state for the survey

Discussion on quality

Best practices for swim instructors from the Red Cross

Goal C: Partnerships - Gwen, Kate

For this goal, we are looking at several options

1. Clearinghouse web page on the NYS DOH website where parents can find information on water safety (Including the hospital bill video) and resources from various water safety foundations.
2. Clearinghouse web page for providers who offer subsidized swim lessons to post their programs.
3. Intranet site for Aquatic Professionals to share toolkits, best practices, and grant opportunities.
4. Request state grant funding for programs to be able to offer/increase subsidized programming. Mike mentioned that there is an existing grant program for sports initiatives (Senate Bill S2749A) where we may be able to request additional funds to be added with a specific line item for drowning prevention.
5. Recommendations for ongoing meetings with representatives from around the state at least annually to discuss opportunities and obstacles for their aquatic's programs.

No formal motion at this time as more information is gathered.

Goal D: Underserved - **Mike, Kevin, Casper**

Tabled for the next meeting

Goal E: Awareness - Kathryn, Heidi, Kate

Tabled for the next meeting

**Define Terms:** Glossary of Terms to create a common state-wide vocabulary; other suggestions for words to be added to the list.

11:20 For the Good of the Group

Game Plan for next meeting - 7/14/2023.

11:30 Adjourned

## Upcoming Events: Guest Speakers

7/14/2023: Infant Discussion; U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan Webinar - Kate

7/28/2023: DIA

## WATER SAFETY GLOSSARY EXCERPT To Create a Standardized Vocabulary

NOTE: Writing in Green was added by Marrick after the meeting.

**1. Aquatic environments:** Any space where water is present, such as, but not limited to... These are areas with bodies of water where aquatic activities can take place. They can be natural such as lakes, rivers, oceans, ponds, or man-made like swimming pools, splash pads, and water parks.

List Examples - Natural Bodies of Water: Bay, Canal, Channel, Creek, Delta, Glacier, Ground Water, Harbor, Lagoon, Lake, Marsh, Ocean, Pond, Puddle, Reservoir, River, Sea, Spring, Strait, Stream

List Examples - Man-Made Bodies of Water: toilets, fish tanks, pet bowls, washing machines, hottubs, bathtubs

**2. Aquatic Literacy:** Also known as Water Competency, it refers to the ability to anticipate, avoid, and survive common drowning situations. This includes water safety awareness, basic swimming skills, and the ability to help others in need. It is closely tied to positive motivations to engage in water activities.

What is the source of this definition?

Aquatic Programming: The Four Pillars of aquatic programming are:

- Swim Team (Competitive Community)
- Therapy (Rehabilitation)
- Learn to Swim
- Fitness Source: Total Aquatic Programming

**3. Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (AHPERD):** This is a national organization of over 20,000 professionals that provides support and assistance to professionals involved in physical education, recreation, fitness, sports and coaching, health education, and dance. National Level: SHAPE America ([Society of Health And Physical Educators](#))

**4. Environmental Stewardship:** The responsible use and protection of the natural environment, including aquatic environments, through active participation in conservation efforts and sustainable practices by individuals,

small groups, nonprofit organizations, federal agencies, and other collective networks.

**5. High Quality Swim Program:** These are swimming lessons that emphasize the teaching of self-rescue skills, breath control, and orientation in the water. They are taught by fully trained instructors with a low student to instructor ratio and customized to the child's needs. Lessons do not use flotation devices and may begin as early as 3-4 months of age.

Categories in the WSI revised 2014 manual — for swim instruction -  
Water Adjustment, Entry and Exit

Breath Control and Submerging

Buoyancy

Changing Direction, Position, and Treading

Swim on Front Swim on Back Swim on Side Water Safety

Aligned with our Swim Instructor Definition

PFD - Personal Flotation Devices US Coast Guard Approved. Swim Education Tools:

Swimming Aids - Tools to be used; do not guarantee flotation

Without excess reliance on flotation devices

What is a standard for a minimum swim lesson program? Three levels: Good, better, best (High quality swim program); perhaps making a rubric outlining the characteristics of each swim quality of swim program.

## 6. Designated Water Watcher:

Designate a water watcher when you are in, on, or around water. Watch all children and adolescents swimming or playing in or around water, even if they know how to swim. Young children or inexperienced swimmers need to be within arm's reach of an adult at all times. Make sure a responsible person constantly watches young children in the bath. (NDPA)

	Various definitions
	NDPA
	Red Cross, YMCA Tom Griffiths, Swim Safe etc

**7. Incentivized:** In this context, incentivized refers to methods and strategies used to encourage or motivate individuals towards a particular behavior or

activity. This can include encouragement in the form of positive reinforcement, feedback, or other non-tangible benefits.

Greg Slade (Assemblywoman Amato's Chief of Staff) clarified that the word was intended to refer to encouraging rather than a tangible, physical benefit. - minutes 4/21/2023

**8. Physical Literacy:** The physical competence, motivation, self-efficacy, confidence, and the knowledge and understanding that individuals develop in order to remain physically active throughout their lives. (Dr. Clancy Seymour)  
-Whitehead, 2010 (Dr. Clancy Seymour)

**9. Progressive Swim Instructor:** A progressive swimming instructor assesses the swimming ability of each swimmer prior to allowing the child to participate in aquatic activities. They use modern adaptive techniques while regularly training in new teaching methods of swimming.

Definition from code:

The term is sort of defined in our [children's camp regulation](#) Section [7-2.5\(f\)](#)  
7-2.5(f) Progressive swimming instructor – As described in the camp's approved safety plan, a progressive swimming instructor must assess the swimming ability of each camper prior to allowing the child to participate in aquatic activities. A progressive swimming instructor must be either:

- (1) a Water Safety Instructor currently certified by the ARC; or
- (2) possess a current certificate issued by a certifying agency determined by the State Commissioner of Health to provide an adequate level of similar training.

The certificates determined by the State Commissioner of Health to provide an adequate level of similar training are posted here:

[Progressive Swimming Instructor Fact Sheet \(ny.gov\)](#)

Room to add additional inclusion for not DOH Camp locations

PSI's are used to determine if campers are eligible for the deep end area of the aquatic facility.

**10. Rescue Skills Swimming:** This is a set of skills taught in high-quality swim programs that enable an individual to safely navigate and potentially exit a body of water in case of an emergency. These skills include self-rescue, turning around in the water and reaching for a wall, proper breath control, and opening eyes underwater for orientation.

How is the term rescue skills defined in the Water Competency article?

**11. Swim Instructor:** A fully trained OR certified professional (as recognized by NYS) who provides swimming lessons to individuals or groups, teaching a

range of skills from basic water comfort to advanced swimming techniques and safety practices.

What does fully trained mean?

What are the recognized certifications?

Who determines what certifications are recognized?

Do the certifications need to be from a nationally recognized organization? Do they still maintain the knowledge of teaching aquatics after their certification expires?

**Swim Coach:**

**12. Underserved:** ~~This term refers to communities or populations that have limited access to resources or services, including aquatic programs and swim instruction. This can be due to racial or socio-economic disparities, geographic location, or other factors.~~

BRIANSTORMING - : In NY, one way that has been used to quantify the socio-economic threshold is to look at households with no more than 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. How would we recognize in populations and in individuals? Free & reduced lunch? Proof of financial assistance?

Public assistance budget letter, EBT card, SSI - Award letter, W-2 or paystub

"Underserved populations" shall mean those who have experienced injustices and disadvantages as a result of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability status, age, immigration status, and/or socioeconomic status, among others as determined by the commissioner of health. Public Health 240 (NY SENATE)

Lack of access, lack of resources

**13. Water Comfort Level:** This is the degree to which an individual feels at ease in the water. It can range from fear and discomfort to a high level of ease and ability to perform various aquatic activities.

**Direction:** does the swimmer have the ability to change direction

**Rhythmic breathing:** is the swimmer barely putting face in or swimming like Michael Phelps

**Over:** have the ability to roll over: back to front, front to back

**Prone = Front:** what does their front floating and front swimming look like?

**Supine = Back:** what does their back floating and back swimming look like?

- American Red Cross Adapted Aquatics book, (Marrick's mnemonic)



**14. Water Competency (Pool versus Natural Water):** Water competency refers to the ability to independently move through the water from point A to point B while being able to take breaths as needed. This competency may vary based on the environment.

What is the source of this definition?

Water Competency is developmental and situational  
Three Components of Water Competency: water smarts, water skills, rescue skills (Dr. Langendorfer)

From Stallman, Moran, Quan, & Langendorfer (2017): **Swimming Skills To Water Competency**

**Table 1.** Proposed water competencies related to drowning prevention

Water Competencies			
1	Safe entry competence a) Entry into water b) Surface and level off	9	Clothed water competence
2	Breath control competence Integrated and effective breathing	10	Open water competence
3	Stationary surface competence a) Buoyancy control: floating b) Treading water	11	Knowledge of local hazards competence
4	Water orientation competence a) Roll from front to back, back to front b) Turn, L & R, on front & back	12	Coping with risk competence - awareness, assessment, avoidance
5	Propulsion competence a) Swim on front b) Swim on back and/or side	13	Assess personal competence
6	Underwater competence a) Surface dive b) Underwater swimming	14	Rescue competence a) Recognize a drowning person b) Assist a drowning person safely
7	Safe exit competence	15	Water safety competence a) Attitudes b) Values
8	Personal flotation device (PFD/lifejacket) competence		

**Also consider Ice Competency, Boating Competency**

Household Water risks

**NYS TEMPORARY COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD DROWNING RECOMMENDATIONS**

<sup>\*</sup> If it inflates, then it deflates.

	Marricks action plan for next meeting-
	Infant swimming
	DIA presentation for the 28th
	Water Safety Action plan

Tim Shay

Dept no role in regulating swimming instructions and we should not inset ourselves as it would require legislative action

**NYS TEMPORARY COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD DROWNING**

**9:30 AM TO 11:30 AM**

June 30

July 14  
July 28

August 11  
August 25

September 8  
September 22

October 6  
October 20

November 3  
November 17

December 1  
December 15  
~~December 29~~ - cancelled due to holiday season

Approved: 6/2/2023 pending approval of extension

**New York State Commission on Drowning Prevention**

Goal D

**Implementation Plan for Swimming Safety Programs in Underserved**

## Communities

**Objective:** To ensure that swimming safety programs are accessible and available to underserved communities

### Identify Target Underserved Communities

- Conduct a thorough assessment of the demographics and characteristics of the community to identify areas that are underserved in terms of swimming safety programs.
- Consider factors such as income levels, access to transportation, language barriers, cultural considerations, and any other relevant factors that may impact participation in swimming safety programs.
- Develop dry land program for communities without swimming pools.
- Develop Partnerships
  - Identify local community organizations, schools, and other stakeholders that serve the identified target underserved communities.
  - Establish partnerships and collaborations with these organizations to leverage their resources and networks to reach out to the community and promote the swimming safety programs offered in their respective communities
  - Collaborate with local schools to integrate swimming safety education as part of their physical education curriculum or after-school programs.

### Outreach and Promotion

- Develop a comprehensive outreach and promotion plan that utilizes multiple channels to reach the target communities, including community events, social media, flyers, posters, and local media.
- Translate promotional materials into multiple languages spoken in the community, as needed, to overcome language barriers.
- Offer incentives, such as discounted or free classes, to encourage participation from underserved communities.
- Utilize local community leaders and influencers to promote the swimming safety programs and build trust within the community.

### Financial Assistance

- Establish a financial assistance program to provide scholarships or discounts to individuals or families from underserved communities who may face financial barriers to participating in the swimming safety programs.
- Seek funding from grants, sponsorships, or donations to support the financial assistance program and make it sustainable.

#### **Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusivity**

- Ensure that the swimming safety programs offered are culturally sensitive and inclusive to the diversity of the underserved populations in the state
- Train instructors and staff on cultural competency to better understand and respect the cultural differences of the participants.
- Create an inclusive environment that welcomes individuals of all backgrounds, abilities, and identities, and actively addresses any discriminatory behavior or attitudes.

#### **Evaluation and Monitoring**

- Implement a system to regularly evaluate and monitor the effectiveness and impact of the swimming safety programs in the underserved communities.
- Collect data on program participation, outcomes, and feedback from participants and stakeholders to measure the success of the implementation plan.
- Use the evaluation results to make necessary adjustments and improvements to the program and implementation plan as needed.

#### **Long-term Sustainability**

- Develop a plan to ensure the long-term sustainability of the swimming safety programs in underserved communities.
- Explore opportunities for ongoing funding, partnerships, and collaborations with local organizations, businesses, and government agencies.
- Continuously monitor and evaluate the program's impact and effectiveness and make necessary adjustments to ensure its sustainability.

*Commissioners: Casper Lassiter, Mike Switalski, Kevin Clark*

## **Water Safety Recommendations**

**A**ctive Adult Supervision: Designated Water Watcher

**B**arriers: 4-sided fencing with self-locking gate; if the one side of the house is the fourth wall of the fence, then add an additional layer of fencing around the pool

**C**lothing: Bright swim clothing (red, hot pink, lime green, orange, fluorescent yellow)

**D**rains (know how to turn off the pool pump in case something/someone gets sucked into the drain)

**E**ducation: CPR and Swim Lessons **F**loatation Aids: PFD's, lifejackets

**G**roups: use the buddy system

**H**2O (water) Environments: understand the water environment you are swimming in

**I**ntoxication: watch out for intoxication due to alcohol and medications

Synthesized from Karen Cohn's presentation, Reginald Chatman's research presented at the Columbia University Injury Prevention Symposium, and Marrick McDonald

**GOAL A:**

**Goal A-1: Age to begin swimming lessons**

Recommendation to accept the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation of 1 year old to begin swimming lessons and water safety instruction (approved 5/19/2023)

**Goal A-2: Learning Standards: (approved 5/19/2023)**

With input from NYS AHPERD Aquatic Section; Kathleen Young, Newburgh Free Academy; Dr. Steven Langendorfer; New York State Red Cross Instructors & Instructor Trainers Facebook Group (with 200 instructors throughout NY State)

**Standard 1:** (Psychomotor) - Demonstrates age and ability-appropriate water proficiency in a variety of aquatic motor skills and movement patterns in aquatic environments.

**Standard 2:** (Cognitive, Psychomotor) - Applies basic knowledge of hydrodynamic principles, strategies, and concepts related to swimming and water safety when in aquatic environments.

**Standard 3:** (Cognitive, Psychomotor) - Demonstrates the capacity to employ knowledge and skills to achieve and maintain a level of physical activity and fitness in all aquatic environments.

**Standard 4:** (Affective) - Exhibits responsible personal and social behavior that respects self and others in aquatic environments.

**Standard 5:** (Affective) - Recognizes the value and respect of aquatic-related physical activity for overall wellness, enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and/or environmental stewardship.

**Standard 6:** (Cognitive, Affective) - Recognizes aquatic career opportunities and manages personal and community resources related to aquatics to achieve and maintain overall wellness.

**Standard 7:** (Cognitive, Affective, Psychomotor) - Recognizes and applies behaviors that promote safe experiences in all aquatic environments; identifies situations and conditions which pose safety hazards; and explains and demonstrates age, ability, and training appropriate rescue skills.

## **NEW YORK STATE TEMPORARY COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD DROWNING**

### **Goals of Commission:**

The commission shall:

(a) Determine an appropriate age and/or stage of childhood development when children can properly begin water safety and swimming instructions and develop statewide standards for such instruction;

- (b) Investigate and evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of programs which incentivize parents and guardians to enroll children in water safety and swimming instruction;
- (c) Develop a comprehensive plan for public-private partnerships between the state and community centers, nonprofit organizations, recreational facilities, swimming instructors, and other relevant stakeholders and expanding existing state resources such as parks and pools to provide access to free swimming instruction, and determine the feasibility of such programs;
- (d) Develop an implementation plan to ensure its swimming safety programs are available in underserved communities; and
- (e) Develop a comprehensive plan for a public awareness campaign to ensure parents and guardians receive information on the importance of children receiving basic water safety and swimming instruction.