

NYS TEMPORARY COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD DROWNING
FRIDAY, June 16, 2023
9:30-11:30 AM

Agenda:

- Reminder to start the recording of the meeting
- Call to Order
- Reminder: Commissioners need to be on camera. The volume needs to be unmuted. Your complete name needs to be displayed.
- Guidelines: - Public Participation:
- Introductions:
- Approval of Minutes from previous meeting
- Extension of the commission through 12/2024 - pending Governor's signature

- Guest Speaker #1: Richard E. Specht, Jr., Founder/CEO, The ReesSpecht Life Foundation (Heidi)
- Guest Speaker #2: Leland Brown, III, Program Director: Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion, USA Swimming (Mike)
- Open Meeting Law: Extraordinary Circumstances Hearing
- U.S. National Water Safety Action Plan Webinar - Kate

Discussion: - Where are we on each Goal?

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

- Goal B: Feasibility & Effectiveness - Brian, Heidi

- Goal C: Partnerships - Gwen, Kate

- Goal D: Underserved - Mike, Kevin, Casper

- Goal E: Awareness - Kathryn, Heidi, Kate

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 - 6/30/2023.

11:30 Adjourned

Upcoming Events: Guest Speakers

6/30/2023: DIA (Mike)

7/14/2023:

7/28/2023:

Biographies of Speakers:

Rich Specht is a father of four, husband, former science teacher, and co-founder of the ReesSpecht Life Foundation. The foundation is named in honor of Rich's son, Rees, who passed away tragically in 2012 at the age of 22 months. In the aftermath of Rees's death, Rich and his family were overwhelmed by their community's kindness and compassion, and they founded the ReesSpecht Life Foundation to pay it forward.

The foundation's mission is to promote kindness and compassion through various initiatives, including the distribution of "ReesSpecht Life" cards, which encourage recipients to perform acts of kindness in Rees's memory. The foundation has also established a water safety program called "ReesSpecht the Water" to teach children and their caregivers the essentials of how to be safe in and around the water.

In addition to his work with the foundation, Rich is also a public speaker who shares his family's story and the importance of kindness and compassion. He has given talks at schools, businesses, and community events and has been featured in various media outlets, including The Today Show, Fox and Friends, and Good Day NY.



Leland Brown III is a native of Galveston Island, Texas and is the inaugural Program Director for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at USA Swimming.

Leland earned his bachelor's degree at Bethel College – KS, with three majors: English, Communication Arts, and Teacher Education.

While at Bethel College – KS, Leland was also the captain and MVP of the Thresher Football team, a soloist in an Emmy award-winning Choir and thespian in productions such as The Jungle Book, Othello, and The Man of La Mancha. Diversity is something he lives and strives to champion.

After graduating from Bethel College – KS, Leland has served as a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) strategist in multifarious capacities with the University of Colorado Boulder, University of Cincinnati, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), USA Swimming, and Promise Prep a K12 school he helped found.

For his efforts in DEI Leland has received the Unsung Hero Award from the University of Cincinnati's UBSA, Cincinnati's 30 Under 30 Honors, and the Albert C. Yates Fellowship awarded to twenty-five incoming University of Cincinnati graduate students.

In his personal life, Leland is a proud member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., Inspirational Speaker, opera singer (although no longer practicing), photographer, and artist.

Education: Bethel College – KS (B.A); University of Cincinnati (M.S)

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, hot tubs, bath tubs

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.

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
- Sim on Front
- Swim on Back
- Swim on Side
- Water Safety

Aligned with our Swim Instructor Definition

PFD - Personal Floatation Devices US Coast Guard Approved.

Swim Education Tools:

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

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)

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)

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 \(ny.gov\)](#)

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.

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.

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

NYS TEMPORARY COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD DROWNING

RECOMMENDATIONS

- If it inflates, then it deflates.

**NYS TEMPORARY COMMISSION TO PREVENT CHILDHOOD
DROWNING
9:30 AM TO 11:30 AM**

June 2
June 16
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~~

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

Active Adult Supervision: Designated Water Watcher

Barriers: 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

Clothing: Bright swim clothing (red, hot pink, lime green, orange, fluorescent yellow)

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

Education: CPR and Swim Lessons

Floatation Aids: PFD's, lifejackets

Groups: use the buddy system

H₂O (water) Environments: understand the water environment you are swimming in

Intoxication: 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-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.