

From the plethora of associated safety messages, an international task force of 18 drowning prevention advocates identified 8 key generic messages for both 'care of self' and 'care of others' around open water. In each category, *the learning of swimming and water survival skills* were the highest priority message. Other messages focussed on the value of lifeguard supervision, obeying safety rules and signage, alcohol avoidance, lifejacket use, close and constant supervision for the young, first aid and CPR skills, safe entry skills, and safe rescue techniques. The guidelines helped inform expert opinion, identified gaps in the research where evidence is weak or non-existent, and made recommendations for a research agenda to inform future drowning prevention interventions.

This presentation presents recent research addressing many of these issues including: defining swimming and water competence; water safety education in HIC's; parental understanding of child water safety and supervision; high-risk behaviours, activities and groups, and drowning risk perception.

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## APPROACHES TO DROWNING PREVENTION IN HIGH INCOME COUNTRIES (HIC'S)

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Drowning as a consequence of aquatic recreation is a significant cause of unintentional death worldwide, high income countries (HIC's) being no exception. In most developed countries, a multifaceted approach, consisting of many layers of protection from drowning, has been widely promoted. Recent landmarks in the field of drowning prevention (such as the world conferences in 2002, 2007 and 2011) have precipitated research activity. New publications (such as the *Handbook on Drowning*, 2006 and an international journal on aquatic research and education [*IJARE*], 2007) have stimulated dissemination of research findings.