

IMPORTANCE ON DROWNING PREVENTION MESSAGES

Domínguez Pachón, AM.; Vega Cid, AA.; *García Sanz, I.; García Sanz, A.; González Díaz, IM.; Pino Espinosa, J.
Royal Spanish Lifesaving Federation (RFESS)

Introduction

Every year, more than 400 people have lost their lives by drowning in Spain, focusing these deaths on natural water areas (beaches, rivers and ports) and in the summer months, representing 60% of annual deaths.

Most of them are caused by imprudence and the lack of awareness about the water environment risk (RFESS, 2018).

Therefore, education and social awareness through the implementation of prevention campaigns is one of the actions that can be taken to reduce these data. However, the messages must be adapted to each situation and group of risk and age, must be simple to remember and easily transmitted to be successful among the population.

Communication can be effective if you ensure that the message reaches the recipient correctly.

Objectives

At these moment, massive use of new technologies, force us to look for new methods to raise awareness of the risks of water environment.

Therefore, the objective of the Royal Spanish Lifesaving Federation (RFESS) is to use these virtual platforms to launch preventive messages, videos and music in order to obtain direct communication with a greater scope and impact, increasing knowledge on prevention and of course, avoid the deaths cause by drowning.

Method

Working with different age groups helped to create the final messages. Children project in the drawings part of their way of thinking and feeling, and therefore they can give a lot of useful information about prevention (*figures 1 and 2*). All these messages collected and the observation of habits of the users of the different water areas, were necessary to make the list of 12 basic messages to prevent accidents at the pools and on beaches.

Accident prevention campaign on BEACHES:

1. I bring protective items to the beach.
2. I read the information signs and check the colour of the flag flying.
3. I remember the telephone number of a family member.
4. The sun is dangerous. I stay in the shade.
5. I am wary of rip currents. They usually form where there are no waves.
6. I am ALWAYS be supervised by an adult.
7. I ALWAYS swim/bath in SUPERVISED AREAS.
8. I don't exercise after eating.
9. I swim parallel to the beach and if I go away from the shore, I try to swim back looking for the waves.
10. BE CAREFUL WITH FLOATING MATERIAL: it can take me away from the shore.
11. I DO NOT PLAY in rocky areas.
12. IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS/QUERIES OR DANGEROUS SITUATIONS, I APPROACH THE LIFEGUARD.

Figure 3. Messages from the prevention campaign on beaches

Results

Drowning prevention messages transmitted through social media, digital platforms and internet are carefully selected in order to ensure that there are direct, specific, easy to understand and timely.

For that, videos and a "catchy" song have been created with a selection of 12 messages (*figure 3 and 4*) that contain recommendations to prevent accidents in water areas.

Accident prevention campaign at SWIMMING POOLS:

1. I bring protective items to the swimming pools.
2. I read the rules carefully.
3. I remember the telephone number of a family member.
4. I shower before and after swimming.
5. I do not run along the edge of the pool.
6. I ALWAYS look before jumping into the water.
7. I do not push others or play dangerous games.
8. The sun is dangerous. I protect myself in the shade.
9. I don't exercise after eating.
10. I will ALWAYS be supervised by an adult.
11. I DO NOT use armbands or rubber rings without supervision, nor if it is not permitted.
12. IF I HAVE ANY QUESTIONS/QUERIES OR DANGEROUS SITUATIONS, I APPROACH THE LIFEGUARD.

Figure 4. Messages from the prevention campaign at pools



Figure 1. Children drawing prevention messages



Figure 2. Children at the school watching the messages on drowning prevention campaign #StopAhogados

Conclusions

These messages sent through the different digital platforms as videos and music are new innovative social awareness methods.

One of the benefits of these tools is that we provide educational information economic, immediate, interactive and adapted to the needs of different risk groups.

Bibliography

Royal Spanish Lifesaving Federation (2018). *Spanish National Report on Drowning 2017*. Spain.