



INCLUSIVE STAFF TRAINING IN YOUR RECREATION FACILITY

In public facilities across North America, recreation departments are often known as having some of the best risk management practices. The staff is generally certified in CPR, First Aid, and AED, and lifeguards typically hold upper level health and safety certifications. However, are they prepared to work together in facilities that have up to several hundred participants per day and 10 or more staff on duty at any particular time?

Although the staff may be certified in the same skills, getting them to work together should be the next common goal. Often lifeguards practice their skills through in-service training and mock drills, and through these experiences gain the knowledge and skills to work together effectively. However, many times other staff members may be simply certified in the basics, and never use it again until a real emergency occurs. This is where inclusive risk management training should be emphasized.

The training could include stations in which the staff participates in mock emergencies. Each emergency should be based on a potential actual occurrence that could happen in your facility. The following are just some scenarios:

- **Spinal Injury in the Gymnasium** - A student was playing basketball when he was under-cut while attempting a lay-up. The student fell and landed on his head/neck. He was temporarily knocked unconscious and was bleeding severely from his head. This sparked a disagreement between the teams, and resulted in a fight among the players. One of the players contacted the staff for help.
- **Cardiac Arrest in the Locker Room** - A lifeguard finds an unconscious adult male while completing their routine locker room check. The victim is found with a clear airway but no pulse.
- **First Aid in the Spinning® Studio** - A participant in a Spinning® class suffered a laceration from a bike pedal. The Spinning® instructor contacts the fitness staff for assistance.
- **Discussion Topics** - This station could be used to cover topics such as:
 - Location of AED's, first aid supplies, supplemental oxygen, ice, and clean up kits.
 - Completing appropriate accident and incident reports.
 - The roles and responsibility of the First Responder Unit.
 - Emergency etiquette and "bedside manner" when responding to emergencies.
 - Guidelines for medication distribution.

Each station should have sufficient time (± 30 minutes) with the training ending with a brief presentation on evacuation procedures for facility emergencies. Seeking staff feedback is important in order to gain an understanding of each other's skills and roles in emergency situations. This type of training will also develop a social aspect with staff feeling better about working with people from different program and facility areas after having the opportunity to meet and interact with them.

Here are a few simple guidelines to develop your training program:

- **Have a Plan** – Take time to create an official schedule for your training. Include a specific time schedule, outline of stations, and assignment of group leaders.
- **Follow Your Plan** – Have someone specifically in charge of watching the time and assisting the travel from station to station – especially when you are working with stations with larger numbers (± 50) of participants.

- **Close Your Facility** – Recognize the importance of this program; make sure that all staff can be involved. Close your facility an hour early if necessary, or schedule the program prior to opening.
- **Use Supervisory Staff and Instructors** – Supervisors and instructors can be great station managers. This provides the professional staff with the freedom to monitor/observe all stations.
- **Continue the Trend** – Risk Management is an ongoing process. Once a successful training program has been developed, commit to repeating it on a regular basis, and make changes whenever necessary.

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