

# National Drowning Prevention Week

## Social Media Plan

July 18-24, 2021

### Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories

#### Introduction

The Lifesaving Society designates the third full week in July as National Drowning Prevention Week (NDPW) to focus community and media attention on the drowning problem and drowning prevention. NDPW is a flagship “Community Activation” for Canada.

Drowning prevention typically becomes a priority to media and the public when a tragedy occurs. Community activations such as NDPW can bring positive attention to preventable water-related incidents, and build awareness through standardized messaging to influence and change behaviors. NDPW provides a focus around which the public, media, affiliate members and leadership volunteers, injury prevention partners and government can plan news releases, do television and radio interviews, and deliver public demonstrations and other events.

The daily themes are suggestions for how you can target your NDPW campaign and use specific messages to address trends seen in the Society’s drowning reports and the data from the Drowning Prevention Research Centre.

The key messages can be used on social media - please be sure to include the #NDPW2020, #SNPN2020 and hashtags.

Don’t forget to also mention us on Twitter and Snapchat @lifesavingabnwt, Instagram @lifesavingsocietyabnwt or Facebook (Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories) so that we will see the post and re-tweet, like or share the content.

If your organization does not have social media accounts you can post messages on a personal account or follow the Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram and share our posts.

Stay tuned for additional social media resources including an Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook photo filters as well as campaign photos containing key themes and messages.

#### Main Messages To Emphasize

The main messages below were selected because of the major risk factors presented in the Canadian Drowning Report – 2020 Edition

- **Prevent Drowning.** Over 400 Canadians die in preventable water-related incidents annually. Even one drowning is one too many.
- **Watch me, not your phone.** Always actively supervise children around the water - distractions are deadly.
- **Be Boat Smart - Wear a Lifejacket.** Choose It. Use It. Always wear a lifejacket when in a boat.
- **Learn to Swim to Survive.** Everyone should have the right to learn swim survival skills. If you don’t know how to swim, take a Swim to Survive class.
- **Swim with a buddy.** Take a buddy and look out for each other, its what friends do.
- **Know your limits.** Stay sober when in, on or around the water. Alcohol consumption is a factor in almost 40% of boating-related fatalities. Both alcohol and cannabis use impairs judgment, reflexes and balance.
- **Be Water Smart all year round.** You can save a life - yours and someone else’s. Take a learn-to-swim, lifesaving or first aid class today.

# Day 1 – Sunday July 18



**Overall Theme:** The Drowning Problem

**Theme 1 (Sunday):** Introduction to NDPW - Prevent Drowning

**Please Use and Tag:** #NDPW2020 #drowningispreventable #drowningprevention #bewatersmart

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## KEY MESSAGES

- As of April 2021, the United Nations adopted a resolution on drowning prevention, of which Canada was a co-sponsor. This will bring more awareness and urgency for stakeholders to take action on this preventable problem.
- National Drowning Prevention Week (NDPW) is the Lifesaving Society's annual drowning prevention awareness event.
- The Lifesaving Society's NDPW takes place July 18-24, 2021.
- With over 400 Canadians drowning in preventable water-related incidents annually, drowning is the third leading cause of unintentional death among Canadians under 60+ years of age. Even one drowning is one too many.
- The age groups with the highest risk of drowning are young adults 20-34 years of age, baby boomers 50-64 years of age and seniors over 65 years of age. Children under the age of 5 are also at risk.
- Most commonly victims of drowning are male, especially those between 20-34 years of age.

## SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS

- Share your Mayor's proclamation of National Drowning Prevention Week (The Society will be requesting these from all Mayors and will share proclamations with local affiliates)
- Get in contact with local news and radio to promote drowning prevention
- Post photos of people in front of a NDPW banner
- Social media giveaway contests
- Send out tweets highlighting statistics

## SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Have a media announcement, send out media releases and invite media to your facility to promote your Mayor's proclamation of National Drowning Prevention Week
- Run a trivia challenge using questions about drowning statistics
- Visit the Calgary Tower, High Level Bridge in Edmonton and Lethbridge City Hall to see them lit blue and white for Day 1 of NDPW!

## Day 2 – Monday July 19



**Theme 2 (Monday): Watch Me, Not Your Phone**

**Please Use and Tag: #NDPW2020 #drowningispreventable #drowningprevention #bewatersmart**

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### KEY MESSAGES

- Don't wait until it appears on your News Feed! The majority of drownings in children under 5 years of age is due to lack of supervision.
- In Alberta and the Northwest Territories, between 2007 and 2016, 100% of drowning deaths among children occurred due to absent or distracted adult supervision.
- Drowning is the 2nd leading cause of unintentional injury death among Canadian children under 10 years of age.
- Drowning is fast and silent, often occurring in less than 30 seconds. It is critical that parents and caregivers watch their children while they are in the water and not be distracted - watch your child not your phone.
- Stay Within Arm's Reach! Adults and caregivers should be within arm's reach of young children when in or near the water.
- "Unattended toddlers" are high risk because they are mobile, curious and require close and constant supervision by an adult.
- Children under 5 years old are the least capable of self-rescue of any age group. Most of these children were alone and playing near water when they fell in and drowned.
- Infants and young children under 5 years are especially at risk in the bathtub. In 2011-2015, 100% of drowning deaths among infants under a year old occurred in a bathtub.
- Lifejackets are a layer of protection, but do not replace adult supervision.
- **Backyard Pool Safety**
  - As a result of Covid-19 it is expected more Canadians will stay home and utilize their backyard in the summer and this may present an increased risk of drowning for homes with toddler pools, hot tubs, and backyard pools.
  - Empty toddler pools after it rains and anytime an adult can not provide active supervision.
  - Private backyard pools continue to be the primary setting where children 1-4 years of age most often drown.
  - Control and restrict access to water with layers of protection such as gates, fences, alarms, and other barriers.
  - Provide active, direct supervision by designating a responsible adult to be a 'backyard pool lifeguard'.

### SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS

- Send out tweets highlighting statistics.
- Watch me, not your phone campaign materials.
- Photos of caregivers within arms' reach.
- Photos of a parent on phone while children are swimming.
- Photos of parent(s) swimming with children while a phone is on the table.
- If relevant include backyard pool safety tips.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Download a copy of the Caregiver Supervision Workbook from [www.lifesaving.org](http://www.lifesaving.org)
- Provide a backyard pool safety checklist.
- Host a family swim safety day.
- Try the twelve second rule activity found in our Water Smart® Activity Guide.

## Day 3 – Tuesday July 20



**Theme 3 (Tuesday): Be Boat Smart® - Wear a Lifejacket**

**Please Use and Tag: #NDPW2020 #drowningispreventable #drowningprevention #boatsafety**

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### KEY MESSAGES

- **General Messages**
  - Get carded! Take your boating safety course and get the Pleasure Craft Operator Card.
  - STARTboating® is a national program from the Lifesaving Society designed to educate new boaters on the basics of how to be safe and responsible boaters.
- **Boat Sober!**
  - Alcohol consumption is a factor in 32% of boating-related fatalities.
- **Lifejacket Use.**
  - Choose It. Use It. Always wear a Lifejacket.
  - Lifejackets don't work if you don't wear them. Not wearing a lifejacket was a factor in 74% of boating deaths.
  - Even strong swimmers need to wear lifejackets.
- **Safety Tips**
  - Don't boat alone. Boating alone was a major risk factor in boating-related fatalities (21%).
  - Stay seated. You can easily fall out of a small powerboat, canoe or kayak.
  - Check the condition of your boat and accessories.
  - Always have a boat safety kit on board.
  - Know before you go. Check the weather forecast and learn about local hazards.
  - Watch out for other swimmers and boaters. Always have a spotter when towing water - skiers and tube riders.

### SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS

- Send out tweets highlighting statistics.
- Tweets promoting the PCO exam at branches/affiliates if relevant.
- STARTboating® campaign materials and/or link to [www.startboating.ca](http://www.startboating.ca) website.
- Photos of boat and safety equipment.
- Photos of people wearing lifejackets on a boat.
- Split screen photo of do and don't with lifejackets.
- Video of how to properly wear and size a lifejacket on a range of different ages and sizes.
- Run a social media giveaway contest for a lifejacket.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Host a lifejacket clinic.
- Local conversations with conservation officers to help promote safety at provincial and regional parks.
- Provide a boat equipment/boat safety checklist.
- Provide a checklist for ensuring your lifejackets are in good shape.

## Day 4 – Wednesday July 21



**Theme 4 (Wednesday): Learn to Swim to Survive®**

**Please Use and Tag:** #NDPW2020 #drowningispreventable #drowningprevention #swimtosurvive  
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### KEY MESSAGES

- Swim skills need to be taught, they are not innate. Most drownings occur close to safety – can you survive an accidental or unintentional fall into the water?
- Swim to Survive® is different than swimming lessons - not a replacement for them.
- Swim to Survive® teaches the necessary skills to survive an unexpected fall into deep water. Meeting the Canadian Swim to Survive® Standard is an important first step to being safe around water.
- Basic swimming ability is a requirement of any meaningful attempt to eliminate drowning in Canada. Swim to Survive® defines the minimum swim skills needed to survive an unexpected fall into deep water.
- Everyone deserves to learn swim survival skills.
- Make sure all family members can learn the 3 skills:
  - Roll into deep water
  - Tread water for 1 minute
  - Swim 50 metres

### SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS

- Send out tweets highlighting statistics.
- Family Swim to Survive® poster.
- Photos of families, children and teens trying the Swim to Survive® standard.
- Video of people doing Swim to Survive®.
- Video of the variations of the Swim to Survive® skills.
- Run a social media giveaway contest for Swim to Survive® stickers and wristbands. Can be purchased at [www.shop.lifesaving.org](http://www.shop.lifesaving.org)

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Support affiliates in setting up Swim to Survive® events at local facilities.
- Run a Swim to Survive® Day.
- Contact the Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories Branch for Swim to Survive® resources.

## Day 5 – Thursday July 22



**Theme 5 (Thursday): Know Your Limits**

**Please Use and Tag: #NDPW2020 #drowningispreventable #drowningprevention #knowyourlimits**  
**@lifesavingabnwt (Facebook & Twitter) @lifesavingsocietyabnwt (Instagram)**

### KEY MESSAGES

- The highest water-related fatality rates in 2011-2015 included Baby Boomers 50-64 years of age and young adults 20-34 years of age.
- Baby Boomers need to adjust their risk taking behavior as they age. They may be older but not as resilient in a life-threatening situation. Know your current swimming ability.
- Young adults tend to participate in high risk activities. Know your limits and know the dangers of being in, on or around the water.
- Stay sober when in, on or around the water. Alcohol was a factor in many boating fatalities.
- Both cannabis and alcohol affect judgement, balance and reflexes.
- The major risk factors for drowning among adults aged 35 and older include not wearing a lifejacket when relevant, being alone and alcohol consumption.
- Choose It. Use It. Always wear a lifejacket. Lifejackets don't work if you don't wear them (see Boat Smart key messages).
- Lifejackets are a boats version of a seatbelt - always wear a lifejacket when boating.
- Plan your activity, be accompanied, follow instructions and stay away from at risk areas.
- Communicate your itinerary with someone you trust.
- Be aware of your environment. Make sure to be informed of weather forecasts and any changes related to the swimming area.

### SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS

- Send out tweets highlighting statistics.
- Focus on local stories to reinforce statistics.
- Photos of people around 50-70 years of age in a small craft while wearing lifejackets.
- See Water Smart social media ideas.
- Social media giveaway contest of lifejacket(s) (available for order through the lifesaving society at a discounted rate).

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Plan a water safety scavenger hunt.
- Play pin the boat on the dock – explain how this is difficult when one (or more) senses are impaired.
- Provide a fillable itinerary sheet that can be given to a trusted person.

## Day 6 – Friday July 23



**Theme 6 (Friday): Be Water Smart® - Swim With a Buddy**

**Please Use and Tag: #NDPW2020 #drowningispreventable #drowningprevention #bewatersmart @lifesavingabnwt (Facebook & Twitter) @lifesavingsocietyabnwt (Instagram)**

### KEY MESSAGES

- **General**
  - Every year many drownings occur while engaged in aquatic activities - where people intended on being in the water, but something went wrong. 20% of people drowned unexpectedly and 2/3 occur in open water.
- **Always swim with a buddy.**
  - Many drowning deaths happen when swimming alone.
  - If you're not within arms' reach, you've gone too far! Always actively supervise children.
- **Open Water Messages**
  - Know before you go! Check weather and water conditions before heading out.
  - Know what's below! Protect your neck. Go feet first into water the first time. Never dive into shallow water.
  - Substance use and swimming don't mix. Stay sober when in and around the water.
  - Lifejackets don't work if you don't wear them or wear them correctly.

### SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS

- Send out tweets highlighting statistics.
- Photo of people swimming with a buddy.
- Photo of Buddy the Lifeguard Dog #buddythelifeguarddog
- Post photos of items/skills that could help prevent drownings unique to your city/province.
- Contact Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories Branch for Swim to Survive® resources.
- Share photo of safe measurements for ice.
- Promote Splashy Mission: <http://www.nagerpoursurvivre.com/games/>

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Contact the Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories Branch for kids colouring sheets.
- Run a 'hit the target' activity with a variety of different rescue aids.
- Run a swim buddy relay race.
- Rent our mascot, Buddy the Lifeguard Dog, for your event.

## Day 7 – Saturday July 24



**Theme 7 (Saturday): Be Water Smart® All Year Round**

**Please Use and Tag: #NDPW2020 #drowningispreventable #drowningprevention #learntoswim  
@lifesavingabnwt (Facebook & Twitter) @lifesavingsocietyabnwt (Instagram)**

### KEY MESSAGES

- Register yourself and your family in swimming lessons. Swimming is a life skill that lasts a lifetime.
- Take a Lifesaving Society Bronze course to learn important self-rescue and first aid skills.
- Learn how to rescue others from water emergencies in the Lifesaving Society's Bronze Medallion course.
- Take a Bronze medal, Lifesaving First Aid, or CPR course today.
- Drowning prevention is a year-round effort. Always be safe in, on, and around water and ice.
- Always measure ice before going out on it. Avoid slushy ice, thawed ice that has recently refrozen, layered or rotten ice caused by sudden temperature changes and ice near moving water (i.e. rivers or currents).
- Wear buoyant suits with thermal protection to increase your chances of survival if you go through the ice. If you do not have one, wear a lifejacket over an ordinary snowmobile suit or layered winter clothing.
- No ice is without some risk. Even thick ice may be weak. Be sure to measure clear hard ice in several places.

### SUGGESTED SOCIAL MEDIA IDEAS

- Send out tweets highlighting statistics.
- Photos of children and adults taking swim lessons.
- Photos of public trying lifesaving skills.
- Photos of a group of people doing CPR on manikins.
- Photo of Bronze medals.
- Social media giveaway contest for first aid equipment and/or whistle.

### SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Provide information on your facility's courses.
- Contact the Lifesaving Society Alberta and Northwest Territories Branch for resources on ice safety.
- Practice a simulated ice and/or cold water self-rescue.
- Hand out ice thickness cards – can be purchased at [www.lifesaving.org](http://www.lifesaving.org)