



Safely Supporting the Visually Impaired in the Aquatic Setting



Presented by:

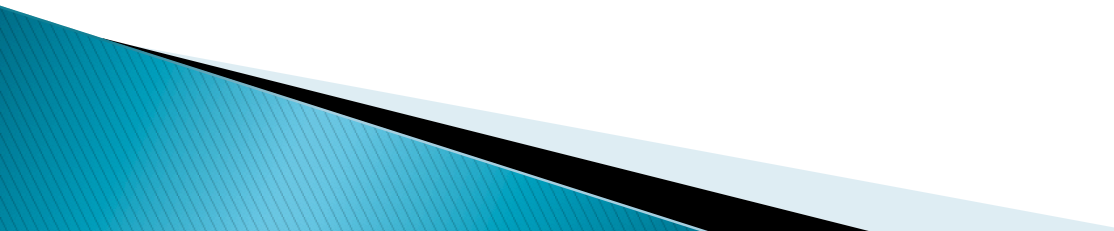
SUSANNAH LOCKETTI

WELL ADAPTED TRAININGS

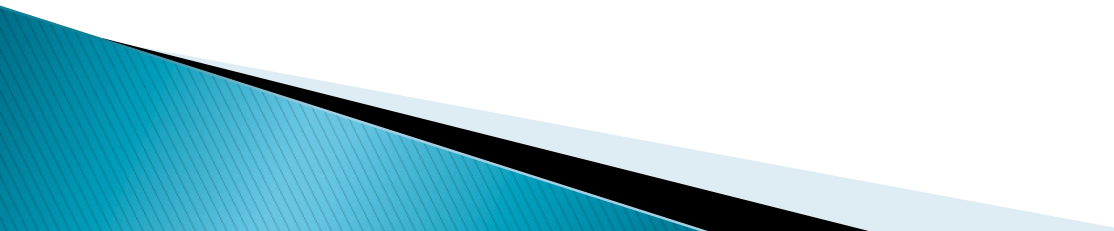
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**Providers of on-site water safety training to meet the
DDS Community Water Safety Policy staff training requirements.**

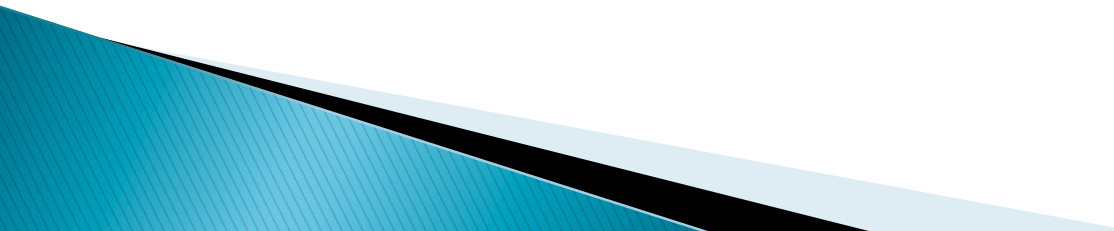
Goals for this Training

- 💧 **Reinforce the individualized safety needs of visually impaired swimmers in a variety of settings.**
 - 💧 **Identify ways to reduce safety risks in the swim environment.**
 - 💧 **Learn solutions to common issues you may encounter in the swim environment with visually impaired swimmers**
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BEFORE SWIM

- 💧 **Review the swimmer's water safety assessment (WSA) prior to every swim outing**
 - 💧 **Confirm the swimmer is medically cleared to swim**
 - 💧 **Check the swim bag BEFORE you leave to be sure swimmer has everything they need based on the WSA and the setting you are swimming in..**
 - 💧 **Determine staffing BEFORE you arrive.
Don't wing it.**
- Offer a tactile exploration of any new site prior to 1st visit.**
Thoroughly describe setting in detail
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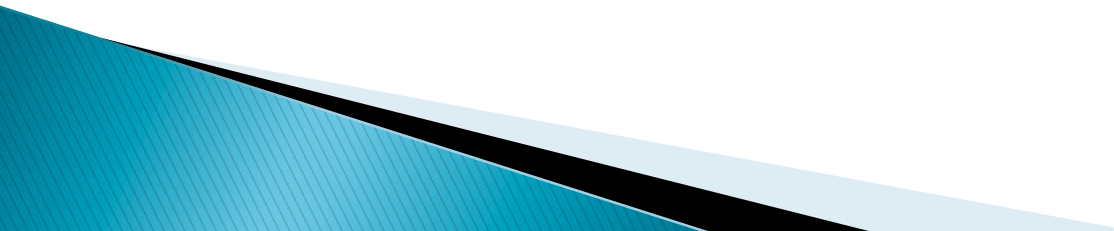
IN LOCKERS/BATHROOMS

- 💧 **Allow the swimmer to select a consistent place to change to serve as their orientation point for all other areas**
 - 💧 **Be mindful of where a cane is stored to avoid others tripping**
 - 💧 **Assist with toileting and hygiene**
 - 💧 **Identify any fall or trip hazards**
 - 💧 **Foster independence to allow for skill building while describing in detail the setting they are in.**
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POOLS

- 💧 **Assist on the stairs to be sure hand railings are used**
 - 💧 **Water walk to determine how many steps before the deep end**
 - 💧 **Count how many strokes it takes to go the length of the pool. Use this number to determine when to slow down or turn.**
 - 💧 **Swim with an outstretched arm at all times**
 - 💧 **Kickboards are a great device to use at beginning to acclimate safely and to avoid hitting the wall.**
 - 💧 **Tactile feedback from ropes/lane dividers/bright objects**
Listen and/or ask for audio cues for orientation
 - 💧 **For water aerobics, select a spot near a wall or edge**
 - 💧 **Encourage use of main stairs only**
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BEACHES

- 💧 **Buddy system at all times**
 - 💧 **NEVER swim alone in open water**
 - 💧 **Listen for audio cues like talking, music or vehicles to determine where shoreline is**
 - 💧 **Swimming in the direction of waves takes you to the shoreline**
 - 💧 **Talk to swimmer and provide intermittent physical contact such as a tap or hand on shoulder briefly**
 - 💧 **Water shoes to avoid injury/glass on feet**
 - 💧 **Staff should ALWAYS be in open water with a VI swimmer within arm's reach or closer based on WSA**
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CIRCLE OF SAFETY



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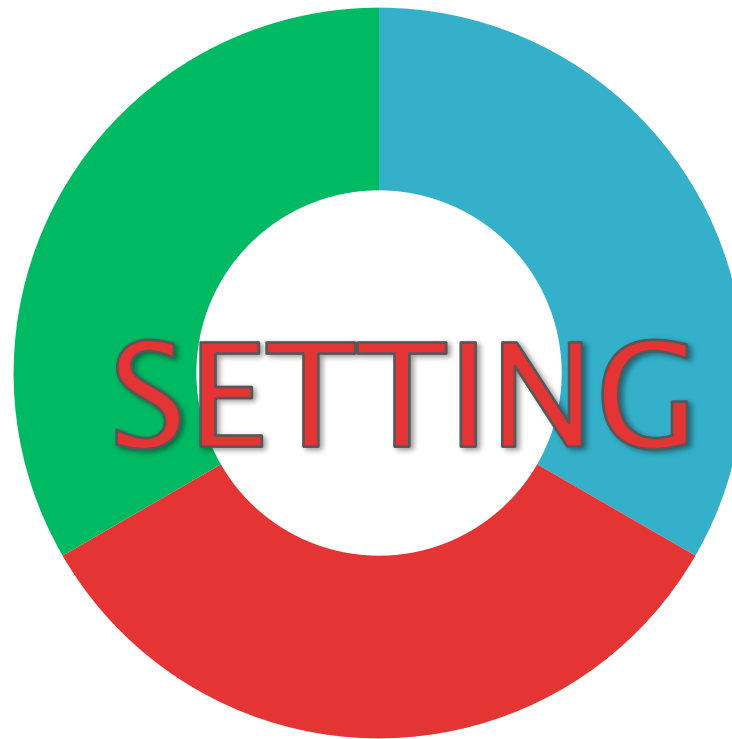
Has the staff been water safety trained? Do they know how to swim? Can they perform a lifesaving action if needed? CPR/First Aid? Does staff swimming ability match the type of swim outing? Does staffing pattern reflect what is in the Water Safety Assessment? How can staff gender affect safety during a swim outing?

Do's and Don't s

- Staff should ALWAYS be in the water supporting swimmers. Poolside staffing is not acceptable. It is not about your preference on swimming—it is about their right to be safely supported.
- Staff should NEVER be on their cell phones or any other electronic device. ALL eyes on swimmers.
- Determine your staffing game plan BEFORE you leave for the swim outing.
- Prepare a Water Safety Plan for the outing and stick to it! No deviations whatsoever.
- Monitor toileting and hygiene.
- Provide familiar, consistent staffing to form a recognizable routine for swimmers
- Suggested sight guide for Visually Impaired until they learn the setting well and demonstrate safety
- Do not force swimmers in the water if they decline once at the swim opportunity. It will lead to behaviors and potentially safety issues. Have them sit and ask again in a few minutes. If they continue to decline that's ok.
- Ask permission before providing hand over hand assistance
- Always keep swimmers within arm's reach
- Do not encourage hot tub use if you do not know if their doctor has approved it.



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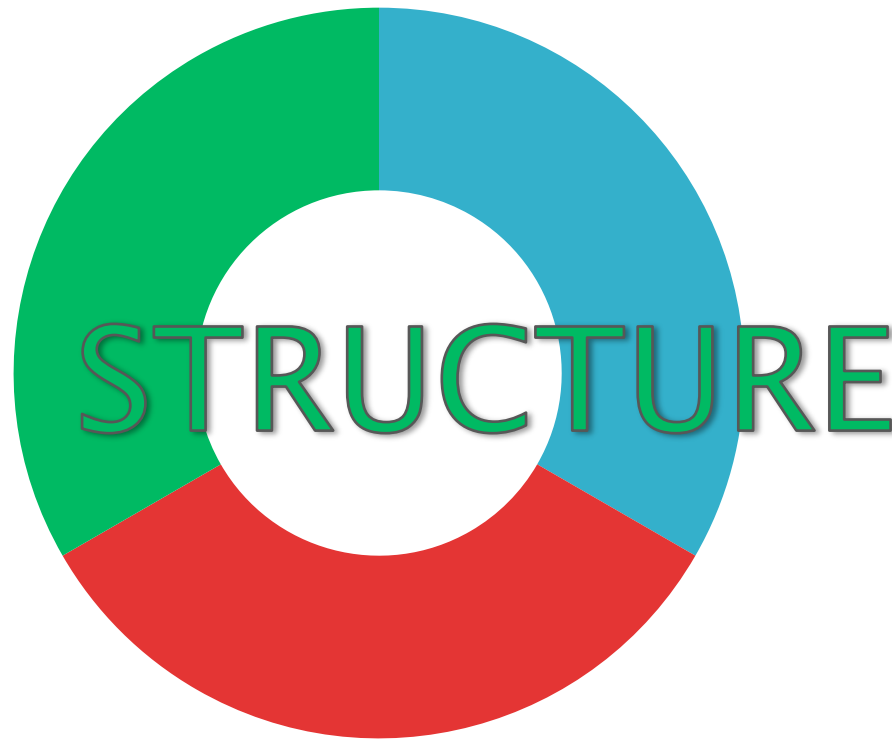
Is the location lifeguarded or non-lifeguarded? Call ahead to find out!

Do's and Don't s

- Know the weather prior to leaving for swim if swimming outdoors.
- Conduct a site visit to any new setting to determine if it has shade, is accessible for all swimmers and has parking and restrooms nearby.
- Know the location of the nearest AED if applicable.
- Consider time of day and number of visitors.
- Be aware of sound and supervision obstacles. Can you hear and see all swimmers at all times?
- Be mindful of lighting and how it can impact safety.
- Allow the VI to have a tactile exploration of the space BEFORE their first visit.
- Know the water temperature and depths of where you will be swimming.
- Are their drop offs? How do you find out?
- Is there a phone nearby in the event of an emergency?



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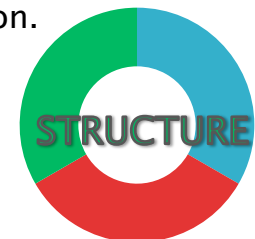


CIRCLE OF SAFETY

IF YOU FAIL TO PLAN YOU PLAN TO FAIL.
Coordinate what you will do when there in advance. Don't wing it!

Do's and Don't s

- Have a consistent routine from start to finish. Reiterate safety rules right before their toes hit the water.
 - Use consistent and universal terminology.
 - If in a group form a circle for highest level of safety.
 - Do not use pool equipment if you are unsure how it is safely used.
 - Examples of excellent water activities to do with swimmers are: water jogging, lap swimming, games with balls or other water sports, water weights or water aerobics.
 - Use the least restrictive form of buoyancy support for swimmers. When do you use a life jacket?
 - Spend your time engaging the swimmers with physical activity. When swimmers have down time that is typically when safety issues arise.
 - Pool stairs and entry/exit are the highest likelihood of a fall or injury
 - Be positive when offering verbal cues or prompts. You have an audience in public.
 - Use common things to try and describe the exercises you are asking someone to do. I.e. if you want a swimmer to reach their arms overhead ask them to touch the sky.
 - Only do what their Water Safety Assessment recommends. Use visual cards if needed.
- **COMMON ISSUES:** Refusals, being unsafe with equipment, inappropriate in lockers or pool, personal space issues, bolting, de-robing in public spaces, physically unsafe, AFR, not following safety rules or listening to lifeguard. Remove from pool if a risk to themselves or others. Use de-escalation.



What is in a properly packed swim bag?

Suit/Swim Shoes
Spare Clothes/Underwear
Wipes/Gloves
Plastic Bags
2 Towels
Personal Care Needs
Goggles/Nose Plug/Mask
Adaptive Equipment
Braille Instructions if Needed



Hair Elastics for Long Hair
Bathing Suit Clips for Straps
Sunscreen if outdoors
Hat/Sunglasses
Games/Reading Materials

What is in a properly packed Safety Backpack?

Cell Phone/Charger
Emergency Fact Sheets
First Aid Kit/CPR Mask
Drinking Water for All
Nonperishable Snacks
Wipes/Gloves
Properly Labeled Meds/Epipen
Sunscreen/Bug Spray
Seizure Protocols
Agency Call List



Anything else specific to your program? Ask your manager or directors. Always communicate! It is better to pack too much than too little.

Thank you for attending!

**We are ALWAYS available as an on-site Water Safety
Training Resource for agencies!
Let us know what you need!**

Email: welladaptedtrainings@gmail.com

Website: www.welladaptedtrainings.wordpress.com

