Cold Water Boot Camp: Knowledge Translation – from the Lab to the Living room

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Problems with Public Understanding of Cold Water Immersion

- Much of the public information on cold water exposure is outdated and incorrect.
- Poor understanding by both the general public and professionals can lead to disaster.

Incorrect Assumptions → PANIC → Bad Decisions → Poor Outcomes
Urban Myths
(Causing Incorrect Assumptions)
• Hypothermia and death occur in minutes
• This is an emergency, all rescue actions must be conducted quickly
• Pre-hospital rewarming is dangerous

Goals of Project
• Create a compelling teaching tool to:
  • provide correct information
  • be memorable
  • change behaviour to:
  • prevent cold water immersion
  • increase survival of CWI

Cold Water Boot Camp Production

Target Groups
• General public (potential victims)
• First responders
• Educators
• Policy Makers
Scope of 4 Video Projects (2006-2011)

• Two programs each in Canada and the USA
• Basic Program for students
• Advanced Program for instructors
• DVD versions (total of 22,500 for free distribution)
• Downloadable from web site

www.coldwaterbootcamp.com
and
www.beyondcoldwaterbootcamp.com

Specific Requirements

• Correct, up-to-date information
• Non-dated ‘look’ – useable for many years
• Realistic demonstrations to emphasize messages
• Comprehensive topics: physiology, physics, survival, rescue, pre-hospital care
• Memorable “Take Home” messages
• recallable in urgent events
Correct Information For 4 user groups

1. Victims
   - Increased Survival
2. First Responders
   - Improved Rescue & Treatment
3. Educators
   - Programs, Delivery
4. Policy Makers
   - Procedures, Equipment, Budgets

Increased Success

Product Distribution and Exposure
(5000 new website hits/month)

US
5000 copies
Canada
7500 copies
US
5000 copies
Canada
5000 copies
Feedback on Program Effectiveness

I couldn’t breath or swim in the cold water, as my 10-yr old watched from my boat. I thought to myself, “was I really going to drown in front of my son”. Then I heard your words “don ’t panic, and control your breathing”. I did that, and could then swim to safety. You saved my life. (Ottawa police officer)

I think every kid in the area should see the unbelievable effects the cold water has on you and how quick it happens (Minnesota Firefighter)

It has helped change the views of even the staunchest dissenter within our paddling world.

I will be wearing my life jacket at all times on the water. Thanks.

I showed the DVD to our Sea Scouts last night and I know I’ll never get any arguments again about wearing PFDs.
Future Work
• Evaluate penetration and effectiveness of CWBC.
• Create similar program for northern Europe

References


Funding
Canada SAR New Initiatives Fund
Wallop-Bureaux Aquatic Resources Fund
US National Water Safety Congress