

Water Quality, Safety and Drowning Prevention to Preschool Children in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Abstract : Water safety is crucial for all ages, but particularly for children. In the past decade, preschool institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa have seen the inclusion of swimming as one of the co-curricular activities. However, these countries face challenges in adopting frameworks, staffing, and resources to heighten water safety, quality, and drowning prevention, hence the focus of this research. It is worth noting that drowning is a leading cause of injury-related deaths among children. Universally, the highest drowning rates occur among children aged 1-4 years and 5-9 years. Preschool children even stand a higher risk of drowning as they are active, eager, and curious to explore their environment. If not supervised closely around or in water, these children can drown quickly in just a few inches of water. Thus, this empirical review focuses on the identification, assessment, and analysis of water safety efforts to curb drowning among children and assess the quality of water to mitigate contamination that may eventually pose infection risks to the children. In addition, it outlines the use of behavioral theories and evaluation frameworks to guide the above. Notably, a search on ten databases was adopted for crucial peer-reviewed articles, and five were selected in the eventual review. This research relied extensively on secondary data to curb water infections and drowning-inflicted deaths among children. It suffices to say that interventions must be supported that adopt an array of strategies, are guided by planning and theory as well as evaluation frameworks, and are vast in intervention design, evaluation, and delivery methodology. Finally, this approach will offer solid evidence that can be shared to guide future practices and policies in preschools on child safety and drowning prevention.

Keywords : water quality and safety, drowning prevention, preschool children, sub-saharan Africa, supervision

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