

DATE

NAME

TITLE

ORGANIZATION NAME

STREET ADDRESS

CITY, PROVINCE POSTAL CODE

SALUTATION,

**RE: Survival Swimming for School-Age Children**

The [Canadian Drowning Prevention Plan](#) was formally released at the World Conference on Drowning Prevention in Vancouver, British Columbia on October 17-19, 2017. The report highlights that drowning is a preventable public health problem.

The Canadian Drowning Prevention Plan was developed as one of the four supporting strategies outlined in the World Health Organization's: [Preventing drowning: an implementation guide](#) (May 2017). The Canadian Drowning Prevention Coalition, tasked with developing the Canadian Drowning Prevention Plan, was formed in response to a call to action from the World Health Organization's 2014 report: [Global Report on Drowning: Preventing a Leading Killer](#).

The aspirational long-term goal of the Plan is for zero drowning deaths in Canada in 50+ years. The Plan is dynamic and will reflect the progress of data, actions, and outcomes in eight key focus areas for drowning prevention.

Drowning is the second leading cause of injury related death for Canadian children. Every year almost 60 children drown. This is equal to more than two classrooms full of children. Each year another 140 children must stay in the hospital due to non-fatal drownings. Non-fatal drownings can result in long-term health effects. It can affect the way a child thinks, learns, and plays (Source: [Parachute Canada](#)).

The WHO Global report on drowning states “Evidence shows that a range of interventions are effective at preventing drowning. Among others, these include the strategic use of barriers to control access to water, provision of safe places such as day care centres for pre-school children, **and teaching school-age children basic swimming, water safety and safe rescue skills.**”

The Lifesaving Society’s Swim to Survive<sup>®</sup> program is simple, easy and an affordable way for schools to give students a meaningful swimming experience and provide them with essential water survival skills. Swim to Survive<sup>®</sup> keeps students engaged, moving and having fun and increases their physical literacy. Inclusion is a key element of the program design and can be adapted to meet cultural considerations. The program is appropriate for all ages and skill levels. Anybody can learn and anyone from a school, community organization or aquatic facility can teach the program.

For some children, particularly new Canadians, participating in Swim to Survive<sup>®</sup> will be their first step to being safe around water. There is clear evidence that survival swimming skills decrease drowning, promote active citizens and decrease health costs. **This long term investment in our children reduces mortality and morbidity from aquatic disasters by 50%.**

The Lifesaving Society and (ORGANIZATION NAME) strongly encourage you to support our schools to offer Swim to Survive<sup>®</sup> to provide students with essential basic swimming, water safety and safe rescue skills, a proven method to prevent drowning.

CLOSING,

YOUR NAME

YOUR TITLE