



# AUSTSWIM Learning Pillars

AUSTSWIM Learning Pillars are a framework for industry, government and community; ensuring quality for accreditation and education.

The standard is high; we are committed to implementing an effective structure and process to reduce drowning, the impact of aquatic accidents and strive for safer swimming and water safety.

## Background

- Documented evidence highlight the need for the establishment of an industry recognised framework for the teaching of swimming and water safety to educate the community sector in understanding aquatic education. (2013 *Community Perceptions AUSTSWIM & Royal Life Saving*)
- The causes of drowning should dictate the way we teach swimming and what children should learn. Weak or missing skills, attitudes or knowledge are causal elements in precipitating *drowning episodes*. (*International Journal of Aquatic Research, 2008, 2, 372-382 Robert Keig Stallman, Malfrid Junge and Turid Blixt*)
- In order to prevent drowning every Australian child must have basic swimming and water safety skills and knowledge of how to be safe when in, on or around water. (NSWC Goal 01)

## Purpose

- Reduce drowning deaths by strengthening industry and community understanding of swimming and water safety educational elements
- Implement a framework that promotes and improves standards and practices in teaching swimming and water safety
- Through the Learning Pillars Framework develop a strategy to raise awareness, enhance understanding and improve knowledge of swimming and water safety education across all sectors of Australian government and society
- Strengthen the skills, standards and recognition of our paid and volunteer drowning prevention workforce. (NSWC Goal 06 *Reduce Drowning Deaths by Strengthening the Aquatic Industry*)

## Method

- Phase 1: (2010) Explored swim school operation across Australia as assessed by program managers, owners and coordinators (n=350)
- Phase II: (2012) Quantitative national research investigated the importance teachers placed on swimming and water safety learning outcomes and their perception of desired community learning outcomes (n=5,652)
- Phase III: (2013) Parents participated in national quantitative research of attitude and perception toward swimming and water safety education (n=1,658)
- Phase IV: (2014 Current) Comparative qualitative research observational and cross sectional in nature. Primary aged children participate in minimum 20 week classes. Analysis will examine knowledge and skill level of control group and pre-planned curriculum group.

## Results

- All phases of research and the case studies demonstrated the importance parents place on personal survival skills, water safety knowledge and survival
- Further results indicate the industry should also consider greater levels of feedback on student learning and development.
- Evidence from research results indicate a clear disconnect between the educational focus of teachers delivering swimming and water safety lessons and parent valued learning outcomes

## Conclusion

Research results initiated a call to action. AUSTSWIM developed Learning Pillars as a framework for enhancing aquatic knowledge, skill and understanding. AUSTSWIM Learning Pillars:

- Align with educational principles in the National Curriculum Framework
- Provide a benchmark for government in defining population standards in swimming and water safety knowledge, skill and understanding of aquatic environments and activity
- Offer an awareness and quality measure for parents in choosing and assessing program suitability for their family
- Define guiding principles for industry
- Are a benchmark in planning and learning outcomes for AUSTSWIM Teachers of swimming and water safety

## AUSTSWIM LEARNING PILLARS

### KNOWLEDGE

- Aquatic Information
- Personal Competence
- Environmental Conditions
- Experience

### SKILL

- Water Safety
- Body shape and movement diversity
- Acquisition based on practise and ability
- Propulsion

### UNDERSTANDING

- Thought and Inquiry
- Problem Solving
- Decision Making
- Consequence
- Empowerment

## COMPETENCY

### Government and Industry

Use AUSTSWIM Learning Pillars as a:

- Standard of swimming and water safety education
- Measure of community competence for safer aquatic participation
- Benchmark for minimum standard for population education in swimming and water safety

### Program Managers

Learning Pillars are utilised as a framework by program managers for:

- Swimming and water safety program curriculum
- Teacher development
- Program marketing and promotion
- Raising community awareness of essential learning elements in aquatic education

### AUSTSWIM Teachers

Use AUSTSWIM Learning Pillars as a framework for:

- The development of lesson activities and lesson plans
- Guiding and supporting students
- Learning and development toward safer aquatic participation
- Quality competency assessment

### Parents and Participants

Parents use AUSTSWIM Learning Pillars as a:

- Tool to assess and select quality programs for their family
- A guide to learning elements in swimming and water safety education

Participants receive the benefit of AUSTSWIM Learning Pillars through:

- Knowledge - Water awareness and familiarity gained by education and experience
- Skill —The learned ability to competently participate in water activities
- Understanding — Gaining insight and good judgement in and around aquatic locations