Safety: Everyone’s Concern

Spike Lobdell
Founder - President, CEO
New England Science & Sailing Foundation (NESS)
• Emergency's happen when we least expect them
• Every second counts
• It is crucial to have a plan and to know your plan
• Good safety is a process that is ingrained throughout the organization all year round
NESS is an Ocean Adventure Non-Profit that Provides STEM-Based Education Programs

• We use sailing, marine science, powerboating, and adventure sports as platforms to teach STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)
• NESS engages students in experiential learning that builds confidence, teamwork, stewardship, and leadership skills
• Operates of out 10 locations including 5 NESS classrooms in local schools
• NESS started as a community sailing program in 2002 with 14 students
NESS’s Growth Has Been Phenomenal

NESS By The Numbers 2017

Full time employees: 26
AmeriCorps Members: 15
Seasonal Staff: 30
Locations: 10
Partnerships: 100+
Revenue: $2.6 Million

Annual Fundraising:
  Operations: $1.8 Million
  Capital: $300,000
NESS Has Remained True To Its Core Values

INCLUSIVENESS
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING
PERSONAL GROWTH
STEWARDSHIP

Safety Is Essential To Everything We Do!
Prior Planning and Practice Can Prevent Most Accidents

• Developing a “culture” of safety is essential
• There are five steps to develop an Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
• You can never practice too much, especially on communication pathways!
What Is A Culture Of Safety?

A culture of safety:

• Focus on effective systems and teamwork to accomplish the mutual goal of safe high quality performance

• Acknowledges the inevitability of errors and proactively seeks and eliminates them

Characteristics of a safety culture:

• Environment where employees can report errors or near misses

• Collaboration across levels to seek solutions to weaknesses

• Demonstrate willingness to direct resources ($$ - people - time) to address safety concerns
Building A Culture Of Safety Does Not Happen Overnight!

- Leadership sets tone
- Highlight safety from day one
- Budget for safety investments – Make it a priority!
- Train all levels
- Reporting processes
- Debriefing
- Train, practice, drill, and execute
Recruiting Qualified Staff Is The First Step To Enhance Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NESS Year-Round Staff Certifications</th>
<th>NESS Seasonal Staff Certifications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 26 Staff</td>
<td>• 30 Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 15 Coast Guard Licensed Captains</td>
<td>• 8 Coast Guard Licensed Captains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 20 American Red Cross Professional Rescuers</td>
<td>• 17 Professional Rescuers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 2 CPR/First Aid/AED</td>
<td>• 13 CPR/First Aid/ AED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Staff members attend 8 in-service trainings per year

Seasonal staff attend 1 week of training prior to employment, in-services once a month
Our 8 Safety ‘Commandments’

• The safety and security of NESS’s students, staff, and volunteers are NESS’s highest priority
• NESS’s EAP guides our response to emergencies and must be followed by all employees
• Employees shall only take such actions as are within their respective levels of training
• When a student is in our care, custody and control, NESS safety and security protocols will govern
• If you see something, say something
• When in doubt, call 911 – always have a communication device
• All NESS locations, vehicles, and powerboats must have a first aid kit and post or carry a summary of the EAP
• NESS has set standards of personal conduct for all employees on and off the water
The Importance Of Preparation

$1 invested in preparation can save $15 in a crisis  Source: Stamford Univ.
Preparing A Well Thought Out Emergency Action Plan (EAP) Is The Backbone Of Safety

- Identifies your vulnerabilities and any emergency situation
- Indicates how to prevent or mitigate potential effects
- Describe staff response
- Provide a blueprint for recovery
- Creates plot form for practice

Should be condensed into a EAP handbook and flashcards for all employees
The EAP Is A Living Document

Continuous Improvement Process
The Process Of Planning For Emergencies Has Some Surprising Side Benefits

• Working groups who develop the plan, learn a lot about each others work
• Solidarity and enhanced teamwork through the process of developing the EAP
• Build a sense of camaraderie
• Subliminal messages to all stakeholders that reinforces culture of safety
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Step 1: Assess Your Needs

• Review your performance objectives
• Assess operating environment
• Identify threat scenarios (on/off the water)
• Examine past threats/disasters for frequency and duration
• Quantity of and quality of resources inhouse and available in the area
• Availability and external resources (time to hospital etc.)
• Prioritize potential threats to allocate resources
Step 2: Create A Written Policy

- Declare your intent and objectives for each threat
- Specify planned actions by site and limit actions
- Align external supporting organizations (USCG, Police, etc.)
- Designate people by name and qualifications to respond
- Create a well defined communications plan
## Step 3: Plan Levels Of Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code Color</th>
<th>Code Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CODE RED</td>
<td>Threat of an intruder</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODE YELLOW</td>
<td>Suspicious activity in town, bomb threat, weapons/dangerous instrument, violent actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODE GREEN</td>
<td>Fire, bomb threat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODE BLUE</td>
<td>Boater in distress, missing or lost persons</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODE PURPLE</td>
<td>Hurricane, high winds, lightening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODE TAN</td>
<td>Child assault and abuse, written threat, fuels spills, power outage, dangerous marine incident</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Step 4: Train Your Staff

- Ensure staff are appropriately certified and drilled between certifications
- Create muscle memory, it takes 1500 compressions to make CPR second nature
- Train, practice, drill, and execute - in-service at least 6 times a year to maintain preparedness
- In an emergency, some staff will have to relinquish authority from their primary role

80% of accidents are caused by human error that could have been avoided with proper training and practice  source: Red Cross
Step 5: Safety Audits

• Change will occur constantly in equipment and personnel
• Incident reports are critical to the audit
• Review incident reports to see what went well, and to identify areas of improvement
• Recruit someone for an outside perspective to help with the audit
Lessons NESS Learned In The Process Of Developing Our EAP

- Encourage input from all levels of your organization
- Expect emergencies to happen at the most inopportune time
- Keep it simple and direct
- It is a living document
- Understand that your response is an important part of your reputation

Reputations take years to develop............
Nano-seCONDS TO DESTROY!
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Why Is Practice Important

• People normally operate at 20% of their ability to make decisions during a crisis (American Red Cross)
• With training you can accomplish tasks if learned even if your brain partially shuts down (Practice, memorization by muscle memory)
• Training must involve the entire organization
• Practicing will increase team cohesion
• Will enhance communication by all speaking common language
Defining Communication Links Is Critical Before, During and After An Emergency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POINT OF CONTACT</th>
<th>RADIO CHANNEL</th>
<th>NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Services</td>
<td>Coast Guard: 16</td>
<td>Dispatcher: 911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stonington Police: (860) 599 4411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Westerly Police: (401) 596 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Groton Police: (860) 445 2451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fishers Island Police: (631) 788 7144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New London Police: (860) 447 5269</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Call list until you reach someone to activate response cascade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Coordinator</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Angela Connolly: (860) 912 9389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations Director</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Ben Yanni: (203) 837 0881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Mary Horrigan: (860) 227 2522</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sailing Director</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Mark Zagol: (860) 572 8434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESS</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Mothership: (860) 835 9562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources Director</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Jodie Kubachka: (910) 689 2114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESS President/CEO</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>Spike Lobdell: (243) 982 8804</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Have important numbers posted everywhere!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Rules Of Thumb For Communicating In An Emergency

• Keep each communication short and concise
• Never give more than 3 instructions at a time
• Try where possible to give instructions in writing as this promotes efficiency
• Have your social media plan defined
Practice Can Come In All Forms

• Set up life like scenarios spontaneously
• Drills at inconvenient times
• Safety scavenger hunts
• Debriefs post drill
• Safety checklist for maintenance
• Include all stakeholders in practice (board, vendors etc.)

IMPORTANT: Make safety practice a part of your ongoing daily processes at all levels!!!
Don’t Forget

• Keep a copy of your EAP in convenient locations
• Overcommunicate your plan
• Supply every employee with a copy/wallet cards
• Have staff and local emergency numbers pre saved in your phone
• Have in-service trainings specifically on the EAP
• The EAP is a living document
Share Your Plan With Other Organizations In Your Area

You will get better and raise quality overall
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“Disasters Don’t Plan Ahead. You Can.”

“If you think you need to call 911, CALL 911!!!!”
CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS:

PUBLIC RELATIONS (aka the Spin Zone)

Stuart Streuli
Communications Director, New York Yacht Club
Your Mission: Protect the Brand

Who are “the brand”?

- Regatta host (yacht club, sailing center, public entity etc.)
- Race organizers
- Staff & Volunteers
- Sponsors
- Competitors
Crisis?
Crisis!
Without a Plan
With a Plan
Job #1: Don’t Get In the Way

• Rescue operations always take priority. Don’t take up bandwidth that could be used for essential operations

• Avoid releasing specifics that may change in the near future

• A little information at the right time can buy a lot of time (relatively) for rescue efforts
Key Components to Effective Crisis Communications PR

• A plan
  • “Once you hear the thunder, it’s too late to build the ark.”
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• Compassion
  • “Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care.” —Theodore Roosevelt
What Makes a Good Crisis Communications PR Plan

• Easily Digested/Understood
  • Comprehensively by key staff
  • Essential components by volunteers who may only work one event
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• Realistic
How to Pick a Spokesperson

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  • Quick thinking
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• Familiar with...
  • The host organization
  • The event
  • The sport
How **Not** to Pick a Spokesperson

- Intimately involved in the event and/or incident
  - Primary race official or event organizer
  - In charge of the rescue effort
  - Vested interest in a stakeholders or other obvious bias
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- Someone Who Loves the Spotlight
  - This can’t be about them
  - May be required to act dumb
  - Will need to be the buffer between press and key event organizers and/or rescue coordinators
How to Draft a Statement

• Just the Facts
  • Who, what, where, when
  • What rescue services involved
  • What other steps have been taken
  • No adverbs (i.e. sadly, unfortunately, tragically)
  • No quotes
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• Timing of next update
When to Issue a Statement

• A soon as you can, given:
  • The incident is not rapidly evolving
  • Key stakeholders have been notified
  • Communications team has assembled & reviewed facts
  • “We are aware of the situation and gathering information. As soon as we have something concrete to report, we will do so.”
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• When you have something significant to report
  • Good news? You want to present it
  • Bad news? You want to get in front of it
How to Release a Statement

• Website
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• Website

• Email
  • Event participants
  • Club/organization members
  • General public
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• Social Media
  • Only works if channels are previously established
  • Twitter is still king for breaking news (link to statement)
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• In person
  • Be prepared to take questions
How to Take Questions

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  • “We’re not comfortable discussing those details until we have everything confirmed.”
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  • “Let me check on that and get back to you.”
  • “We’re not comfortable discussing those details until we have everything confirmed.”
• Deflect whenever possible to public officials (police, fire, coast guard, etc.)
  • “I will defer to the local authorities to answer that question.”
You’re Not Finished Yet

• Monitor how the situation is perceived
  • Social media
  • Google alerts
  • Local news sources
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  • Social media
  • Google alerts
  • Local news sources

• Report back to key stakeholders
  • Flag officers
  • Sponsors
  • Class associations
  • Competitors
Your Opinion Matters

Please open the *Sailing Leadership Forum* app and complete the *session survey* found in the *menu bar* for a chance to win a *free drink ticket*!

*Thank you for attending this session*