
WRMC



WILDERNESS RISK MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

WRMC Action Steps 2014

The true value of attending the WRMC is in the resulting action you take upon returning to your organization. The following list is intended to help you know where to start.

Action steps are measurable tasks or ideas you should be able to do or implement in your program within a reasonably short time frame. They are not meant as large sweeping changes, rather as small steps to move you forward in your risk management strategy.

Each presenter has contributed three action steps from their 2014 WRMC workshop. In some cases the action steps parallel the main take home points of the workshop; in other cases the action steps are examples of a multitude of possible follow-up action.

The following action steps are arranged alphabetically and include pre-conference workshops and posters.

ACA Stand-Up Paddleboard Instructor Certification Workshop

Jeremy Oyen, Nick Cross

1. To increase knowledge and awareness of Industry Preferred Practices pertaining to the instruction of Stand-Up Paddleboarding.
2. To increase knowledge of risk management and judgment for on-water programming (instructional and guided experiences).
3. To increase knowledge and understanding of the skill assessment process that can be utilized by programs for staff and participant personal and professional growth.

A Critical Evaluation of Certifications

Curt Davidson, Graham Ottley

1. Evaluate how much organization time, money, and resources to dedicate to training or certifying your staff.
2. Identify appropriate certification requirements to perform certain jobs within your organization (i.e. Wilderness First Responder versus Wilderness First Aid).
3. Create more effective staff training to better prepare for the most likely incidents that you may encounter.

And the Winner is...(?) Hot Issues, Hot Cases

Catherine Hansen-Stamp and Reb Gregg

1. Review your organization's risk management plan and/or policies to identify and address issues raised in this session's legal discussion.
2. Identify issues raised in this session that affect your operation and incorporate case discussion and outcome into your organization's staff training.
3. Work with legal counsel to review case law in your jurisdiction that address 3 issues raised in this session. As a next step, consider having legal counsel provide you with a brief review of case law and laws that specifically impact the different aspects of your operation and your documents, prioritizing discreet areas.

Beyond Read and Repeat: Training Staff to Understand and Analyze Risk Management Policies

Aaron Gorban, Jess Wilson, Winslow Carroll

1. Implement at least one new risk management training lesson that challenges your staff's cognitive processing within your next staff training cycle.
2. Prepare for your next training on risk management policies by performing a trigger/action/reason analysis for all policies to be taught.
3. Collaborate with another WRMC workshop participant or staff trainers, program administrators, or experienced staff from your organization to identify and generate additional policy training components where trainees could be given the opportunity to apply and analyze policy rather than read and repeat.

Buried: A Mountain Guide's Reflection on a Tragedy

Ken Wylie

1. Change guide team leadership and communication strategies.
2. Dissolve compartmentalization between personal habits, biases and decision-making in risk related environments.
3. Make human virtue a guide to managing safety in risk environments through the application of social courage, truth, acceptance, and human connection.

Case Studies in Wilderness Medicine

Shana Tarter

1. Review the experiences in which you have provided medical care, identify at least one thing that was different than you experienced in your training, and share that with your peers.
2. The next time you provide care in a remote setting, ensure you step away from the patient/scene, review your notes/verbalize your notes, and create physical or temporal distance before making key decisions.
3. Add an extended (12 or more hours) scenario into staff training to prepare instructors for long-term care responsibilities.

Concepts and Strategies for Developing Risk Management Related Decision Making in your Staff

Aaron Ball

1. To provide an understanding of how people make decisions so as to understand the implications for specific decision-making development strategies.
2. To review the findings from the study so programs can have at a holistic perspective for field staff decision-making development.
3. To draw implications for administrators as which elements of staff development should receive the most attention and how to potentially integrate those elements into the program.

Containers as Boundaries: Proactive and Participant-Centered Strategies to Raise Risk Awareness

Tim Hare, Aaron Slosberg, Ryan Wagner

1. Work with colleagues to describe your institutional risk tolerance, thus the boundaries of your institutional container – state it in one line.
2. Define the specific elements and practices that shape the various containers that hold a participants experience on your programs – map them out.
3. Define three areas where you would like to strengthen layers at your institution with greater intentionality and three areas where you would like to allow more participant and leader autonomy.

Contracting with Third Parties

Catherine Hansen-Stamp, Justin Talbot, Todd Duncan

1. Analyze your organization's current (or projected) contracting arrangements. Consider whether those arrangements align with your mission, and adjust as appropriate. Characterize the nature of the remaining relationships, and develop screening guidelines.
2. Work with informed legal counsel to develop a contract template or template/s for your contracting relationships.
3. Consider targeted staff training regarding roles and responsibilities in contracting relationships.

Creating an Emotionally Safe Environment on Wilderness Expeditions

Janae Turner, Katie Dalbey, Amy Ambachtsheer

1. Include emotional safety in staff training.
2. Review you organizations policies and procedures, as well as paperwork given to students and families, to ensure organizational guidelines regarding emotional are clear and transparent.
3. Conduct review on any safety incidents (behavioral, motivational, or otherwise) in which potential issues of emotional safety occurred.

Crisis Management: A Preplan in Action

Drew Leemon

1. Identify three to five questions that would likely be asked of your organization in a crisis.
2. Craft organizational and crisis message points unique your organization.
3. Practice two new methods of monitoring social media.

Decision Making: Errors of Perception

Gates Richards

1. Address decision-making strategies within your team as a concept worthy of attention, but do so without focusing on a specific decision.
2. Conduct some of these activities within your team to illustrate that we all have misperceptions – this is a fact, not a judgment.
3. Create a decision-making system within your team to minimize the chances of only one perspective being used in the DM process.

Electronics for the Outdoor Leader

Bob Myron

1. Identify the electronic tools that you feel would benefit your program.
2. Create a budget around the use of these tools and training your staff. Get the budget approved and implement this technology into your program.
3. Develop an action plan for what to do when the electronics fail (both in the field and when they return).

Grassroots Organizing: A Tool to Shift Your Risk Management Culture

Melanie Mac Innis, Alex Kosseff, Sascha Paris

1. Identify 1-2 potential changes in risk management practices with volunteers to obtain valuable input, increase buy-in, and promote universal implementation.
2. Learn the training and safety approaches of peer organizations and implement 1-2 of their best ideas in your program.
3. Receive and discuss examples of different standard and requirements used in volunteers organizations.

How to Prepare and Execute Effective Critical Incident Simulations with Administrative Staff

Mark Vermeal

1. Identify 3-5 plausible critical incidents.
2. Determine where on the simulation continuum their organization currently is and plan the first in a series of administrative staff simulations.
3. Conduct the simulation and implement changes.

'I'm Not Like the Others': 3 Activities to Minimize the Emotional Risk of Exclusion

Aparna Rajagopal-Durbin

1. Facilitate three exercises from the "NOLS Inclusion Briefing Guide" (found in the WRMC on-line resource center) with your staff.
2. Encourage staff to use the "Iceberg of Diversity" activity (found in the WRMC on-line resource center) with program participants.
3. Every week, practice one act of allyship, and encourage your staff to do the same.

Incident Reporting and Analysis

Billy Roos, Mark Vermeal

1. Create a format/form for incident reporting in the field.
2. Implement an incident reporting system/database for documenting incidents.
3. Define a method(s) for incident analysis and reporting.

Inclusion and Cultural Competence for the Outdoor Educator

Aparna Rajagopal-Durbin

1. Facilitate three exercises from the "NOLS Inclusion Briefing Guide" (found in the WRMC on-line resource center) with your staff, and encourage them to use the "Iceberg of Diversity" activity with program participants.
2. Incorporate inclusive structural practices and language to change your organizational culture.
3. Document and share inclusion-related field incidents with the WRMC community so we can all learn from them.

Insurance Provisions in Outdoor Organization Contracts and Permits

Don Pachner

1. Create an outline of insurance that can be referred to for contract review.
2. Review the insurance provisions of your organization's current contracts, permits and other written agreements for compliance and contact your insurance agent/broker, if necessary.
3. Review the need to put written agreements in place where a need exists to define insurance responsibilities of your organization's relationship to third parties.

Intro to Climber First Aid

Seth Hawkins, Bryan Simon

1. Climbers and leaders will maintain awareness of common climbing overuse injuries and their warning signs, improving injury prevention.
2. Climbing leaders will implement evidence-based rather than anecdotal or experiential treatments for common or dangerous climbing conditions.
3. Climbers will implement their gear for climber-specific first aid treatments when necessary.

It Just Got Worse: Managing Conventional and Social Media in Crisis Situations

Skip King

1. Determine who in your organization will handle the key outreach and monitoring roles in a crisis situation.
2. Identifying internal and external human and physical resources that will facilitate crisis management.
3. Assessing internal human assets, and identifying training needs to enhance existing skillsets.

It's Not All Megafuana and Altitude: Mitigating the Small but Mighty Hazards

Nelson Bruni, Laura Luttrell

1. Examine how your organization currently trains staff and participants on identification of these hazards.
2. Revisit your relationship with the land management agency where you operate. Are there assumptions about tolerable levels of ticks and poisonous plants where you camp, work, hike, etc?
3. Create an organization-wide system for tracking sites where ticks or poisonous plants have been an issue and where staff can formally request mitigation methods for their programs.

Keeping Field Staff Fresh: A Model for Ongoing Training

Rebecca Bear, Jeremy Oyen

1. Outline your organization's current field staff training timeline and assess current strengths and weaknesses in the plan.
2. Use the REI Outdoor School Instructor Training plan, provided in the 2013 WRMC Resources, as a resource for improvements to your plan.
3. Design one new field assessment for your staff.

Managing Legal Issues After a Serious Incident: What to Do, What to Say

Frances Mock

1. Identify the person in your organization who will be responsible for collecting evidence, interviewing witnesses, and managing the legal issues after an incident.
2. Create forms to help track communications, evidence, and witness statements. (Examples of these forms will be shown.)
3. Educate your staff about the discoverability of internal communications and the need to be thoughtful about what you say.

Media Training: Sound Bites, Tips and Tricks, and Communicating in a Crisis

Travis Taylor, Karmina Zafiro

1. Designate spokespeople for your organization.
2. Develop key messages for likely crisis scenarios.
3. Rehearse media interview skills.

Mock Trial Focus Group

Tracey Knutson, Wilma Gray, Tony Clapp

1. Learn issues central to wilderness recreation lawsuit and discover the range of responses and attitudes that can be expected from jurors at trial.
2. Armed with these insights, program leaders/owners can assist your attorney to tailor strategy for handling a lawsuit to fit best with your organization, including discovery and possible settlement.
3. Provide risk assessment data useful for your program.

Near-Critical Incident Response

Brendan Madden

1. Attendees will be able to recognize and react to a Near-Critical Incident
2. Attendees will be able to create a structured, informative and supportive debrief
3. To create a culture of comfort with reporting serious near misses in your organization

Near Miss Incidents are Telling You Something Important. Are you Listening?

Josh Cole, Steve Smith

1. Interview field staff to determine whether or not near misses are being reported and if they are not being reported, determine why.
2. Carefully track, analyze and disseminate learning from near misses.
3. Design an organizational plan for promoting a culture that uses near misses as opportunities to develop better risk management practices.

NOLS Risk Management Training for Administrators

Liz Tuohy, Katie Baum Mettenbrink

1. Take two exercises from the training and use them in an administrative staff training in the next six months.
2. Ask your insurance carrier if they have tools that you can use for driving training.
3. Clarify emergency response roles and procedures, in writing, with your contractors.

Parent Phone Call Lab

Justin Talbot

1. Identify two characteristics or behaviors of potential parents (or clients) that are likely to hook you into angry or defensive communication. Write down one strategy for responding constructively to each of those behaviors.
2. Identify five pieces of information you want to have written down before making your next parent phone call about a behavioral incident. Then do the same for a medical incident. Incorporate those lists into your next staff training.
3. Identify two people in your program or a similar program who can serve as resources for you in preparing for or debriefing a challenging parent phone call. Contact those people in the next six months about serving as resources for you in the future.

Performing Under Pressure: Making Good Decisions in Stressful Times (pre-conference)

Deb Ajango

1. Create a realistic and intense/stressful emergency-based scenario (field or administrative) that can be used to improve instructor performance under stress.
2. Develop organizational guidelines or a create a form that can be used to help people give and receive effective feedback.
3. Create a useable and effective checklist that is single-task oriented and that can help guide employees through a field emergency.

Performing Under Pressure

Deb Ajango

1. This workshop will identify how and why people under-perform during intense situations. Participants will be asked to identify specific teaching methods that can be incorporated into their own organizations that can improve instructor performance under stress.
2. Participants will be given ideas for modifying field emergency action plans; they then will identify how these ideas can be incorporated into their own organizations in an attempt to improve instructor performance under stress.
3. Participants will be given ideas for modifying administrative action plans; they then will identify how these ideas can be incorporated into their own organizations in an attempt to improve administrative performance under stress.

Physiological Effects of Adventure Activities: Is it All in Our Minds?

Adrew Bailey

1. To enhance program outcomes, planners should be aware of the physiological impacts of various activities on participants of varying experience.
2. To better facilitate outdoor activities and group experiences, field instructors should be aware of the potential mental stress induced by various activities.
3. To ensure individual and group safety and satisfaction, instructors and program planners should take into account participant experience, activity milieu, group processing procedures, and counter-intuitive energy expenditures for each course experience.

Risk Management: An Ocean Rowing Perspective

Lloyd Figgins

1. Identify areas of planning that need to be completed prior to embarking on an expedition.
2. Develop and understand what an effective training plan is.
3. Apply a strategy to test every element of the expedition to failure.

Risk Management: The Traumatic Aftermath

Will Marling

As an introduction to area of crisis response and intervention:

1. To identify emotional needs after a critical incident, risk managers should diagram the emotional impact to determine priorities.
2. To equip team leaders with skills to support those harmed and traumatized, risk managers should introduce crisis intervention checklists to team leaders during training.
3. To promote physical and emotional health, risk managers should follow a self care checklist with every managed incident.

Risk Management Update to Drowning and Submersion Injuries

Justin Doroshenko, Seth Hawkins

1. Outdoor trip leaders should receive specialized training for any aquatic environments in which they anticipate possible rescues.
2. Outdoor trip leaders of trips in or around water should receive pre-trip training in ways drowning care differs from other standard first aid.

3. Risk management practice should have clear mechanisms to identify swimming ability on trip participants, screening policies regarding conditions which could increase drowning risk, and clearly establish policies regarding supervision of swimmers on trips.

Screening the Whole Applicant

Anneliese Thies

1. The next time you approach a participant interview ask yourself: Who are you talking to? Have you tailored your approach to match their age and experience? Why are you talking with them? Do your questions serve a purpose? How are you talking with them? Is your goal to build confidence or set boundaries?
2. Review the communication between admissions and program delivery, are you each getting what you need from this relationship? What could be strengthened?
3. Review your 2013 incidents, what was your rate of undisclosed issues? Were they primarily medical or psychological? Come up with interview questions that might address your highest areas of undisclosed issues.

Should Wilderness Program Staff Always Accompany Their Group? Three Views

Ken Kalisch, Brad Daniel, Andrew Bobilya

1. Decide where you stand regarding the use of Solo & Independent Student Travel in outdoor programming. As an administrator or instructor, will you allow these components in your program? If a difficult decision, do further research and reflection.
2. Document to what degree you will permit unaccompanied student experiences in your program. If permitted, describe the boundaries or limits of your practice. If an administrator, document instructional policies in detail for your staff manual.
3. Develop a plan for training instructors to manage the risk of unaccompanied student experiences, if they are permitted. Use scenario-based discussions or role-plays to clarify what decisions are left to staff judgment and what is not (i.e. organizational policy).

Small Organization Emergency Response Plans: Where do I Start?

John Kelley

1. Identify individuals and organizations that will be resources in the creation of your emergency response plan.
2. Create an outline of key features for your organization's emergency response plan.
3. Develop strategies to build collaboration with local emergency services.

Standards Do Exist for International Programs

Natalie Mello

1. Use Standard 8 (Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management) when developing or reviewing a program.
2. Use the standards to develop a new or review an existing international program.
3. Acquire one resource recommended in the session and apply it to your program

Stupidity Explored: Mindful Leadership Amplified

Lester Zook

1. Develop a tool or questionnaire for leaders to help them evaluate what personal qualities they possess that might predispose them towards an incident.
2. Schedule a meeting with program leaders to discuss, or routinely include as a part of trip debriefs, input on specific programmatic and administrative vulnerabilities.
3. Seek out one or two well known program leaders and ask them to begin sharing stories of prior incidents and mistakes, to begin establishing a climate of mutual learning from past incidents and mistakes.

Supporting Struggling Participants: Strategies for Managing Behavioral and Mental Health Issues

Katie Baum Mettenbrink

1. Define two zero-tolerance and five case-by-case participant behaviors for your organization, and check alignment between administrators and field staff at next opportunity by soliciting examples of each and discussing.
2. Query field staff about challenging behavior or mental health incidents they have faced. Choose 2-3 as case studies for next staff training or briefing. Talk through the case studies and identify what management strategies might be appropriate and how staff could determine whether the situation is field manageable.
3. Make a list of 5 questions you'd like field staff to consider in assessing a challenging behavioral or mental health issue. Aim for questions that will help your staff decide whether the participant should continue on your program.

Tech Talk: Safety, Communication, and Navigation in the Backcountry

Chip Noble

1. Review current safety and communications protocols with your team and determine what role satellite technology might play in your trip planning, sharing, and exploring process.
2. Review the strengths and weaknesses of each form of satellite communications technology and select the one that is appropriate for your team.
3. Revise your team's safety and communications protocols to incorporate the newly selected satellite communications technology and stage a practice event with escalating levels of emergency response.

10 Steps to Better Risk Management

Alex Kosseff

1. Identify up to 10 steps your program can take to improve risk management fundamentals.
2. Establish a plan including human resources and a timeframe for addressing the risk management steps relevant to your program.
3. Evaluate the next steps for your program's risk management efforts such as forming a risk management team, conducting an internal or external risk management review, or enhancing leader training.

The Law Says 'Yes' to Risk

Reb Gregg

1. Understand your organization's legal duty of care, and it's implications for a negligence claim.
2. Review your areas of exposure to claims of a client/student, and strategies for protecting the client and your organization in those areas.
3. Conduct your annual review of your Participant (or other exculpatory) Agreement now.

The Normalization of Deviance

Aram Attarian

1. To enhance program safety, instructors should familiar themselves with the factors associated with "normalization of deviance."
2. With your program's risk management committee develop a plan to address "normalization of deviance."
3. To create an awareness of "normalization of deviance", program administrators should include a session on this topic in their annual staff training(s).

The Value and Practice of Medical Screening

Amberleigh Hammond

Participants will be able to:

1. Analyze what the purpose of medical screening is for your program.
2. Articulate your organizational risk tolerance as it pertains to medical screening, accepting participants, and the complexity of a possible evacuation.
3. Create/modify your medical form based on the purpose of their screening, staff training, and course environment.

Top 10 General Dos and Don'ts to Avoid in Liability

Tracey Knutson

1. Entities should have greater awareness of where their practices intersect with new and increasing liabilities.
2. Entities will have a heightened awareness of what the latest greatest claims are being made by plaintiffs and their counsel and how to avoid those traps.
3. Entities will be able to take these issues back and examine their existing policies and procedures for areas that can and should be updated or revisited.

Training to Failure and Other Unlikely and Highly Effective Training Strategies

Jeff Jackson

1. Articulate the boundaries of your program's risk tolerance. These boundaries separate normal and non normal.
2. Plan staff training to test the boundaries of normal.
3. Tell staff "you're the guide, you're in charge, you need to respond". Repeat repeatedly.

Training Your Staff to be Risk Managers

Liz Tuohy

1. Make case studies available to staff of serious incidents that have occurred in the type of terrain they will lead trips.
2. Establish a routine method to record and discuss near misses or incidents after each trip.
3. Identify areas in which decision making roles are not clearly defined pertaining to risk management systems.

Transplant: Cultural Diversity from City to Wilderness

Milosz Peirwola

1. Identify language that discreetly communicates your trade to your clients.
2. Educate employees of common misconceptions.
3. Create platform to share experiences and provide support.

Use of Participant Agreements: Releases and Related Issues

Catherine Hansen-Stamp

1. Work with informed legal counsel to develop (or revise) your participant agreement, consistent with your state's laws, your organization's mission and other relevant considerations. Remember that these documents should have informational (practical) value for participants/parents, as well as articulate appropriate legal protection for your organization.
2. If you work with minor participants, have your legal counsel assist in addressing this issue thoughtfully in your written participant agreement, and considering applicable law.
3. If you have, or are planning to have participants electronically sign your participant agreements, work with your legal counsel and e-sign provider to assure compliance with legal requirements regarding, e.g., the e-sign process, signature, and electronic storage and retrieval of documents.

Vetting for International Programs: What Can You Know; What Should You Know?

Bill Frederick

1. Conduct an internal training focusing on mindfulness in field staff decision making and incorporate new vocabulary into staff supervision, mentoring and coaching.
2. Run an effective debrief for all field programs.
3. Implement one new staff training component centered around awareness of decision-making.

Where are We Now? Epinephrine and Outdoor Programming 2014

Frances Mock, Dave Yacubian

1. Learn the law governing epinephrine administration in the states where your organization operates.
2. Develop or re-evaluate your policy after learning the laws governing your operations and after considering all the legal and programming issues.
3. Discuss your policy for the use (or non-use) of epinephrine and your reasoning with your Board and be sure your employees understand your policy.