

Submitter: Dr. Belinda E. Stillwell

The purpose of this presentation is to bring forth the voices of those individuals afraid in water who have experienced the impact of traditionally-taught swimming lessons on their fears. Many individuals of all ages who are afraid in water have attended traditionally-taught swimming lessons in hopes of overcoming their fears. Although small pockets of instructors exist that understand the impact fear has on one's ability to learn swimming skills, many are unaware of what may be required to help these individuals succeed. By interviewing those afraid in water it is the intent of this researcher to find out exactly how aquatic professionals can best format their curriculum and instruction to better fit the needs of these individuals.

Preliminary results from the first interview showed that traditionally-taught swimming lessons, though unintended, did not fit the needs of one individual; rather it heightened fears, lowered self-confidence and contributed to a lifetime of avoidance of water. It is hypothesized by this researcher that many others share this individual's concerns and challenges. With continued investigation it is hoped that the information gathered will form the basis for a practical and successful intervention package that can be used by all professionals who come in contact with those afraid in water.

heard with regard to teaching strategies and methods that have been effectively implemented when working with those afraid in water. Synthesizing these best practices will bring about new curriculum and instruction that will far outweigh traditional approaches. Every child, adolescent and adult should feel comfortable near, on, in and beneath water as a result of their movement experiences in school. Additionally, input from renowned aquatic agencies and organizations around the world is deeply needed in this effort to help eliminate preventable drownings.