

Conducting an Effective Teacher Training Workshop

Your classroom teachers are among the most important members of your *Risk Watch* team. According to NFPA, “We believe teachers are the key to a safer future. By teaching children to recognize and avoid risks, we can help them lead fuller and more productive lives.” Teachers are tasked with an awesome responsibility and have much to accomplish with very little discretionary classroom time. The better your support, the more likely your teachers will be able to help you achieve your *Risk Watch* goals. A key element of that support is providing a teacher workshop at the beginning of your implementation project.

In many cases, your workshop will be your first contact with your *Risk Watch* teachers and your first opportunity to make a positive impression. Generally, your teachers will be excited about *Risk Watch* following an effective workshop. They will be committed to the project and will expect the total support of your coalition. Your teachers will measure your commitment to the project by how well you follow through on your commitments and the quality of your support.

Before your workshop:

- Meet with a representative teacher(s) and the school principal(s) to plan the workshop.
- Schedule the workshop during a timeframe that will ensure the highest attendance. Your workshop should last between one and two hours.
- Choose an appropriate location for your workshop. Arrange seating so that teachers from the same grade levels will be sitting together.
- Invite special guests to participate: the school superintendent, principal(s) and emergency room physician, nurse, EMT/paramedic, police officer, or parent who can speak first-hand about his/her experience with preventable childhood injuries.
- Make arrangements to provide door prizes (cups, mugs, t-shirts, etc.). Personalize handouts, attendance certificates, and other meeting materials.
- Invite the media. If possible, arrange interviews with the teachers and other dignitaries.
- Make plans to serve refreshments.
- If possible, make arrangements to provide teachers with continuing education units (CEUs) for the workshop and your implementation project.
- Arrange for appropriate audio-visual equipment and other presentation material (pens, paper, flip charts, markers, etc.).
- Duplicate copies of the *Risk Watch* Longitudinal Study Final Report and the appropriate state correlations for your audience found at www.riskwatch.org.
- Set up a registration table where teachers will receive other handouts, nametags, and the *Risk Watch* module appropriate for their grade levels.

Following is a suggested outline and script for your teacher workshop. A Powerpoint presentation of this workshop is located at www.riskwatch.org.

Welcome and Introductions (10 minutes)

Introduce yourself, coalition members, and other important guests. Briefly explain the purpose of the workshop. Point out the emergency exits from the meeting room. Discuss what should happen if the emergency alarm sounds. (Use every opportunity to model safe behavior.) Ask participants to briefly introduce themselves (including the grade they teach) and tell of any experience they or their students have had with preventable injuries.

Overview (20 minutes)

Use the following questions to stimulate a discussion about childhood injuries.

Slide #1

Risk Watch Training Workshop

Slide #2

True or False?

For children ages 14 and under the #1 health risk is drug abuse.

Slide #3

False! The #1 health risk is unintentional injuries. Each year in the United States, unintentional injuries kill more than 6,000 kids and permanently disable more than 120,000.

Slide #4

True or False?

Most people in North America have planned and practiced a home escape plan.

Slide #5

False! According to the National Fire Protection Association, only sixteen percent of North Americans have developed and practiced a home fire escape plan.

Slide #6

True or False?

About twenty percent of child safety seats are installed incorrectly.

Slide #7

False! According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, four out of five child safety seats in use today are installed incorrectly without caregivers realizing it. The incorrect use of child safety seats is widespread.

Do you think these injuries are just “accidents”? (This is your opportunity to emphasize that most childhood injuries are preventable. Ask the teachers, “What is the best way to prevent these injuries from occurring?” Education is the answer!)

Provide an overview of the local childhood injury problem. If possible, every teacher should have a copy of a fact sheet that contains information on the local injury problem and/or newspaper clippings that address local childhood injuries that could have been prevented. This is the appropriate time for a local pediatric or emergency room physician, nurse, EMT/paramedic, police officer, or parent to speak first-hand about his/her experience with preventable childhood injuries.

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Risk Watch was developed by NFPA with initial funding provided by the Home Safety Council. *Risk Watch* is an injury prevention program designed for children in preschool through grade eight. It addresses the top eight risk areas that injure or kill the most kids every year. *Risk Watch* is divided into five modules, each covering two grade levels. A coalition of leading injury prevention organizations provided the technical information for *Risk Watch*. Technical Advisory Group (TAG) members include: Consumer Federation of America, Duke University Medical Center, National SAFE KIDS Campaign, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Association of Poison Control Centers, American Automobile Association, American Red Cross, Emergency Medical Services for Children, Johns Hopkins University, Maternal and Child Health Bureau (Health Resources and Services Administration), National Safety Council, Sowers Associates, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, United States Fire Administration, and the University of Wisconsin.

Risk Watch was thoroughly tested in schools in the United States and Canada and was proven to be an effective educational program. In addition, an independent three-year longitudinal study was conducted and the results indicated, “*Risk Watch* undoubtedly increases the safety-related knowledge of students.” (Refer teachers to the final report of the three-year evaluation).

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Why teach injury prevention in the school?

1. Caregivers don't always teach their children about injuries and safety.
2. Schools provide an effective learning environment.
3. Teachers ensure that education is age-appropriate.
4. Teachers are role models and act as a link between caregivers and the school.

Personal safety is a value that is learned at an early age. The earlier a child is introduced to the concepts of personal safety and injury prevention, the more effectively injuries can be prevented.

Slide #10

Why use *Risk Watch*?

1. *Risk Watch* is the first comprehensive injury prevention curriculum available for use in schools.
2. *Risk Watch* is based on an integrative, experiential approach to learning. It is age-appropriate and utilizes the latest educational theory and practice.
3. *Risk Watch* has been field-tested and proven to be successful.
4. *Risk Watch* is fun for both teachers and students
5. *Risk Watch* involves caregivers in the learning experience.
6. *Risk Watch* is designed for maximum teacher flexibility.
7. *Risk Watch* can be customized based on local need.

A Look at *Risk Watch* (45-90 minutes)

Slide #11

The Introduction Section includes information on the philosophy of *Risk Watch* and an explanation of what's inside the curriculum as well as some suggested timeframes for your *Risk Watch* lessons.

Risk Watch is very flexible. It can be taught as a "safety unit" that requires just nine hours. In this approach, a one-hour lesson is presented for each of the eight risk areas (eight hours) and then students participate in a one-hour culminating activity from the "*Risk Watch* in Action" section of the module. This is the presentation format you will use for the *Risk Watch* pilot.

Another option carries *Risk Watch* lessons throughout the school year. Using this approach, your students would focus on one risk area each month. Then in May, your students would participate in some of the culminating activities suggested in the "*Risk Watch* in Action" section of the module.

A third option is experiential in nature. This method may be structured to your own discretion, with students using the information and activities provided in the curriculum to guide their own, unique exploration of each risk area.

Slide #12

The next section is called "Getting Into Character." Each module features a character role that will give your students the opportunity to practice the age-appropriate safety skills included in each lesson.

The preschool/kindergarten module uses the "Storyteller" character role. Young children love to tell and listen to stories. Students in these grade levels are encouraged to share their thoughts and experiences as they learn new injury prevention skills.

The character role for students in grades one and two is "Detectives." Why do you think this might be appropriate? (Students at this age are a bit more

sophisticated and better understand the relationship between cause and effect. As Detectives, students will be on the lookout for risks and how they can be prevented.)

The character role for students in grades three and four is “Reporters.” Why do you think this might be appropriate? (Students at this age can practice their language and writing skills, using the “Five Ws,” and can document events in their daily lives. They are encouraged to write and share stories about which situations are safe and which are not.)

The character role for students in grades five and six is “Promoters.” Why do you think this might be appropriate? (Students at this age typically don’t like being told what to do. This module encourages them to apply leadership and advanced communication skills to research and promote injury prevention practices to their peers, family members, and the community.)

The character role for students in grades seven and eight is “Coaches.” Why do you think this might be appropriate? (In this tough-to-reach age group, students become role models and advocates for safety at home and throughout society. Many students in this age group work as babysitters or may have younger siblings at home. While they sometimes feel invincible, they may adopt safer practices for the sake of younger children who are watching.)

Slide #13

The next section contains the “Lesson Cards.” There are eight Lesson Cards, one for each risk area. Let’s look at the lesson card for Fire and Burn Safety. The front page includes an icon that represents the risk area. Open up the card and look at the safety messages in the upper left-hand corner. These are the key messages your students need to learn. Please take a look at the “Know the Facts” section. This gives you some statistical information on why it is important to address this safety issue in your classroom. The Lesson Cards provide you with all the information you will need to present this lesson. On the back of each Lesson Card is a detailed lesson plan, including behavioral objectives. Step-by-step procedures are included as well as additional activities if you want to expand the lesson, such as journal writing and suggestions for getting family and community members involved in the learning process.

Slide #14

The next section is called “*Risk Watch* in Action.” This section includes fun activities that actively involved students in learning about all eight risk areas. Activities include developing a safety fair, creating a newsletter, and performing skits.

Slide #15

The “Caregiver Letters” section includes letters that can be sent home to families. It includes an introduction letter to send home when you begin the *Risk Watch*

program, letters to send home around the December holidays and in the spring, and a letter reminding families to plan and practice a home escape plan.

Slide #16

The next section is called “Evaluation Instruments.” It includes a knowledge test to use as a pre- and post-test. Make sure you duplicate enough copies of each knowledge test and answers for the teacher to use for the pre-test. Knowledge tests for the post-test should be given to the teacher at the end of the nine-week session. You will have your students take the knowledge test as a pre-test. After you have completed all of your *Risk Watch* lessons, have your students take the test again. This will give you a comparison of knowledge gain as a result of the program. There is a sheet to record the test scores for your classroom. I will pick up your tests and completed record sheet to be incorporated into the final report. NFPA is interested in hearing about success stories as a result of the *Risk Watch* program. If a student in your classroom applies knowledge learned through the program in a real situation, please complete the *Risk Watch* Success Incident Report form. An example of a success story would be a child who develops and practices a home fire escape plan with his/her family. Later, a fire occurs at the home and the family uses its escape plan to safely exit the home. You may want to duplicate this form so that you always have a master copy. Please let me know of any successes so that I can assist you in completing the form. I will send it to NFPA and they will review the information and send a certificate signed by the president of NFPA to present to the student.

Slide #17

The final section of each module is called “Accessing Resources.” This section includes suggested resources to help support *Risk Watch* activities in your classroom. A sample letter is included that you can personalize to invite a community representative to visit your classroom.

Slide #18

Each module includes “Icon Cards” for each of the eight risk areas. The Icon Cards in the modules for grades three through eight include student information for use during small group projects. These cards can be duplicated. Also included is a large poster filled with hidden risks. A lesson plan to accompany this poster is included in the “*Risk Watch* in Action” section of each module.

Slide #19

The *Risk Watch* Student Workbooks are designed to enhance lessons taught in the classroom. They are grade-based for kindergarten through grade six. Each workbook covers the eight risk areas included in the *Risk Watch* program. A caregiver letter with suggested family activities can be sent home while you are teaching each risk area. There are three activity sheets for each risk area. You will notice that the activities reinforce basic skills. The activities were designed to help teachers meet the skills being evaluated in state testing. Many of the activities can be integrated into language arts or math.

Let's take a look at what *Risk Watch* looks like in the classroom. This short video is included with every module of the program.

Show "*Risk Watch* Teacher Video". Running time: 13 minutes.

If time allows, have teachers break into small groups. Assign each group a different *Risk Watch* lesson. For example, have one group perform a song from the "We've Got Rhythm" lesson in the preschool/kindergarten module; have another group participate in "The Brainy Babysitter" lesson from the seventh and eighth grade module. Have each group explain their activity to all workshop participants.

Program Implementation (10 minutes)

Your teachers will need detailed information about your *Risk Watch* implementation effort. Provide the teachers with the following information:

- The scope of your implementation effort
- Goals of the program
- The role of teachers in the program
- Specific tasks that teachers need to complete. Such as give students the pre-test, teach *Risk Watch* for nine weeks, give students the post-test, give you the completed *Risk Watch* Test Scores Summary Sheet, inform you of *Risk Watch* successes, provide pictures of *Risk Watch* in the classroom, etc.
- What kind of support the teachers can expect from you
- The evaluation process
- The role of caregivers

Provide each teacher with a written summary that details your implementation timeline including:

- The date for pre-test evaluations
- The start and end date of classroom instruction
- The date for post-test evaluations
- The summary should also include the names and phone numbers of key contact persons. A sample "Teacher To Do List" should also be provided.

It is essential that you take the time to understand the needs and expectations of your teachers. Ask how you can best support them, i.e., providing resources or safety equipment, visiting classrooms, organizing community activities, etc.

Closing (5 minutes)

Make Time for Safety!

Make the time to ensure that teachers understand your implementation effort, especially their role in the program. Ask for questions, emphasize that teachers are the key to this *Risk Watch* project, and reaffirm your coalition's support.

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Remind teachers to utilize the official Web site for *Risk Watch*, www.riskwatch.org. This site includes a special section for teachers. There are games for students and it is a great resource to enhance technology in the classroom. In addition, www.sparky.org has lots of fun games and activities for kids and families.

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Finally, review the following statements:

- Are childhood injuries a problem in our community? Yes!
- Are childhood injuries preventable? Yes!
- What is the best way to prevent childhood injuries? Education!
- Is *Risk Watch* a solution that will work? Yes!

Slide #22

Why *Risk Watch*?