

WORLD DROWNING PREVENTION DAY 2026

CAMPAIGN TOOLKIT

UNITE TO
TURN THE
TIDE



World Health
Organization

ABOUT THE DAY

**Drowning takes more than 300,000 lives a year.
This is the day we Unite to Turn the Tide.**

25 July 2026 marks the 5th annual World Drowning Prevention Day – a global call to action against one of the most preventable causes of death.

Five years on since the UN General Assembly established World Drowning Prevention Day in 2021, the case for action is stronger than ever.

Since 2000, the global drowning rate has fallen by 38% - proof that action works. But every hour, 30 people are still dying.

The evidence is clear, the tools exist, and the strategies are proven. What's needed now is solidarity, at scale.

This year we look upstream – to the actions that save lives long before danger arrives – and call on everyone to recognise and play their part.



HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is for anyone who wants to be part of the effort: partners, advocates, communicators, community leaders, educators, employers and any organization or individual who wants to use their voice to help save lives.

Inside, you'll find:



Practical guidance and actions you can take to do your part



Key messages you can use and adapt to your platform



Ready-to-use social media copy



Simple, practical ways to show your support



Links to useful assets and resources to learn more

USE WHAT'S HELPFUL. ADAPT WHAT YOU NEED. SHARE WIDELY.

Every voice added to this movement helps turn the tide.

THEME: UNITE TO TURN THE TIDE

People often think you save a life by reacting to danger.

But with drowning, the real opportunity is to **save lives before the danger occurs.**

Drowning prevention is not the responsibility of any one person, profession or sector. It depends on action across communities, workplaces, and governments – long before an emergency unfolds. It takes all of us.

When we come together to prevent drowning, the benefits ripple outward – into stronger child survival, safer livelihoods, more climate-resilient communities, and healthier economies.

This year's campaign is a call to every parent, worker, educator, regulator and neighbour to recognise the part we can play, and act on it together.

The campaign is anchored in the [Global Strategy for Drowning Prevention](#), uniting all role players in a shared global goal to turn the tide on drowning and reduce drowning deaths by 35% by 2035.

KEY MESSAGES

Partners, advocates and communicators are welcome to use and adapt these messages across campaigns, events and media:

1 **Drowning claims more than 300,000 lives every year.**
That's 30 people drowning every hour.

2 **Drowning is preventable.**
We know the risks. We have the solutions.
Now we need to scale them.

3 **Children pay the heaviest price.**
Drowning is the 4th leading cause of death for children aged 1–4, and the 3rd leading cause of death for children aged 5–14.

4 **Drowning is a deeply unequal crisis.**
Nine in ten drowning deaths happen in low- and middle-income countries.

5 **Drowning is a climate issue.**
Floods are becoming more frequent and severe, and 75% of flood deaths are due to drowning. Drowning prevention belongs at the heart of disaster risk reduction and climate resilience plans, with stronger early warning systems and community preparedness.

6 **Drowning prevention is bigger than a health issue.**
It's a sustainable development issue – central to child survival, climate resilience, safer livelihoods, education, transport safety and economic productivity. When we prevent drowning, the benefits ripple across communities and society.

7 **Drowning prevention takes a united effort.**
It's not the job of one ministry, one community or one profession. It depends on action across families, workplaces, sectors and governments – often long before an emergency unfolds.

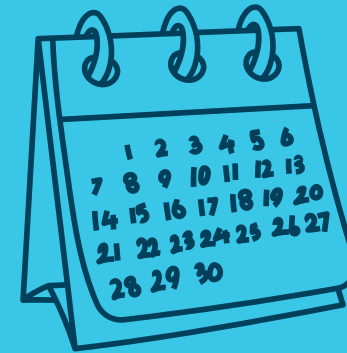
8 **We know how to solve this crisis.**
Swim and water safety education, supervised childcare, lifejackets, CPR training, swimming pool fencing, regulated boats and flood early warning systems all save lives. What's needed is scale. The [Global Strategy for Drowning Prevention](#) sets out a shared global roadmap – uniting governments, communities and partners behind what works.

9 **Investing in drowning prevention is one of the smartest public health investments any country can make.**
Most of the actions that prevent drowning are low-cost, well-understood, and ready to scale. Studies show that scaling just two solutions – supervised childcare and child swim education – could save 774,000 lives by 2050 with a 9x return on investment.

10 **This moment matters: it's time to turn the tide.**
Five years into the global movement, the world has a shared goal – to reduce drowning deaths by 35% by 2035. We have the knowledge and tools, now it's time to act!

NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

300,000+
drowning deaths every year



3  **drowning deaths every hour**

24%
of all drowning deaths are children under 5



92%
of drowning deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries

3RD

leading cause of death for children aged 5–14 (4th for ages 1–4)



75%
of deaths in flood disasters are due to drowning

9x 

return on investment from scaling up two key interventions —
projected to save **774,000 lives by 2050**

KNOW YOUR PART

Turning the tide doesn't only happen in government buildings or international agencies. It happens in homes, schools, workplaces, on boats, at beaches and in communities – every day.

Whoever you are, you have a role to play.

PARENTS & CARE GIVERS

- Watch children closely near any water.
- Cover or fence wells, tanks and household water containers
- Use safe play areas away from water
- Fence pools
- Teach children swimming and water safety skills and rules
- Learn CPR and safe rescue

NEIGHBOURS, FRIENDS & FAMILY

- Look out for each other's children near water
- Share what you learn about water safety with the people around you
- Speak up when you see someone in unsafe conditions
- Encourage your community to organise swim or rescue training

COMMUNITY LEADERS & ADVOCATES

- Spot and fix local water safety risks
- Run community swim and rescue training
- Push for safer pools and covered wells, tanks and household water sources
- Establish or improve flood warning systems
- Advocate for safer work conditions around water
- Ensure people travelling over water reach their destinations safely

EDUCATORS AND SCHOOLS

- Make swim safety, water safety and self-rescue skills part of school curriculums
- Connect families with local swim and water safety resources

WORKERS AROUND WATER (FISHERS, TRANSPORT, SANITATION, CONSTRUCTION)

- Make sure safety equipment, like lifejackets, is always available
- Insist on safety training, drills and equipment
- Report unsafe conditions

EMPLOYERS & OPERATORS

- Comply with, and exceed, occupational safety standards
- Provide training, safety equipment and proper supervision
- Report and learn from incidents around water

YOUTH

- Learn to swim
- Learn CPR and what to do in emergencies
- Teach your friends about water safety
- Speak up about water safety in your community or online

POLICYMAKERS & REGULATORS

- Pass and enforce drowning prevention laws
- Fund proven interventions
- Coordinate across sectors and embed drowning prevention into complimentary policies
- See the [Global Strategy for Drowning Prevention](#) for the full framework

MEDIA & CONTENT CREATORS

- Tell prevention stories, not only rescue stories
- Use your platforms to share practical water safety information
- Amplify community voices and local solutions

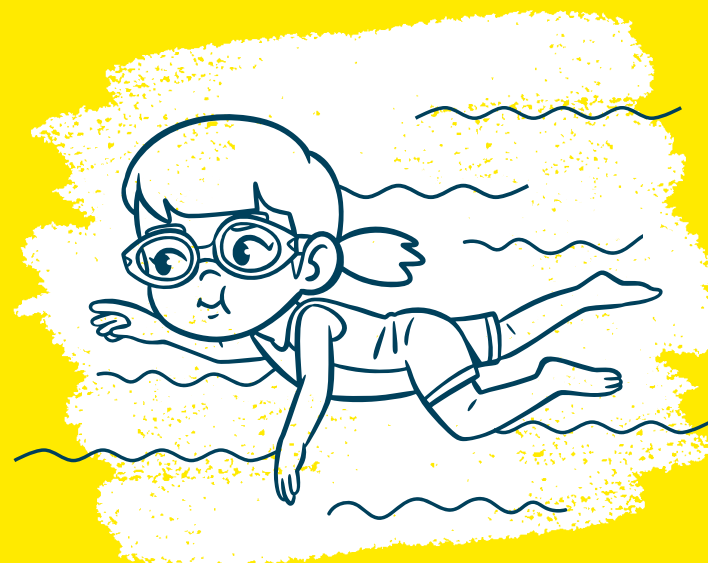
HEALTH WORKERS

- Use everyday patient contact to share water safety information, especially with parents of young children.
- Connect families to local swim, CPR or community resources.
- Advocate for drowning prevention in your facility, district and country.

PRIORITY INTERVENTIONS FOR HIGH-BURDEN COUNTRIES

In the countries hardest hit by drowning, four interventions consistently save the most lives, particularly for children:

SURVIVAL SWIMMING



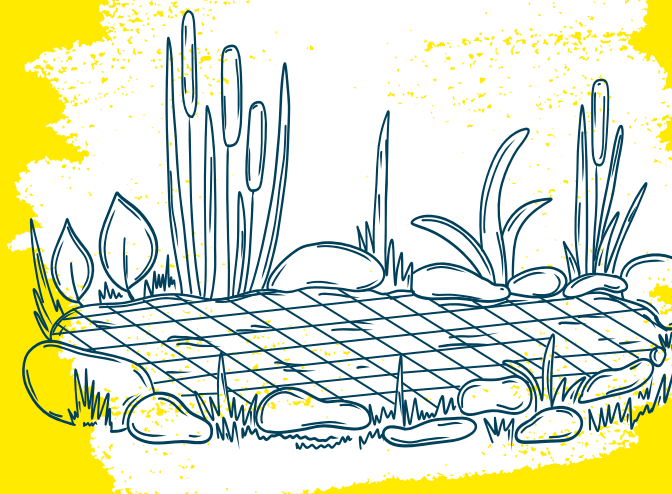
Basic water competence for children, especially in communities living near water.

SAFE CHILDCARE



Supervised, structured care that keeps young children away from water hazards while parents work.

PROTECTING HOUSEHOLD WATER SOURCES



Covers, fences and barriers around wells, tanks, ponds and water containers.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS



Community-level flood preparedness, with warnings that reach every home, in time.

See the link for how to implement these at scale.

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT ON SOCIAL MEDIA

SHARE A LOCAL DROWNING PREVENTION 'HERO STORY'

Behind every life saved from drowning is someone who acted: a teacher who started swim lessons, a community that fenced a pond, a volunteer who learned CPR. These everyday heroes rarely get recognised.

Let's change that! This 25 July, share your story of drowning prevention in your community – it could be about an individual, a group, or your own organisation's work.

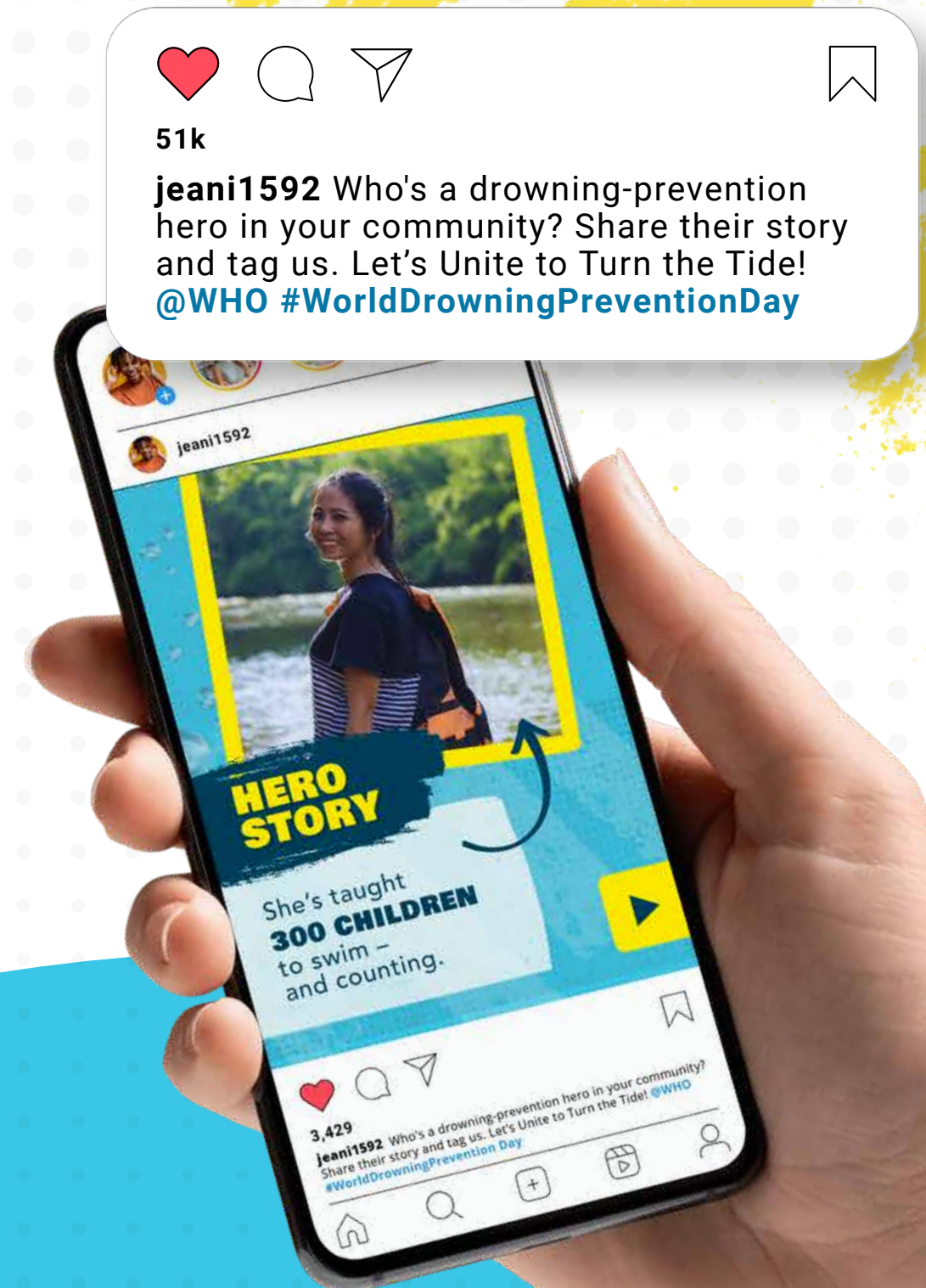
Keep it simple, honest and human.

It doesn't need to be perfectly polished or produced. A few photos and an authentic story are all it takes.

The next page provides a template you can use to get started.
Remember to tag @WHO so we can amplify your story!

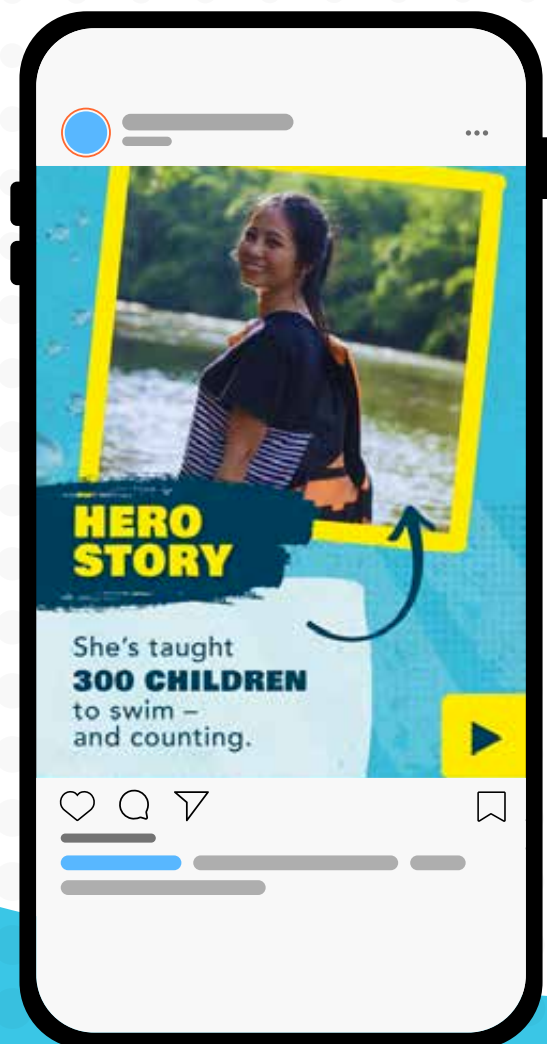


EDIT THE TEMPLATE



TELL YOUR STORY IN FOUR SLIDES

NOTE: THE STORY BELOW HAS BEEN 'MADE UP' AS AN EXAMPLE – PLEASE DON'T POST IT!



1 THE HOOK



A strong photo of your hero + a short headline. A fact or number grabs attention.



2 THE PERSON & THE PROBLEM



Introduce your hero and the risk they're responding to. Keep it local and specific.

TELL YOUR STORY IN FOUR SLIDES

NOTE: THE STORY BELOW HAS BEEN ‘MADE UP’ AS AN EXAMPLE – PLEASE DON’T POST IT!



3 WHAT THEY DID



The concrete action they took. This is the heart of the story.



4 WHY IT MATTERS



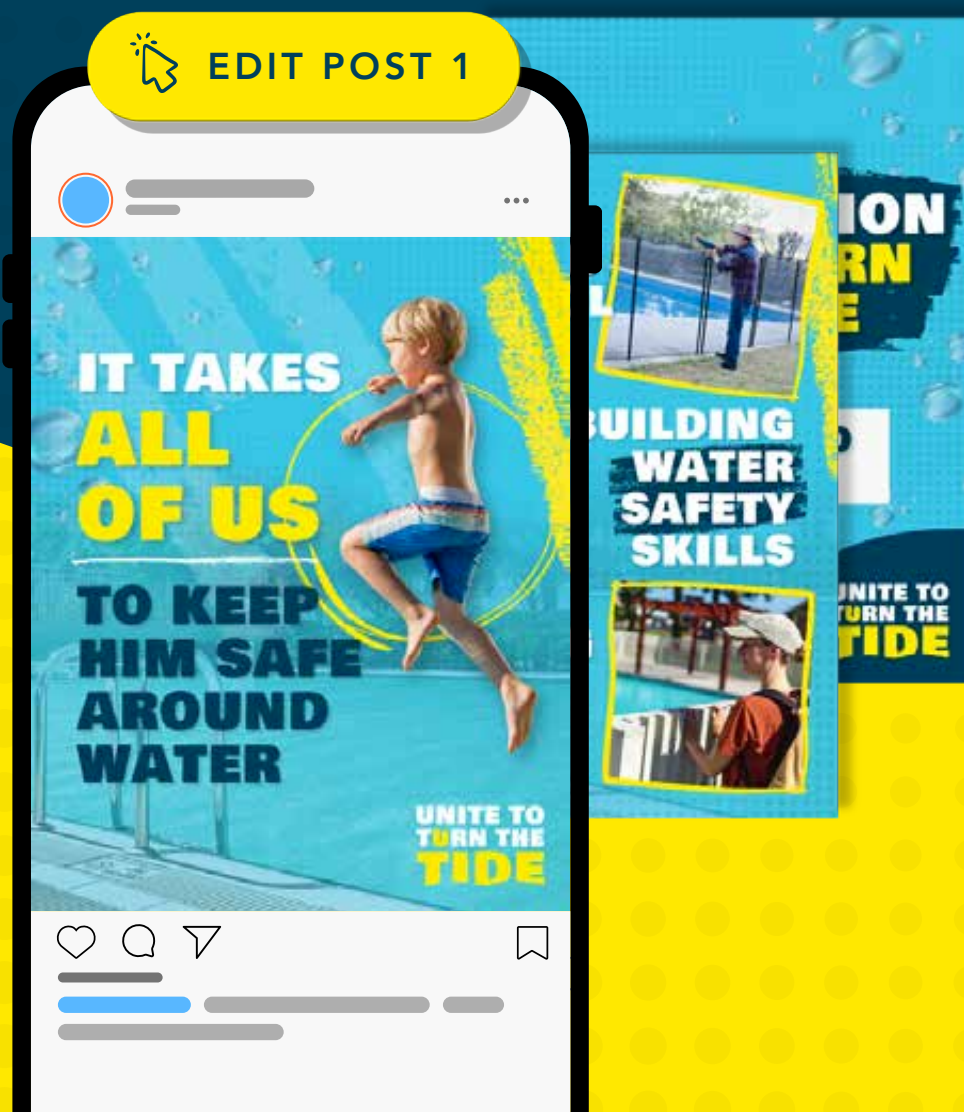
Zoom out. Connect their work to the bigger picture, and invite others to act.

OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA MESSAGES

Partners, advocates and influencers are invited to use and adapt these messages to share the campaign, tell your stories, and join the global call to Unite to Turn the Tide.

@ Tag: @WHO @DrTedros and your WHO Regional Office

Use: #DrowningPrevention



CAPTION COPY:

Someone fenced the pool.
Someone made sure he could float.
Someone watched him like a hawk.

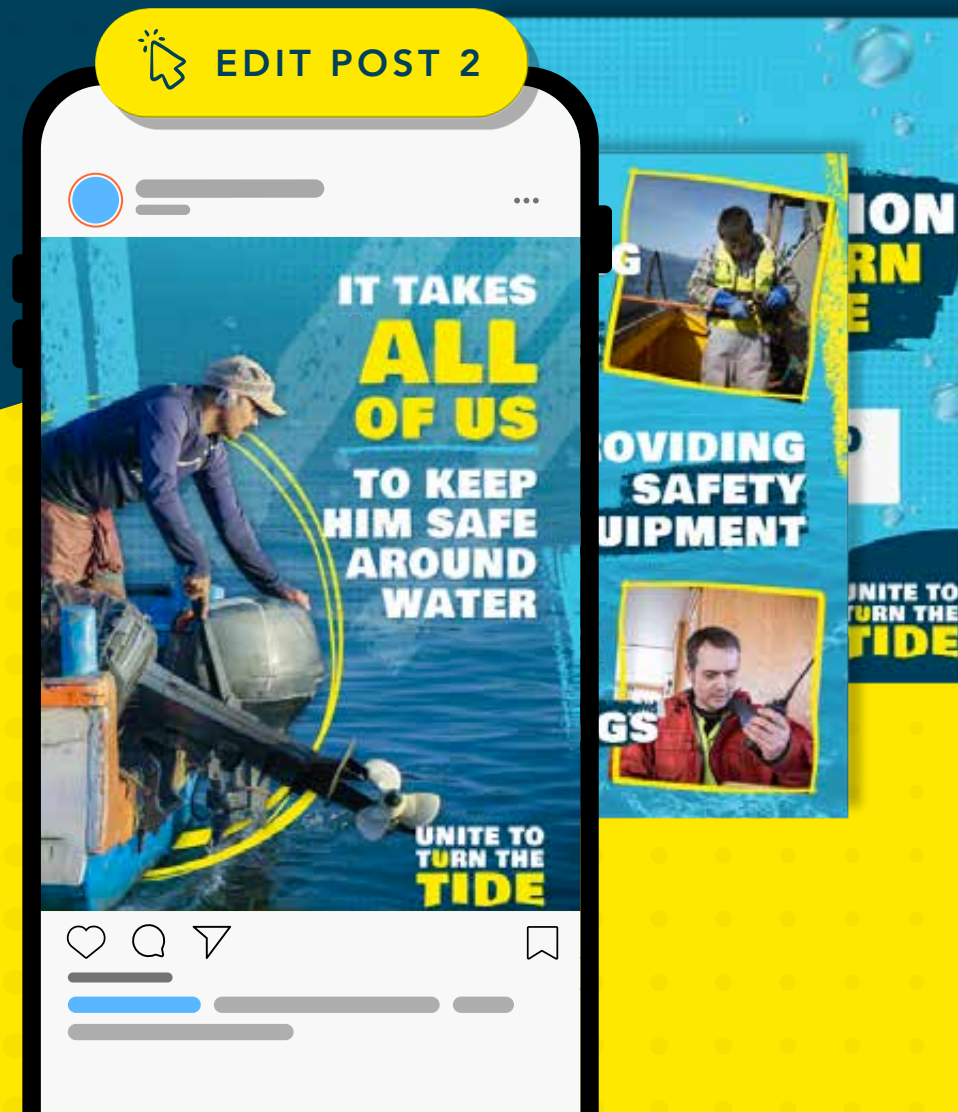
It took ALL of them to keep him safe.

Drowning is the 4th leading cause of death
for children aged 1 to 4.

We can only turn the tide when
everyone
plays their part.

See how: [\[campaign page link\]](#)

#DrowningPrevention



CAPTION COPY:

Someone inspected the boat.
Someone fought for the safety law.
Someone issued the storm warning.

It took ALL of them to bring him
home safely.

Over 32,000 fishers drown at work
every year.

We can only turn the tide when
everyone plays their part.

Find out how: [\[campaign page link\]](#)

#DrowningPrevention



CAPTION COPY:

She lives in a place where the water rises fast and the warnings come slow. Nine in ten drowning deaths happen in low- and middle-income countries. Not because the people there take more risks. Because the world has invested less in protecting them. But drowning is preventable — everywhere. When children learn survival swimming. When toddlers have safe places to play. When wells and water sources are covered. When flood warnings reach every home. That's how we turn the tide.

Learn more: [\[campaign_page link\]](#)

#DrowningPrevention



CAPTION COPY:

300,000 lives – most of them children
❤️
That's the annual toll of drowning worldwide.

We can change this story. We know how. We just need to act.

- 🏠 At home: Physical barriers and constant supervision.
- 🌊 On the water: Lifejackets and sobriety.
- 🚑 In emergencies: Skills like CPR and weather awareness.
- 🤝 In the community: Sharing knowledge and organizing.

It takes all of us.

Find your part: [\[campaign_page link\]](#)

#DrowningPrevention



CAPTION COPY:

He goes out on the water so others can eat. 🐟🐟

But climate change is making fishing trips more treacherous. ⚠️

Drowning shouldn't be an occupational hazard.

- 🚢 Safer vessels.
- 📋 Enforced protocols.
- ☀️ Better forecasts.

It takes all of us to prevent drowning on the job.

Find out how: [\[campaign page link\]](#)

#DrowningPrevention



CAPTION COPY:

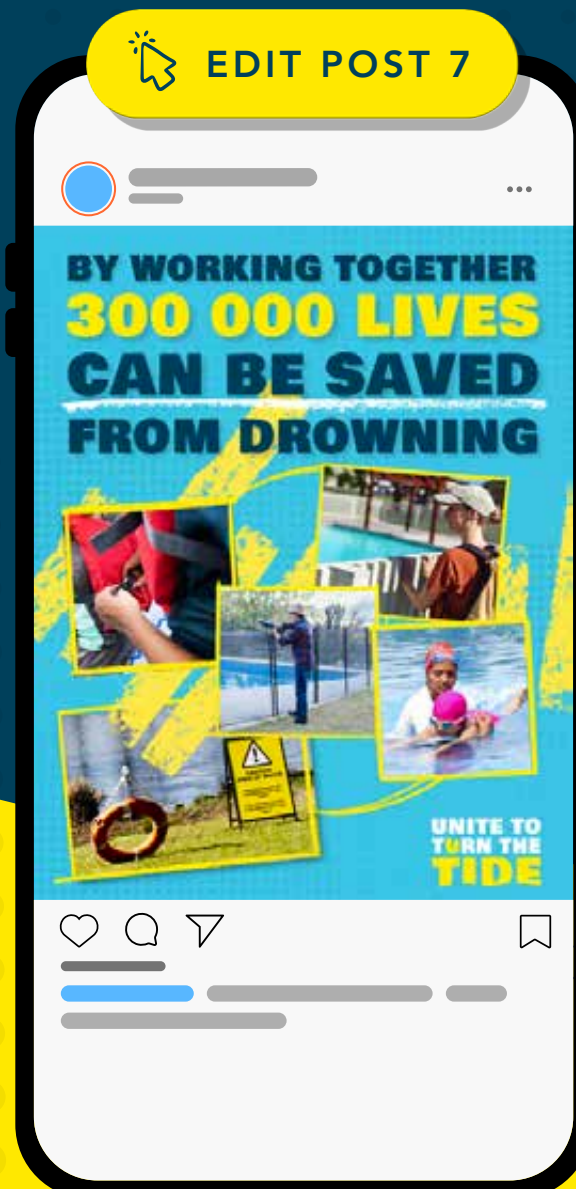
A fence.
A latched gate.
An adult who stayed close.

That's what "the day a child didn't drown" looks like.

The best rescues are the ones that don't need to happen – because everyone did their part.

Save a life. Know your part:
[\[campaign page link\]](#)

#DrowningPrevention



CAPTION COPY:

Here's the math:
300 000 people drown every year. ❤️
That's 30 preventable deaths every hour.

The things that prevent drowning aren't complicated...

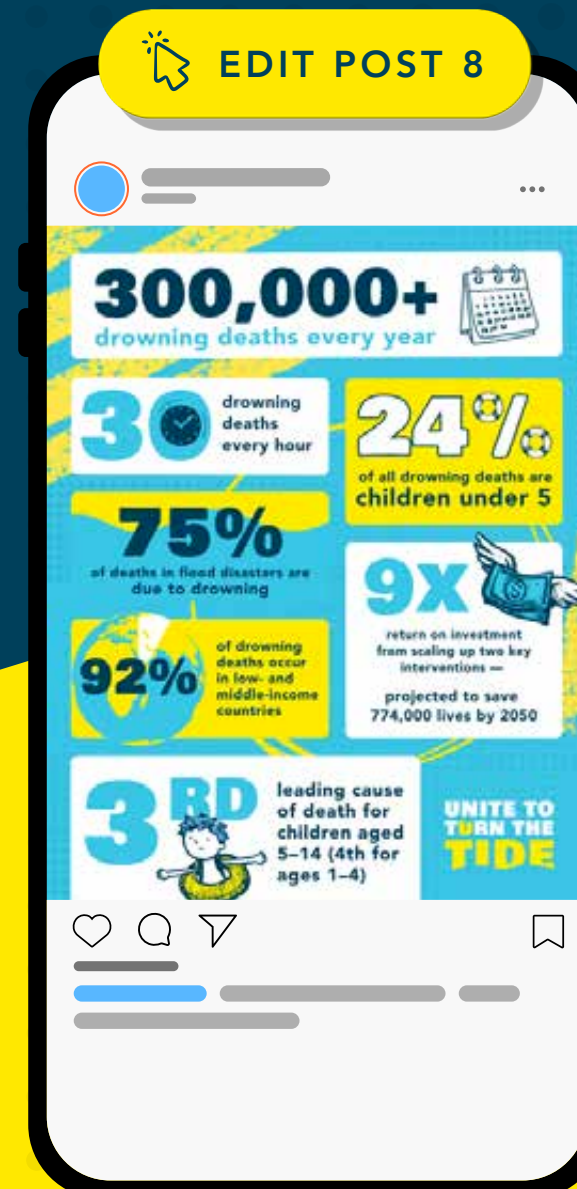
- 🚧 A fence.
- 🚼 A life jacket.
- ⚠️ A warning.

...We just need more of them, in more places, for more people.

📊 When our actions add up, the stats come down.

See how: [\[campaign page link\]](#)

#DrowningPrevention



CAPTION COPY:

Copy here
[\[campaign page link\]](#)

#DrowningPrevention

CAMPAIGN ASSETS

 POST 1

 POST 3

 POST 5

 POST 7

 POST 2

 POST 4

 POST 6

 POST 8

 CAMPAIGN PAGE

 CANVA TUTORIAL

WANT TO EDIT, BUT NOT SURE HOW?
CHECK OUT THE QUICK CANVA TUTORIAL!

 SEE LAST YEAR'S CAMPAIGN ASSETS

UNITE TO
TURN THE
TIDE



WORLD
DROWNING
PREVENTION
DAY 2026

LEARN MORE



[GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR DROWNING PREVENTION: TURNING THE TIDE ON A LEADING KILLER](#)



[HIDDEN DEPTHS: THE GLOBAL INVESTMENT CASE FOR DROWNING PREVENTION](#)



[WHO GLOBAL STATUS REPORT ON DROWNING PREVENTION 2024](#)