

# Cry For Help

**TOPIC/SUBJECT:** Drowning profile demonstrating crying for help

**TARGET AUDIENCE/AGE LEVEL:** Kindergarten - Adult

**TIME:** 10-15 minutes

**THEME:** The actions of a drowning person may surprise you.

**GOAL/PURPOSE:** Participants will realize a drowning person cannot call for help.

**OBJECTIVE(S):** Participants will be able to identify the four signs of a drowning victim

## **DESCRIPTION:**

- A. Choose a willing volunteer from the audience.
- B. Ask the audience how many of them have ever panicked in the water before, where they have at least gasped for air. Then have them imagine that they are drowning, fighting to survive, and they want someone to help them. But how can anyone help them unless they know what a person drowning looks like. State that the actions of a drowning person may surprise you.
- C. You and the volunteer together simulate the “instinctive drowning response.” Extend your arms laterally or to the front pushing down on the water. Put your head back, with your mouth wide open.
- D. Open your mouth as wide as possible (like you are going to swallow an apple!), and take in a big breath of air, while still flapping your arms laterally, and your head back.
- E. **AT THE SAME TIME THAT YOU ARE BREATHING IN AIR**, moving your arms up and down, and your head back shout, “HELP.”
- F. If done properly, you and your volunteer will only register a weak call, barely audible to someone in the back of the audience. **PROGRAM NOTE:** About this time in the simulation, laughter breaks out and usually the entire audience is trying to do it. If your audience is not provoked to try the simulation on their own ask everyone to try it together.
- G. Explain to the class that it is practically impossible for a true drowning victim to shout for help, because there is not a sufficient air supply to do so! Mention that if they see someone that is drowning on TV or in the movies that those people actually are not drowning they are just acting.
  - G. Review the four signs of a drowning victim 1. Head back 2. Mouth open 3. Arms moving up and down slapping the water 4. No sound
- H. This can be demonstrated by placing the drowning victim volunteer behind a vertically held blue tarp or sheet of plastic (representing water) with only their body from the neck up viewable to the audience. This program is better when combined with "Find a Float" or some type of activity that describes proper rescue techniques.

**SUGGESTED MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT:** None needed