



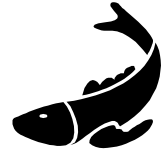
# Safe Communities Best Practices

## BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

**Eastern Carolina Injury Prevention Program  
University Medical Center of Eastern Carolina  
Greenville, North Carolina**

### **Pisces: A Different Kind Of Fish**

The Pitt Initiative for Safe Communities Evolving Successfully (PISCES) is a different kind of fish - like other Safe Community programs, it relies heavily on local data for decision-making and has a strong community coalition, but what makes PISCES different is how it uses program evaluation to build and refine its activities.



“Evaluation helps us develop a stronger and more effective community coalition,” says Herb Garrison, MD, “and it is essential to fine tuning our interventions. We use process evaluation to examine how the staff and coalition meet and organize and make decisions. As a result our coalition has become stronger and more focused on preventing injuries.”

PISCES has 60 members in its community coalition. Coalition members have been chosen or have volunteered to develop a Safe Community because of their interest in preventing injuries or because of their unique technical or political skills. The monthly meetings are facilitated by PISCES staff. A steering committee of 8-10 coalition members is responsible for planning the agenda and seeing that ideas get created into action.

PISCES has contracted with the University of North Carolina (UNC) Injury Prevention Research Center to evaluate the process of establishing a Safe Communities approach. The UNC evaluation team - Dr. Carolyn Crump and Robert J. Letourneau, MPH - has focused its process evaluation on three objectives:

- To examine the coalition’s development process
- To describe the process used to identify intervention strategies
- To examine the extent to which the intervention activities were implemented as planned

An evaluator attends each meeting, takes notes, and provides feedback to the community coalition and PISCES staff about the coalition process and their progress toward making Pitt County a Safe Community. Their recommendations focus on making the process of establishing and developing a community coalition more effective and productive for the coalition’s work. (See below for some

suggestions made by the evaluators to strengthen the coalition's processes.)

Already changes can be seen - coalition meeting attendance is increasing. Coalition members are becoming more comfortable meeting and working with each other. (As one would expect, coalition members coming from diverse backgrounds such as law enforcement, health and medicine or education initially found it difficult to find common ground for discussion.) The coalition is becoming more self-reliant, and PISCES project staff are now functioning as facilitators; with direction and leadership coming from the coalition, both in terms of meetings and project direction.

**A More Effective Coalition Meeting**  
(Here are a few of the recommendations given to the PISCES project to help them make their coalition meetings more effective):

- Circulate an agenda in advance
- Provide meeting summaries to those who could not attend to keep them abreast of activities taking place each month
- Use name tags and place markers to identify everyone so that coalition members are more comfortable and knowledgeable about the perspectives and experiences represented by the diverse coalition membership
- Collect survey information about coalition member interests and willingness to participate in future project activities
- Arrange tables and chairs to encourage eye contact and better facilitate discussion

**"Evaluation helps us develop a stronger and more effective community coalition."**

- Start and end meetings on time
- Conduct introductions of participants to stimulate the group process
- Have a period of announcements and "open comments" on each agenda to allow coalition members to provide additional direction of meetings and planned activities
- Have working group members (not project staff) report back to the coalition on activities taking place and future action plans
- Use door prizes to encourage attendance
- Ask coalition members to serve facilitation roles, such as presenter, note-taker, time-keeper so they develop ownership of the meetings

The PISCES Project is located in Greenville, a rural area in eastern North Carolina. Farming and light manufacturing are the principal industries. Greenville is the largest town in Pitt-County and has a population of about 50,000. East Carolina University - part of the University of North Carolina System - its medical school, and Pitt County Hospital are the largest employers in Greenville.

**Organizational Structure:**

One of the two Safe Communities programs funded by NHTSA in September, 1996 (the other grant was awarded to Dallas, Texas), PISCES is based at the Eastern Carolina Injury Prevention Program (ECIPP), part of the School of Medicine of Eastern Carolina University and Pitt County Memorial Hospital.

In addition to the \$337,000 grant from

NHTSA, PISCES also receives support in terms of facilities and services from Eastern Carolina University (\$10,000), Pitt County Memorial Hospital (\$7000), the University of North Carolina Injury Prevention Research Center (IPRC) (\$5000), and the UNC Highway Safety Research Center (HSRC) (\$5000).

**Administrative Activities:**

ECIPP was organized by Pitt County Memorial Hospital and Eastern Carolina University School of Medicine to prevent injuries. Prior to the PISCES, prevention activities focused on water sports and community safety. ECIPP is joined by the IPRC to conduct the project process evaluation and the HSRC to conduct the project outcome evaluation.

**Data and Analysis Activities**

Since 1988, injury data has been collected and collated by ECIPP and organized into the Central Injury Surveillance System (CISS). These data from sources such as the Emergency Department, Trauma Registry, and the Medical Examiner is being linked to the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles motor vehicle crash file using techniques similar to the CODES project.

**Organizational Practices**

Community Coalition

About 60 representatives from government, medicine, law enforcement, housing organization, education, the justice system, public safety, religious, and employer groups form the general coalition which meets monthly.

Steering Committee - is drawn from the

general coalition. This group, along with the focus groups, address specific injury prevention issues, coalition administration, and program development, implementation and evaluation.

Focus Groups - These working groups focus the coalition's ideas into action steps. There are three focus groups; two involved with bicycle safety, and one developing a safe driving school.

Project Staff are involved in clarifying the coalition's and working group's vision, mission, and goals; moving the coalition to action, establishing a communications network, and establishing and maintaining the functional structure of PISCES. There is a half-time Safe Communities Coordinator, along with a part-time project director.



**Activities**

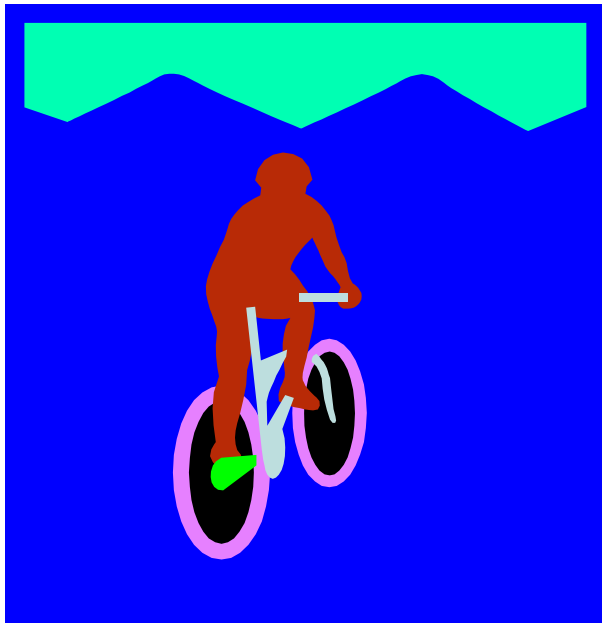
The first injury prevention two activities chosen by the PISCES coalition include launching a bicycle safety program (PEDAL - Parent Involvement, Education, Distribution of helmets, Access to safe roadways, and Legislation). Each aspect of the PEDAL program will have specific program interventions. A second activity in injury prevention is launching a Safety Driving School Program (designed to provide safe driver training to minor traffic offenders). PISCES is also involved in other community activities such as a bike awareness ride, the Christmas Parade bicycle ride, and SafeKids.

*For more information on the project, contact::*

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