

Category 5

Criterion 5B: Public Education Program

A public education program is in place and directed toward reducing community risks in a manner consistent with the agency's mission and as identified within the community risk assessment and standards of cover. The agency should conduct a thorough risk analysis as part of activities in Category 2 to determine the need for a specific public education program.

Summary:

The department has six public education specialists and one Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) coordinator who receive incentive pay for these additional responsibilities. The seven public education specialists report to an operations captain who then reports to the division chief of training.

Public education specialists deliver training sessions in various ways and to a variety of audiences. Some of the topics include hands only CPR, first aid, exiting drills, safety in the home, slips, trips and falls, cooking safety and fire extinguisher training. These public education events delivered to grade school children, college students and the elderly.

Performance Indicators:

CC 5B.1 The public education program targets specific risks, behaviors and audiences identified through incident, demographic and program data analysis and the community risk assessment/standards of cover.

Description

The department’s public education programs are consistent with SOP 603.10 Public Education Program and target three primary audiences within the community; elementary aged children, college students, and the elderly. Public education programs are developed internally and designed to meet goals identified through national trends or local issues.

In October of every year, public education specialists visit the first and fifth grades and talk about fire safety. The elementary-aged children are provided the opportunity to experience the Safe House. The safe house is a small mobile home-like structure pulled to each school that has multiple exits, smoke alarms, and doors that heat up. The children are instructed on staying low, feeling the door, and finding a way out of a smoke-filled environment.

The program delivered to students at local universities is designed to educate students on the process of using an AED and fire extinguishers, hands-only CPR, cooking safety, as well as situational awareness and exiting strategies.

The elderly population are visited and educated about slips, trips and falls, space heater safety, cooking safety, and the hazards of smoking as it relates to fire safety. The department also participates in operation red file which is a red file that contains personal medical information for responders to use in case of an emergency.

The department also attends many other community events and promotes community-wide CPR as well as the PulsePoint application. Public education specialists work with Safe Kids Coalition to provide bicycle helmets for children participating in wheeled sports. The department utilizes social media to distribute educational information, as well as seasonal and regional safety issues.

Appraisal

The department has been successful in the delivery of public education to elementary students as well as students of local universities, however, the COVID-19 pandemic provided the department an opportunity to re-evaluate the educational programs currently offered.

Historically, the public education programs delivered for the elderly population have been inconsistent and reactive. The department has identified opportunities to use the CRASOC to develop targeted public education programs for this demographic.

Plan

Annual public education initiatives will be maintained however, the Training Division will focus efforts on reimagining the delivery of public education programs to the community. Utilizing demographic and community data to target specific risk within planning zones and districts will provide greater value to the community and risk reduction resources. Partnerships, like the Lawrence Public Schools and Safe Kids Coalition will be utilized to enhance public outreach. The department will work with the Safe and Secure Outcome team, within the City of Lawrence, to develop a specialized risk reduction program.

References

SOP 603.10 Public Education Program

CC 5B.2 The program has adequate staff with specific expertise to address identified risks and meet the public education program goals, objectives.

Description

The seven public education specialists work under the direct supervision of the division chief of training, with an operations captain providing additional program support. These members must meet the qualifications outlined in SOP 111.10 Incentive Positions and SOP 111.17 Public Education Specialists.

The public education program members are required to complete the Youth Firesetters Prevention and Intervention Program, the National Fire Academy online programs “Introduction to Strategic Community Risk Reduction Q0841” and “Introduction to Community Risk Assessment Q0843” within the first year of appointment. All public education specialists must obtain CPR instructor certification.

Appraisal

The public education program has been difficult to implement due to staffing shortages in the operations division. The increase in call volume, occupancy inspections, and training requirements has had a direct impact on the effectiveness of the public education program.

Plan

The department will continue to request additional resources, including, a full-time public education specialist, for the public education program through the regular budget process. The Training Division will focus efforts on reimagining the delivery of public education programs to the community.

References

- SOP 111.10 Incentive Positions
- SOP 111.17 Public Education Specialist Incentive

5B.3 Programs are in place to identify large loss potential or high-risk audiences (such as low socio-economic status, age and cultural / ethnic differences, where appropriate), forge partnerships with those who serve those constituencies, and enable specified programs to mitigate fires and other emergency incidents (such as home safety visits, smoke alarm installations, free bicycle helmet programs, fall prevention programs, etc.).

Description

The department has identified high-risk audiences within the community served during the publication of the 2022 CRASOC. In Module 3, the department identified demographic information within each planning zone. Two examples of this includes households with 1+ persons with a disability and no access to vehicle households are identified within the planning zone infographics to aid in the awareness of risks in those specific areas. There is potential to use this type of information to strengthen community risk reduction efforts by customizing the application throughout different parts of the communities.

High risk audiences are identified and targeted for specialized public education opportunities (fire extinguishers utilization, Safe House, Wheeled Sports Helmet program, slips, trips, and falls, cooking safety, etc.).

The department utilizes partnerships with Lawrence Kansas Police Department, the Douglas County Sheriff's Office, Lawrence-Douglas County Public Health Department, Douglas County Emergency Communication Center, Douglas County Emergency Operations Center, and Lawrence Memorial Hospital Health.

Appraisal

The identification of high-risk audiences has not been updated and has room for improvement. Deployment of resources, specific to hazard locations, and specialized community risk reduction efforts have not changed to keep up with community risks.

Partnerships, through collaboration, have benefitted the department through data sharing and increased community reach.

Plan

Through the creation of the department's CRASOC, a task force will identify and recommend an updated response matrix based on probability, consequence, and impact. The department will continue to collaborate with local partners to identify opportunities for increased risk reduction efforts and enhanced response to community needs. The department will continue to provide support and resources to other public safety initiatives led by other agencies.

References

Helmet Fair – Safe Kids Coalition, Drowning Autism Awareness and Water Safety
2022 Community Risk Assessment Standards of Cover (Module 3 Planning Zone
Infographics)

CC 5B.4 The agency conducts a formal and documented program appraisal, at least annually, to determine the program’s impacts and outcomes, and to measure performance and progress in reducing risk.

Description

The department conducts a formal and documented program appraisal annually that summarizes the program’s impacts, outcomes, and effectiveness in the prior year. New goals are outlined in the upcoming year within this document.

Appraisal

The department’s assigned program manager and supportive staff have been able to complete an annual program appraisal. These appraisals are provided to the AHJ for review, as well as posted on the department’s external /internal website for employee review as part of the Annual Compliance Report.

Plan

The department will continue to utilize these appraisals to improve performance within the program as well as develop more efficient operational procedures based on the prior year’s performance.

References

- 2021 Public Education Program Appraisal
- 2022 CFAI Annual Compliance Report (pages 58-60)