



Learn to Swim FAQ's

Welcome and thank you for choosing Zeeland Recreation for your child's swim lessons! We are excited that you are here and we promise to make your swimmer's experience positive and fun!

Following are some frequently asked questions and answers. We hope you find the information helpful.

Arrival Time: On the first day of lessons, please check in with the pool staff to find out who your child's instructor will be and where on the pool deck to meet them. For the rest of the session you may check in with your child's instructor. It is important to be on the pool deck and ready to go 5 minutes before your class time. Children can get anxious if hurried. Please allow plenty of time before class to get dressed, use the restroom, shower, etc.

Parents on the Pool Deck: Parents are welcome to be on the pool deck on the first and last day of lessons. Other days we ask that you leave the pool area. With parents out of sight, we find children are less distracted and quicker to begin listening and bonding with their instructors. Parents may sit in our pool balcony. There is also seating available in our downstairs or upstairs lobby areas.

Swimming Attire: Most bathing suits and swim trunks are acceptable. We ask that you make sure that your child's swimwear fits snugly so it will not hinder any movement. Children should not attend swim lessons with any type of built-in flotation.

Swimming Accessories:

Swim Caps: If your child is prone to chill, a swim cap may help. We welcome and encourage them. For swimmers with long hair, we ask that it be tied back away from the face with a rubber band so it does not interfere with learning to breathe.

Goggles: For the beginner swimmer, goggles can present a false sense of safety. If your swimmer feels that they need goggles, they may bring them; however, for safety reasons a portion of lessons will be spent encouraging participants to be comfortable without goggles.

First Day Evaluations: The placement of your child on the first day is based on where you placed your child at registration. If your child has participated in our program before, their placement may be determined by a previous evaluation. It is normal if your child is reassigned during swim lessons so that he/she will be placed in a class with children of similar ability.

Bathroom Use: We encourage all participants to arrive early enough to use the restroom before class begins. For all participants who are not potty trained, we require the use of plastic swim diapers worn over a regular diaper. If necessary, our Head Instructor will assist your child to the restroom.

What to Expect: Zeeland Recreation is an authorized Red Cross Learn-to-Swim provider. Our swim classes are taught by certified, knowledgeable and caring instructors who can help swimmers at every level feel comfortable in the water and progress to the next level. Our swimming classes for kids are tailored to the needs of each child, so that he or she can progress at a comfortable pace. And although some children may advance more quickly or slowly, our instructors ensure that everyone receives the instruction they need.

What They'll Learn: The Learn-to-Swim program focuses on building skills one step at a time. By giving them the opportunity to master one element before moving on to the next, our kids' swim classes make it easy to build confidence in the water. During their swim lessons, children will follow a series of steps in a natural progression working towards mastering the following skills: water adjustment, fundamental skills such as body position and arm and leg development, forward movement and stroke development and refinement.

Why does my child work on the same thing every day? Repetition is the key to learning for most young children. Repeating games and skills give children something to look forward to. Swim lesson participants also feel a greater sense of success by mastering a skill they have been replicating.

What do I do if my child is crying or won't get in the water? Rest assured that it is not unusual to see tears and hear crying. Most often children experience fear due to separation anxiety or the overwhelming feeling caused by the pool environment. We ask that you trust our staff in helping your child overcome their fear. We encourage apprehensive children to continue attending swim lessons and to actively participate in class. The more often your child is active in the water, the less chance they will have of developing an irreversible fear of swimming. Please understand that if your child is having difficulty adjusting to swim lessons, often times when their parent steps out of sight the tears stop and they are able to begin building a relationship with their instructor.

What do I do if my child is misbehaving? Most all disciplinary problems are addressed and taken care of by either our swim instructors or our Head Instructor. We use positive reinforcement to encourage appropriate class behavior such as self-identification of the problem, warnings and time-outs. If our instructor does not have success with this approach we may approach you in an effort to find a better method that is more effective for your child. We ask that you teach, talk about and review appropriate class behavior and pool rules with your child. We encourage our parents to lead by example and to help children understand "respect" for the water, classmates and instructors.

Pictures: We often take pictures to use for our brochure and social media, if you would prefer not to have your child's picture taken please let us know.

If I would like to talk with someone, who should I approach and when? We invite you to participate in your child's swim lesson experience. Please introduce yourself to your child's instructor. We have allowed time after each class for you to speak to them if you have immediate or specific questions. We also have a Head Instructor that is almost always available during lessons. If for any reason a staff member is not available, please leave your name and phone number with our service desk and our Aquatics Coordinator will contact you.

What can I do to ensure my child will learn to swim and pass their level? On the last day of lessons each swimmer will receive a completed skills assessment sheet. We consider learning to swim as a never ending process and as a chance to help encourage motor, language, social skills and emotional development. It is extremely normal for a child to remain in a certain level for multiple sessions. Do not get discouraged and give up on lessons if your child is not promoted at the end of each session. We want to make sure that we give our swimmers the greatest chance of continuing through our program successfully. If you have questions regarding your child's level, please contact the Aquatics Coordinator.

Any other questions? Please contact the aquatics staff.

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