



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## Swim Lesson Parent Frequently Asked Questions

Welcome to YMCA Swim Lessons! We are excited that you are here!

### Arrival Time

Please allow 10-15 minutes before class to get dressed, use the restroom, etc. Children can get anxious if hurried. For safety reasons, please do not let children sit poolside until the instructor is present at class start.

### 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.

### Swim Caps

If your child is prone to chill, a swim cap may help. We welcome and encourage this! 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.

\*No metal clips please – they can fall out in the water and cause rust-stains on our pool bottom.

### 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 the information you gave on registration day. 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 more than once during the first week of swim lessons so that he/she will be placed in a class with children of similar ability. If you are unsure of your child's placement, please your child's instructor.

### Cancellation/Sick Policy/Class Switching

Children who have been ill should be kept at home. This is in the best interest of their health, as well as, the health of other class participants and the instructor. Unfortunately, non-attendance for any reason does not entitle you to a refund or a make-up class. We will make every attempt to offer a make-up class if the YMCA must cancel a lesson. Unfortunately, alternate make-up classes cannot be offered, nor does non-attendance to a make-up class entitle you to a refund. We discourage switching classes because we cannot guarantee the same instructor teaching the same class. This is very important for young swimmers because they are in the process of building a trusting relationship with the instructor.

### 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 or disposable swim diapers. For children who are not comfortable using the restroom on their own, we ask that you remain on the pool deck in the event that your child needs to use the restroom. As a reminder, children over the ages of 5 cannot use the opposite sex locker room.



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

### **How long will it take my child to learn how to swim?**

The YMCA uses a developmental series of steps in a natural progression working towards mastering the following skills: water adjustment, buoyancy, body position, arm and leg development, forward movement and ending with stroke technique. In general, each child's readiness is influenced by physical development, previous experiences and behavioral maturity. The rate at which a child progresses is based on their individual development in addition to time spent working on skills outside of class.

\*As a reminder, if you are planning on spending time in our pool before or after your scheduled lesson, you must hold a YMCA membership.

### **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; however, we ask that you limit your questions/concerns before or after class, as it may pose a distraction to the class in addition to creating a safety issue. Since we only see your child for a short time, we need your assistance helping us understand personality traits that may be inhibiting your child's performance. If a staff member is not available, please leave your name and phone number with someone at the Welcome Center with any concerns you may have and a program director will contact you. Please do not bring concerns to a lifeguard.

### **Is my child in the right level?**

On the first day of every swim lesson session, we evaluate each child to ensure proper class placement. In an effort to establish more consistent levels, your child may be evaluated at a higher or lower level than they previously participated in. We ask you to support this effort to ensure all of our participants have the greatest chance for success. If you feel that your child is not performing to their ability or that your child's level is inaccurate, please consult with the instructor.

### **Why do I see my child playing or sitting on the side when they should be learning how to swim?**

Unlike other area swim lessons, we pride ourselves in teaching the basic building blocks of swimming through four additional components including: character development, personal safety, rescue and water sports and games. We see play as an important part of learning for children. Through games your child will gain considerable knowledge and skill development by staying engaged. We also set aside time to discuss and incorporate our character values: caring, respect, honesty, and responsibility. Our goal is to develop a well-rounded swimmer, not just one with perfect technique.

### **Why does my child wear/use floatation devices when they can swim on their own?**

We use instructional floatation devices (IFDs) as teaching tools to help children focus on mastering arm and leg movement. Using IFDs gives our swimmers the freedom to concentrate on their stroke development without having to maintain their own floatation.

### **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.



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

### **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 in that they may actually regress if they do not 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 continues having difficulty adjusting to swim lessons, we may ask that you step out of sight so they can build a relationship with their instructor. We may also recommend a Parent-Tot class.

### **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 lifeguards. 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.

### **What can I do to ensure my child will learn to swim and pass their level?**

We do not establish passing or failing a level as our primary definition of success. Failing does not apply to swim lessons as children are always making improvements. We consider learning to swim as a never ending process and as a chance to help encourage motor, language, social skills and emotional development. The rate at which a child progresses through our program is largely based on the amount of time spent working on skills outside of class. It is extremely normal for a child to remain in a class for sessions at a time. 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 speak with your child's instructor. The best and most appropriate role a swim lesson parent can pursue is practicing and playing in the water with your child as often as you can. Attending class on a regular basis is necessary to your child's progress. Exercise patience and understand the importance of not expecting your child to succeed before they are ready. Respect your child's abilities and qualities, and do not compare them to siblings or other children. Understand that all practice does not have to be in the pool. A great way to enhance your child's swim lesson experience is by practicing skills at home – most of which can be done in the absence of water. Please feel free to speak with our instructors on skills to work on outside of class.

Please feel free to contact the Aquatics Director, Kevin Tang at [ktang@ymcahonolulu.org](mailto:ktang@ymcahonolulu.org) or 808.625.1040

See you at the pool!