

Swim Team

2020-2021



Handbook

And

Parent Survival Guide

YMCA Mission:

*To put Christian principles into practice through programs
that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.*

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Welcome to Our Team!

Welcome to the Williams County Family YMCA Swim Team (WCY)! We are glad that you have chosen to provide your children with the lifetime satisfaction that comes with competitive swimming. Competitive swimmers learn many skills other than how to get from one end of the pool to the other. Some of these great skills include:

- Goal Setting**
- Building Self Esteem**
- Discipline**
- Responsibility**
- Time Management**
- Interaction with Coaches and other swimmers**
- Character Development**

This handbook is designed to answer many questions that may arise during the season. If you have additional questions or concerns that are not addressed in this book, please ask an “experienced” parent, a coach, or aquatics director. We also welcome your comments and suggestions, as they will help our program become more successful.

YMCA PHILOSOPHY

The primary purpose of the Williams County Family YMCA is to promote the spiritual, mental, and physical well-being of all persons. The YMCA’s involvement in sports has been one means of teaching Christian ideas, values, and behavior based on this purpose. Sports in the YMCA have never been an end in itself, but rather a vehicle for achieving a much more global purpose, promoting character development through the four values: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Our Mission, “To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all”.

YMCA MOTTO

“Everyone Swims, Everyone Wins!!”

COACHES’ PHILOSOPHY

The coaches of the Williams County Family YMCA Swim Team will focus on individual improvement. A swimmer’s success is NOT necessarily measured by place at meets. Improvements can be made in a number of areas such as:

- Times at meets
- Times at practices
- Attitude and Behavior

A swimmer is successful as long as he/she is improving some aspect of his/her swimming. In some cases, improvements may temporarily cause a set back in other areas, but eventually swimmers will be able to combine the skills they have learned and improve their whole stroke.

The great thing about swimming is that everyone improves. Most improvements in swimming do not come overnight. It takes time to develop the skills necessary to be a good swimmer. Be patient and encourage swimmers to do their best, and they will improve. **We hope all swimmers and parents will have a similar philosophy.**

TEAM GOALS

Have fun! This is probably the most important goal that all swimmers, parents, volunteers, and coaches should have. Sometimes we will all have to do things that we are not particularly fond of, but in order to achieve higher goals, they need to be done. Everyone's hard work will pay off with improvements. That's the fun part of swimming!

Every swimmer will have fun!

Every swimmer will improve meet performance.

Every swimmer will improve practice performance.

Every swimmer will improve their knowledge of competitive swimming.

Every swimmer will learn goal setting.

Every swimmer will learn sportsmanship.

Every swimmer will learn the correct technique of the four competitive strokes, turns, and starts.

VALUES

YMCA Character Values should be practiced by everyone at all YMCA activities.

1. A **CARING** attitude for others around them.
2. Being **HONEST** with themselves and others around them.
3. **RESPECT** for themselves, teammates, coaches, and opponents.
4. Taking **RESPONSIBILITY** for their own actions, and learning the responsibilities that they have to the team.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

1. Enter the pool only when directed by a coach or YMCA staff member.
2. Do not throw kick boards, pull-buoys, or other equipment.
3. Starting blocks are to be used only when directed by a coach.
4. When practicing starts the guidelines below will be followed:
 - a. Swimmers should NEVER dive into water that is less than 5 feet.
 - b. The deck should be clear of kick boards, pull buoys, etc.
 - c. No "horse-play" when starts are being practiced.
 - d. Starts will only be practiced at a time designated by a coach.
 - e. Practice starts only when a coach and lifeguard are present and directly observing the swimmer.

- f. When using the starting blocks, get onto the blocks only when a coach gives the command.
- g. When practicing starts, from the deck or the blocks, all other swimmers must keep an adequate distance from the starting swimmer.
- h. Cones are to be placed back on the blocks when practice is finished.

All swimmers and parents need to be aware of this policy in order to reduce the risks associated with practicing starts. Any violations of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from practice.

EXPENSES

Payments may be made at the front desk of the Williams County Family YMCA. Please make checks out to ***Williams County Family YMCA***.

- All swim team members are required to maintain a family membership in order to participate with the team. Both league and national YMCA rules state that all team members must have a full privilege, YMCA annual membership.
- Family memberships allow the entire family to enjoy the YMCA while the swimmers are practicing. Parents may use the fitness center or take an exercise class during practice times.
- **Scholarships are available for membership** to help families when a membership could present a financial burden. Please request a scholarship application from the member services desk.

Team Fees –

Each swimmer must pay program fees to be on the swim team. Multiple swimmer families may receive a discount on the program fees. **Financial assistance is available and can be arranged by seeing the Y Aquatics Director.**

Meet Entry Fees –(Includes Y Champs)

In order to participate in Y Invitationals and Y Championship Meet, swimmers must pay entry fees for each event they are entered in. Fees at most meets are \$16-\$20 dollars per meet.

Team Suits/ caps/ goggles –

Team suits are not mandatory, but swimmers do need to have a suit to practice. Shorts or T- shirts are not allowed. All swimmers should have goggles and swimmers with long hair should wear a cap at practices and meets.

Team T- shirts – are optional and usually arrive just before Christmas. They are available for

swimmers and parents by placing orders with size and paying at the time of ordering.

Out of town meet expenses – Swimmers who sign up for out of town meets will be responsible

for their own expenses as needed for meals, travel, and/or motels.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Financial Assistance in the form of scholarships for either YMCA membership and/or team fees are available for anyone who is experiencing financial difficulties. Please don't let you child miss out on this opportunity due to your hesitation.

All inquiries are kept strictly confidential. In keeping with the YMCA mission, we will not exclude anyone due to lack of funds.

TYPES OF SWIMMING MEETS

1. Virtual

A meet held at the Williams County Family YMCA with only Williams County swimmers, but results are pooled with other teams competing in the same events in the same 72 hour window. Results are then posted as if all swimmers were in the same pool. These meets do qualify as meets toward the minimum requirement for Champs.

2. Dual

A meet consisting of two teams within the Northwest Ohio YMCA Swim Cluster. Most meets are within 1 to 1-1/2 hours from Bryan.

3. Invitational YMCA

An Invitational meet hosted by a YMCA team. Any YMCA team that wishes to attend may compete. The order of events varies depending on the home team. These meets are longer than dual meets. Invitational meets are on weekends and are usually one or two day meets. Entry fees are charged.

4. YMCA Championships

All swimmers who have competed in 3 or more meets are eligible to swim in the Championship meet at the end of the season.

5. YMCA Zones

A meet held for all YMCA teams in the Great Lakes Zone. Swimmers must achieve pre-established qualifying times in order to participate. Entry fees are charged per event.

6. YMCA Nationals

Spring Nationals - A meet held for all YMCA teams in the country. This meet is for 12 & Over swimmers who achieve the established qualifying times. This meet is swum in a 25 yard pool and is usually held in Florida in the middle of April. Entry fees are charged per event.

Summer Nationals - A meet held for all YMCA teams in the country. This meet is for 12 & Over swimmers who achieve the established qualifying times. This meet is swum in a 50 yard pool and is usually held the first week of August. Entry fees are charged per event.

WHICH MEETS TO ATTEND?

- Swimmers are encouraged to attend ALL dual meets that are scheduled.
- Championships
- YMCA Invitationals recommended by your coach. (10 swimmers must attend)

Remember that all swimmers need 3 YMCA meets, either dual or invitationals to swim at Y Chamionships, Y Zones or Y Nationals.

YMCA/USA SWIMMER GUIDELINES

- YMCA swimmers are permitted to join USA swimming as an UNATTACHED swimmer.
- As a YMCA swim team member, we require the Y meets be a priority over USA meets because the child is swimming as a YMCA team member.

HOW TO SIGN UP FOR MEETS

- Parents will use SignupGenius to sign their swimmers up for meets.
 - Check the deadline for sign-up dates and sign up before that date.
 - Sign up as soon as possible so the coaches can start the meet entries.
- Please notify the coaches of any changes. Last minute changes can be made at dual meets. **Remember though, if your swimmer is involved in a relay, your canceling will affect 3 other swimmers who may then not be able to swim!**

For invitational meets, entries are sent in a few weeks before the meet. Sometimes changes can be made if the coaches are notified early enough. Once an entry has been mailed, swimmers are responsible for paying their fees.

Dual Meets – Swimmers need to be signed up by the end of practice on the Tuesday prior to a Saturday meet or the deadline on signup genius (www.signupgenius.com).

Champs – Watch for team emails, the Family Folders and bulletin board for sign-up deadlines.

Invitationals – Deadlines will be noted if we attend any invitationals this season.

HOW DO YOU DETERMINE A SWIMMER'S AGE AT A MEET?

YMCA Meets:

All YMCA meets except Nationals use December 1 of the current season to determine a swimmer's age. (June 1 is used for summer season.)

Examples:

A swimmer that turns 11 on December 1, will swim with the 11-12 age group through the season.

A swimmer that turns 11 on December 2 will swim with the 9-10 age group through the season

MEET ENTRIES

- The coaches are responsible for each swimmer's event assignment at all meets.
- Swimmers are expected to swim all events they are entered in. **Swimmers will not be assigned to events they are not physically ready to do.**
- Coaches are also responsible for assigning swimmers to relays.
- **The coach will make the final decision on all meet entries.**
- All dual meet entries will be posted the day of the meet.
- Invitational entries will be posted the week of the meet.

WHAT TO TAKE TO A MEET

- -Swimming suit, goggles, cap (if needed), extra towels, warm clothes, blanket or sleeping bag, healthy snacks, cards, books or quiet games, lock for locker room.
 - -Make sure all personal possessions are labeled with the swimmer's name!
- (See Parents' Swim Meet Survival Guide on page 13-14 for more information)**

OTHER MEET INFO

- Swimmers should check in with their coaches when they arrive at the pool.
- Swimmers should remain in the designated team area.
- If you leave before the meet is over, check out with a coach.
- Swimmers should be aware of which event is currently "in the water".
(Swimmers should NEVER miss an event they are scheduled to swim.)
- Questions regarding an Official's call or conduct of the meet should be referred to a coach. Coaches will explain or pursue the matter through the proper channels.
- Swimmers or parents are not to scratch from an event without first consulting a coach.
- Arrive at least 15 minutes before warm-ups start.
- Transportation to & from meets is the responsibility of the swimmer and his/her family.
- Swimmers must see their coach immediately after they swim.
- Swimmers are to warm up with their team.
- Swimmers should rest and stay warm between events.
- Swimmers and parents must remember that their conduct at meets and team activities should reflect the philosophy, mission and goals of the YMCA and the Williams County Family Swim Team.

PARENTS' HELP AT HOME SWIM MEETS

Parents are essential to run a home swim meet! Parents are asked to fill out the volunteer form (attached) to help your swimmers and our team. The following positions need to be filled at all home meets.

- Officials
- Computer
- Colorado Timing System
- Timers
- Announcer
- Clerk of Course
- Scorers
- Runners
- Concessions
- Set up & take down

PHILOSOPHY OF COMPETITION

Swimmers will compete in many types of events throughout their swimming career. Like our practice structure, the meets are intended to provide challenging, yet success oriented competitive situations for swimmers of all ages and abilities. The following policies outline the philosophy of the Williams County Family YMCA Swimming Program.

1. We emphasize competition within oneself. Winning ribbons, medals or trophies is not our main goal. Even if the swimmer finishes first, but swam poorly in comparison to his/her past performances, he/she is encouraged to do better. The individual's improvement is our primary goal.
2. Sportsman-like behavior is of equal importance to improved behavior. Respect for officials, congratulations to opponents, encouragement to teammates, determined effort, and mature attitudes are examples of behavior that will be praised by the coaches.
3. A swimmer will be praised for improving their stroke and/or time. Swimmers are successful if they improve some part of their stroke. Improvements do not necessarily have to take place in a meet performance.
4. Swimmers should learn to set challenging, yet realistic goals for meets, relate those goals to practice and direct their habits and efforts at practice.
5. Swimmers will be prepared to compete in all swimming events, distances, and strokes. This promotes versatility and encourages swimmers to explore their potential in the wide range of events offered in competitive swimming.

PRACTICE GUIDELINES

- **Practice will be closed to parents until the last 15 minutes.**
- **If your need to speak with a coach please schedule an appointment or give them a call or email.**
- Swimmers should sign in at the front desk when they enter the YMCA for practice.
- Follow all YMCA rules.
- Practices will start on time. Allow time for changing and setting up for practice.
- Swimmers should not leave the pool area without permission from a coach.
- Swimmers will learn and practice all four competitive strokes, starts, and turns.
- Swimmers misbehaving may be excused from practice.
- Swimmers should listen for announcements during practices and report those announcements to their parents.
- Swimmers should use the family locker rooms.
- Swimmers and parents must take off shoes upon entering the pool area.

SWIMMER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend practice regularly and have fun!
- Communicate effectively with the coaches.
- Show support for your teammates – show good sportsmanship always!
- Show appreciation to your parents.
- Attend and participate in all meets and events you are entered in.
- Attend the championship meet for which you qualify.

- Participate in fundraisers.
- Take home information to parents.
- Always show respect for coaches, teammates, YMCA staff, officials etc...

PARENTS' ROLE IN THE WILLIAMS COUNTY YMCA SWIMMING PROGRAM

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- Have Fun!
- Support the team through volunteer time.
- Participate in team fundraisers.
- Encourage swimmers to attend all practices and meets.
- Provide transportation to team activities.
- Be supportive and loving toward your swimmer at all times while encouraging them to do their best and have fun.
- Let the coaches coach. Your job is demanding enough without taking on additional responsibilities.
- Keep communication with the coaches open and frequent.
- Read all information carefully.
- Regularly check swimmers mailboxes on deck during the last 15 minutes of practice this helps the coaches communicate with you.

PARENT-SWIMMER-COACH RELATIONSHIP

To have a successful program there must be complete understanding and cooperation among the parents, swimmers and coaches. The progress each swimmer makes depends on this triangular relationship. Consider this and read this section carefully, so that your swimmer(s) can get the most out of their experience with our team.

Parents' guidelines:

You have done a great deal to raise your child. You create the environment in which they are growing up. Your child is a product of your values, the structure you have provided and the model you have been. Human nature, however, is such that a person loses some of his/her ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning his/her children. The following guidelines will help you to keep your child's development in the proper perspective.

1. Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to various methods of presenting skills. It takes some children longer to master some skills, so swimmers, parents and coaches must be a little more patient. These children have just as much potential as any other swimmer on the team.
2. Plateaus can occur at any time in every swimmer's career. Plateaus can be both in competition and at practices. A plateau signifies the swimmer has mastered lower-order skills, but is not yet ready to put all of the skills together in order to produce improvement. It is important that swimmers and parents understand that plateaus occur in all fields of physical learning. The more successful athletes are those who work through this momentary delay in improvement, and go on to achieve greater performance and approach their personal potential.

3. Ten and under swimmers are the most inconsistent swimmers which can be frustrating for swimmers, parents and coaches. Times at meets will often go up and down as they try to put together all of the elements of each stroke.
4. Slow development of a competitive drive at an early age is normal, and perhaps more desirable than forced development of competitive spirit. It is also important for young swimmers to learn to adapt to reasonable levels of emotional stress. Small disappointments they learn to handle as youngsters help to prepare them for larger ones they are certain to experience as adults.
5. One of the coach's jobs is to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's job to supply love, recognition and encouragement necessary to help the young athletes feel good about themselves. Make sure your swimmers know that you will love them just as much if they DQ as you do if they get a first place.
6. Parents' attitudes and models often indicate those of their children. A child might not be consciously aware of what is taking place, while subconsciously absorbing powerful messages about their parents' desires. For example: be enthusiastic about taking your swimmer to practices and meets, fundraising events, meetings etc. Don't act as though these functions are chores – your children feed off your attitudes.
7. Criticizing the coach in front of, or around your swimmer undermines the coaches authority and breaks down the swimmer/coach relationship that is necessary for the maximum success of your child.
8. No parent should behave in such a way as to bring discredit to a child, the team or competitive swimming. Any disagreement with a meet official should be brought to the attention of a coach and handled by the coach.
9. Be sure that the youngsters swim because they want to. People tend to resist anything they "have to do." Self- motivation is the stimulus of all successful swimmers.
10. Avoid playing your child against their nearest competitors, thereby creating vendettas within the team and swimming community.
- 11. The communication between the coach and the swimmer is very important. A two-way relationship must exist daily at practice and at meets. It is imperative that the coach has the swimmer's full attention at practices. For this reason, it is recommended that parents not be on the pool deck. If parents are at the Y they are asked to remain in the lobby and make sure your swimmer is focusing on his/her coach.**

Remember that particularly with young swimmers, the attitude and behavior of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport has a very definite effect on the child. In swimming, as in life, no one can win or succeed all of the time. There will always be some disappointments. Every child can gain something from every experience whether

or not he/she ever wins a single race. The important thing is to keep on striving to do better the next time.

The goal is not only to produce great swimmers, but to also produce great young people who swim.

COMMUNICATION

In order to keep everyone informed be aware of the following things:

- **Email will be a primary form of communication. Please provide us with your current email address. Please check your email regularly.**
- **Facebook Group – Williams County Y Swim Team**
- Swim Team Bulletin Board – Northwest pool wall to the right as you enter the pool from the locker rooms (**Please no shoes on the deck!**)
- Family file folders – on a cart just below the Swim Team Bulletin Board
- Announcements at practice
- Team Handbook
- Parent meetings
- Volunteering

REST

Swimmers should get at least 8 hours of sleep each night. This is sometimes hard with swim practice, school work or church responsibilities. Swimmers need to learn to schedule their time so that they can get their homework done, attend practice, do other activities and get enough sleep. When swimmers are very busy with their responsibilities it is even more important to eat right to maintain energy levels.

Many times on weekends swimmers will sleep in the morning and stay up late at night. This may throw off their sleep cycle and make it hard to get caught up during the week. A lack of sleep can cause difficulties at school and in the water. Please help to make sure swimmers get enough sleep. Even a quick nap in the afternoon before practice is beneficial.

NUTRITION

HYDRATION:

Weigh swimmers before and after practice: 1 pound = 2 cups of fluid

Swimmers need 2 quarts of water per day

Avoid caffeine. It's not a thirst quencher – it acts as a diuretic.

NO pop, tea or coffee

HYDRATION: BEFORE -DURING -AFTER EXERCISE!

Swimmers should be fully hydrated before swimming

Bring a water bottle to practice and drink often.

WATER vs. SPORTS DRINKS:

Exercise less than 60 minutes – drink water

Exercise more than 60 minutes-drink water or sports drink

120 – 240 Cal/hr.

Replenish 50 grams of carbohydrates within 30 minutes after exercise such as:

Bagel with honey ½ cup raisins

3.5 slices of bread 1 baked potato

2 C. dry cornflakes 2 C. oatmeal
1 ½ cup pasta 1.5 – 2 cups of fruit juice
3 pancakes with 2 tbsp. syrup

PRE-COMPETITION MEALS

- High carb/low protein/low fat/water
- Goals of pre-competition meals:
- Psychological benefits, Fluid balance, prevent hunger, Rapid emptying,
- Carbs will be out of your system in 2 hours
- If you have less than 1 hour before your race:
- Juice, bananas, toast
- 2-4 hrs: High carbohydrates
- 4+ hours: protein with carbohydrates

HEALTHFUL SNACKS

Fruit, yogurt, bagels, muffins, juice, crackers, popcorn, pretzels,
Carbs are found in grains, fruit & vegetables

How to Survive a Swim Meet...

The Night Before, Pack...

The Swim Bag

Perhaps you've been to a virtual home meet and already know about some of the routine stuff...you know the swimsuit, towel, goggles etc. But, for dual meets, away dual meets and invitational meets, you need EXTRA STUFF! Here's the basic checklist.

- Sleeping bag or soft blanket (No Dad this is not for you!)
- Swimsuit, two pair of goggles
- Towels, two is better than one
- Between event wear- Remember these are wet people, so loose and comfortable clothing works. Sweatshirts and pants are great for this!
- Slippers, flip-flops, aqua-socks...you know something for cold toes, Cold feet make for cold children! Being cold is not only uncomfortable; it wastes a lot of energy too! Keep your swimmer WARM between their events!
- ...and a spare pair of underwear is always handy if your swimmer wears his/her suit to the meet and ---oops! "I left them at home?" ☹

The "Other" Bag

Do NOT underestimate the importance of "The Other Bag". This is the activity bag to keep your children happy and busy while they wait for their events to be called. Rest is important, particularly at the long invitational meets, so here are some suggestions for quiet, yet fun activities: (Remember to keep an eye on your things!)

- Paper and crayons
- Electronic hand held games
- Cards, Books
- Walkman- portable cassette or CD players (watch these carefully)
- Travel games
- Homework??? (We can try!)

What Parents Need

While some folks enjoy watching the competitors and spend nearly all of their time in the pool area, other folks prefer to relax with their children in-between their events. You may want to consider bringing some of the following creative comforts and optional items:

- A comfortable folding chair (rock hard gymnasium floors and unforgiving bleacher seats will get uncomfortable as the day progresses!)
- Ball point pen, magic marker, or combination marker/highlighter pen
- Book, Paper, Magazine or other reading material*
- Paper work, or small handiwork*

*If it is a home meet that we're hosting, you will likely be busy helping with one of the many volunteer positions and won't need to bring these kinds of things.

Remember if you are dressed for cold weather, it gets VERY warm in the pool area! Be sure to dress in layers, or bring some lightweight cool clothing to change into.

The Cooler

This is optional and if you're going to a meet that our team is hosting, we would encourage you to patronize our concession stand. (Remember all proceeds benefit our swim team.)

If you opt to pack some food/drinks, here are some good and bad swim meet food choices:

Good:

- Gatorade, Powerade, 100% fruit juices, and water (fluids are VERY important)
- Bagels (hold the cream cheese)
- Carrot and celery sticks
- Fruit- grapes, bananas, and apples (oranges are too messy unless peeled)

Think natural energy. Easily digestible, portable foods are your best choices.

Bad:

- Pop (any carbonated beverage)
- Candy and sweets (anything with heavy sugar content)
- Dairy foods (takes too long to digest)
- Greasy, heavy foods (no nutritional value)

FLUIDS ARE VERY IMPORTANT! Even slight dehydration can cause cramping and fatigue and a bad swim meet experience. Encourage your swimmer to sip, sip, sip all day long. Don't let them slap down a box of juice and think they're all set. This can cause cramping too. Don't worry about too much fluid; they know what to do when that happens!

Moderate your child's food intake and remember less is better. Some kids think they're hungry when really they're bored and looking for something to do (visit "the other bag"). There are some excellent nutritional tips for swimmers on page.

NOW THAT YOU'RE ALL PACKED... tuck the kids in bed (all our swimmers need EXTRA sleep before a meet) and put the sleeping bag, swim bag, and "the other bag" near the front door. (You'll be glad you did this tomorrow morning!) This will help to

reduce last minute rushing around and you can concentrate on getting everyone loaded in the car (take a pillow for the longer rides). You have of course, already checked at swim practice to make sure you know the warm-up times and have planned to arrive at least 15 minutes prior. Maps are usually available- check with your coach or parent rep if you need directions. (We swimmers get to see our fair share of the local country!!)

We're On Our Way!

In the Morning...

Scoop up your swimmer, throw the duffels in the back of the car, grab the cooler (or your wallet) and allow plenty of time to get there! Oh yeah, COFFEE, don't forget your coffee! If it's an hour drive or more, allow time for the kids to have a good breakfast (but skip the milk)

OK, --head 'em up and move 'em out!

The Arrival

What do I do FIRST?

When you first arrive, have your children go to the designated locker area and change into their swimsuit. They should take their cap, goggles, and towel and immediately report to their coach in the pool area. Now, You have a few things to do....

If this is an invitational swim meet, heat sheets should be available. Purchase one and put your name on it. Tuck it under your arm and head for the "teams area". Look for the WCY Campout Area. Here's where the sleeping bag, chairs, and "the other bag" comes into play. Lay claim to some spaces and spread your stuff out. (By the end of the day, we'll be sharing everything and stepping over each other's stuff!)

Ok, I've got my spot, now what?:

Don't worry about your swimmer in the pool; they'll be joining you soon. Before that chilly swimmer returns it's a good time to get out the heat sheet and a marker. Highlight all your swimmer's events. If there isn't a heat sheet, just look around, the events will be posted. You will find your child's name and event list listed on the WCY roster. Each child will be entered (by the coach) in 3 to 5 events and may also be participating in a relay with fellow team members. Once you find your child's event, write them down, making sure you double-check the posted event sheet so that you and your child know which events to report to.

You've probably noticed it's a bit chilly in the gym, sometimes real chilly, OK, it's freezing!! This is where those slippers or aqua socks are going to be really important!

Is your swimmer back, warmed up, and sipping a drink? Now make sure they know their events too. A very convenient place to write them down is on the back of your child's hand- Yes, this is what we do; he/she can't lose his/her hand! Remember to use a waterproof marker or pen! You will see most 10 and under kids looking like this – some of them even have added decorations! It's the one time we DO allow our kids to write on themselves! Here is an example of how we write things:

#4 – 25 Breast

#16 – 50 Fly

#48 – 100 Free R B

This tells your child the event number, length, and stroke he/she will be swimming.

(R denotes a relay). If we have more than one relay team, the relays will be designated by the letters A, B, C, etc. Don't worry too much; your child will get a helpful reminder in the clerk of course and also on deck before they jump in the water. The important thing is that your child remains in the team area and listens for announcements as the clerk of course and workers call the event numbers.

The Meet

Your swimmer is back, warm, and hydrated: you know his/her events, now what?

If this is a meet we are hosting, head to your volunteer post. Just keep an eye on your child's event numbers so you have plenty of time to pop in the pool area and watch their heat! Don't worry, your volunteer co-workers all have the same idea – we work together to make sure we don't miss our child's events.

If we are at another team's host meet, this is a great time to scope out the facilities. Make sure you know where the clerk of course is, the restrooms and the pool area, and finally how to get back to home base – the team area (Some Y's are huge and tricky to get around)

Meanwhile back at the team camp, check in on your swimmer, keep them warm. The body uses energy trying to warm itself up and energy is something to conserve before their events! There's nothing more nerve wracking than searching for caps or goggles seconds before its time to report. If they keep their caps on, and their goggles pulled down like a necklace, they're less likely to lose these things!

Your main job at this point is to make sure your child stays in the team area between events as opposed to wondering the facility.

Clerk of Course, I've heard of this term, but what is it?

Basically, the Clerk of Course is a staging area where children are gathered and put in an orderly fashion to enter the pool area. This is critical to making certain kids are lined up for the right heat and right event. The Clerk of Course is staffed by parent volunteers from the host team. The staging area may be in the team area, pool bleachers or could be in another location. It will consist of several rows of chairs and some very haggard looking parents standing or sitting at a table with no voices left. ****Your swimmer needs to pay attention to all announcements****. Clerk of Course workers will continually announce the next event. When your child hears FIRST Call for event number, he/she should check his/her hand to see if he/she is swimming this event. This is a skill swimmers should be taught early on in their career, and one he/she should be encouraged to be responsible for on their own. If your child is not paying attention to the calls, he/she could miss an event and will be extremely disappointed. When your child's event is called, he/she should march over to clerk of course and listen for his/her name. Your swimmer will be shown to a seat that marks the swimming order. Once a child is seated in Clerk of Course, he/she should remain there until escorted into the pool area.

Ok, I know what Clerk of Course is, my child is sitting there now, where do I go?

Head for the pool to finally see what you came here for – your "fish" in the water! People are constantly moving in and out of the pool area and you will notice there is a lot of activity going on. There generally aren't any reserved "team" sections, but there will

be a viewing area for spectators. Find a seat where you're comfortable and resist the temptation to go see your child (you aren't allowed behind the starting blocks anyway). After your child finishes his/her event, they are to report to their coach on deck. This allows the coach an opportunity to give your child feedback. After that they will head back to the gym, where you can meet him/her and give those much-deserved kudos! Remember that the primary focus is to have FUN! Your child will constantly learn and improve some aspect of their swimming.

What is the purpose of swimmer disqualifications (DQ's)?

It takes time and lots of practice to master the technical aspects of competitive swimming. All throughout your child's swimming career, he/she will increase his/her knowledge and improve his/her starts, strokes, turns and finishes. During a sanctioned swim meet, officials and judges monitor the competition to ensure that starts, strokes, turns, and finishes are done in accordance with rule requirements. Some latitude is granted to your younger swimmers, but it is important that proper stroke technique be learned early in a swimmer's career.

ALL kids will, at some time in their career, experience the disappointment of being disqualified (DQ'd) in an event. Remember that this is a learning opportunity and the DQ is an excellent tool to help your child. (Children rarely repeat the same error.) Your child's mistake will be explained and he/she will be encouraged to correct their technique. Though it may be disappointing, you can help your child by offering support and encouragement to always do their best.

HEY, my child did pretty well!

Of course your child did well, after all these little fish have been practicing for weeks, months, and years! Ribbons and medals are awarded at many meets. Typically, they are awarded for the 1st through 5th place finishers in each event. If your child swam very well in his/her event, he/she may have qualified to receive an award. You've probably gathered that parent volunteers are extremely important to a successful swim team. Here's another example. During the swim meet one of the many behind the scenes jobs is the Award Committee. As events are finished and scored (by parent volunteers), the place finishers are recorded on labels and delivered to more parent volunteers. (These volunteers are probably hidden behind closed doors somewhere to allow for peace and quiet as they sort through the hundreds of ribbons and/or medals.) Depending on the size of the meet, this process can take 2-4 hours to complete. Once the committee finishes the task of applying the labels, the awards are delivered to the team head coaches for presentation to the swimmers. (Typically 2-4 days after the conclusion of the meet.) Our team distributes dual meet awards during the season. Coaches will give these to the kids at practice or look for them in the Family Folders. We will save the awards from Championships and present those at the end of the season banquet.

After the Meet

You made it!

Give yourself a pat on the back! YOU survived a swim meet!! The day was long, the races are over, and everyone was a winner! You made some new friends and learned more about the sport of swimming. While your swimmer is in the shower changing, gather up your stuff making sure that you've got everything you came with.

Drive home safely!

See you next time at the pool!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to any of the following contacts:

Head Coach: Jordan Brown, jordobro@gmail.com

Assistant Coach:

Senior Program Director: Heather Jones, heatherj@wcymca.org

Parent Volunteers: Jenny Kellogg, scottjenk@yahoo.com

Beth Moore, a2nmoore@gmail.com

2020-2021 COVID-19 GUIDELINES ADDENDUM

1. Swimmers must be dressed in the swim suit when they enter the facility.
Swimmers are not permitted in the locker rooms upon entering the facility.
2. Swimmers, parents, and coaches **MUST** wear a mask as they enter the facility.
3. Swimmers will removed their masks once it's time to enter their lane. Coaches will keep their masks on at practice unless it is necessary for them to remove them for coaching or safety purposes.
4. Swimmers should perform a health assessment at home before arriving at the Y for practice.
5. Swimmer, parents and coaches are not permitted to gather in the lobby or on deck.
6. Swimmers will access the pool through the lobby.
7. Coaches will take attendance each day to allow for contact tracing if there is a positive COVID-19 case on the team.
8. There will only be 7 swimmer per lane at one time.
9. Swimmers are to remain 6 feet apart when entering the facility, waiting to enter their lane, after practice, and upon exiting the facility.
10. When practice is finished swimmers will be released by lane to the locker rooms to change.
11. There will be designated marks on the locker room floor where each swimmer is to change.
12. Showers are not available to swimmers before or after practice. Showering is recommended at home.
13. Parents will not be permitted to stay on deck during practice times to allow for proper social distancing.