

Swim Team Policy

Mission Statement

The USAI Swim Team exists to provide a safe, fun, and inclusive learning environment that fosters individual and team improvement while promoting good sportsmanship and spirited competition.

The mission of the USAI Swim Team is to provide all participating swimmers with the opportunity to reach their maximum potential, and to foster an atmosphere of superior sportsmanship, spirited competition, positive attitude, in an environment that fosters personal growth and development.

Core Values

1. Safety

- All children are expected to listen and respond accordingly to their coaches at all times for safety instructions.
- All children will behave in a safe fashion.

2. Sportsmanship

- Learning to be a gracious winner or loser, to cheer for teammates and for the opposing team is a critically important component of swim team participation.
- Swim team members are expected to wait in the water until everyone in one's heat has finished and shake hands with their opponents and to treat all teammates and opponents with respect at all times.

3. Teamwork

- Team members will be expected to work hard at every practice and follow coaching instructions.
- Team members will be expected to rest and eat well before a meet to ensure top performance.

4. Mentoring

- Older swimmers should expect to support and encourage younger swimmers and set a good example of positive behaviors and ethics.
- When possible swimmers will participate in end-of-practice relays to encourage team spirit.

5. Competitive Spirit

- All swimmers are encouraged to improve their swimming skills and times.
- All swimmers are encouraged to compete at their respective highest levels possible, both on an individual and team basis.

Swim Team Requirements

- All swimmers must demonstrate that they can freely enter the water and swim 25 yards of freestyle using alternate arm action with their face in the water. Floatation devices are not allowed on the USAI Swim Team. Alternate arm action refers to arm movement (ex. doggie paddle arms), not necessarily freestyle arms.

- Swimmers must demonstrate readiness for a one or two hour practice. After the one lap assessment, swimmers who are 9 and over may be asked to demonstrate other skills to help the coaching staff assign them to an appropriate practice group.

- The goal of the assessment program is to ensure that the swimmers demonstrate the required age-appropriate swimming skills. Children unable to swim one lap with alternate arm action with their face in the water do not have the essential foundation needed to

frustration, which would ultimately lead to them no longer enjoying swimming. These children would show greater improvement and greater enjoyment in swimming lessons.

- Some swimmers may be placed in a combination of swim team practice and lessons as determined by the coaching staff.

- Swimmers, whether returning or new to the USAI Swim Team, must be bona fide members of the USAI, have all required waivers completed and submitted, and paid fees.

- If your child does not possess the skills required for placement on the USAI Swim Team, either technical or readiness, the parent(s) will receive a written check list of skills requiring improvement *or descriptive examples of readiness*. These children will be referred to the **USAI Swim School**. Some swimmers who are placed in the one hour practice may also be recommended to participate in swim lessons.

Swim Team Skill Goals

Listed below are recommended goals for each age group. These are **not** requirements for placement on the team

6/under:

- 1 length freestyle (alternate arm action, face in the water, propellant kick)
- 1 length (shallow end) backstroke (alternate arm action, ability to remain on back)

8/under

- 1 length freestyle (alternate strokes, rotary breathing, steady kick)
- 1 length backstroke (as above but full lap with real strokes)
- 1 length breaststroke (pull breath kick glide sequence – not necessarily legal)

10/under

- 2 lengths freestyle (same as above)
- 2 lengths backstroke (same as above but should remain horizontal in water)
- 2 lengths legal breaststroke
- 1 length butterfly (arms come above water, feet stay together)
- Dive and pull out, attempt flip turn

12/under

- 4 lengths freestyle, backstroke, breaststroke (as above)
- Flip turn, dive, and pull out
- 1 length legal butterfly

14/under and 18/under

- 4 lengths free back breast (as above)
- Flip turn, dive, and pull out
- 2 lengths butterfly (as above)
- A legal 100 yard IM (Individual Medley)

Swim Team Practice

The practice schedule will be provided each year in the swim team packet. During most of the season, practices are in the morning, for two hours. At the beginning of the season some practices may be in the evening.

Two Hour Practices

- Older and more experienced swimmers and swimmers who are capable of handling two-hour practices will be placed in the *Two Hour Practice* time slot. Placement will be announced by the Head Coach.

One Hour Practices

· Younger swimmers or those new to the sport are likely to be in a one hour practice. Placement will be announced by the Head Coach by the Friday parent meeting before the first practice of the season.

· There may be multiple one hour practices; Session 1 and Session 2. Placement will be determined by the Head Coach

· There may be combinations of one hour practices and *Swim Prep Lessons*, part of our **USAI Swim School**. Placement will be determined by the Head Coach.

First Sunday: New swimmers interested in joining the USAI Swim Team must meet at the pool at 9:00 am to be assessed by the USAI Coaching staff. Coaches determine if swimmer fulfills the requirements for placement on USAI Swim Team.

New swimmers interested in participating on the Team must arrive at the pool with a completed USAI Swim Waiver Form. Forms will be sent out via email in advance and forms will be available at the pool for parents to fill out. Children will not be admitted into the pool for an assessment without a USAI Swim Waiver Form.

Parents will be permitted to sit in a designated area inside the pool area; however, parents must not interrupt or talk to the swimmers or coaches during the assessment.

First Monday Coaches notify Parents of children who were assessed on Sunday with final results by email. For children whose skill sets *do not* meet the requirements for admittance onto the USAI Swim Team, their parents will receive a written assessment and recommendations from the Head Coach.

First Practice All swimmers meet at the pool and swim under the direction of Coaches. Coaches will assess skill and endurance levels for practice group assignment.

All swimmers must arrive at the pool with a completed USAI Swim Waiver Form. Forms will be sent out via email in advance and forms will be available at the pool for parents to fill out. Children will not be admitted into the pool for a practice group assessment without a USAI Swim Waiver Form.

Coaches will develop final roster and assign practice placements.

Please note: Practice groups cannot be assigned based on sibling placement or car pool needs. The Coaching staff will develop practice groups based on ability and number of swimmers.

Parents meeting:

- Any outstanding Waivers, forms and fees are collected
- Sign up for Team Jobs, and snack stand donations

Swim Team Fee

It is the goal of the swim team to maintain its' own operating budget. Swim team fees will be determined on an annual basis and announced in the April mailing.

- Returning swimmers may pre-pay swim team fees with annual dues.
- Swimmers interested in joining the USAI Swim Team may not pre-pay swim team fees with their annual dues

Swim Team Season Length

The season starts in mid-June with dual meets which are held usually twice a week. The dual meet season ends by about the end of the third week of July. This is followed by league

Swim Team Attendance Policy

Parents should confirm, by May 1, their child's participation on the USAI Swim Team, using this email address: **usaiswimteam@gmail.com**

The policy below outlines unanticipated and/or anticipated absences:

1. Coaches must be notified via email or phone call of unanticipated or anticipated absences of one to two days.
2. Coaches must be notified one week in advance of anticipated absences of an extended period or an absence from a swim meet. An absence of more than two days is considered an extended period of absence.
3. Coaches must be notified if a swimmer anticipates an extended absence of two weeks or more. Under this circumstance, the Coach will review the swimmer's eligibility for participation on the USAI Swim Team.
4. Any unexcused absences may lead to disciplinary action.

Disciplinary Policy

The USAI Coaching staff expects that all Swim Team members follow directions, treat each other respectfully, behave appropriately consonant with the mission of the Team and demonstrate age-appropriate maturity levels.

In the event that Swim Team members become disruptive, fail to follow directions, refuse to enter into the water, or behave in a manner not conducive to the swim team environment, the Coaching Staff will have the authority to discipline the swimmer(s) as described below. If an incident is so serious that it needs immediate action, the coach, in consultation with the manager, has the authority to take immediate action.

First Incident:

If a child is disruptive during a practice, he or she may be asked to sit out for the remainder of their practice time. A written warning about the behavior will be issued and logged in the Coaches' Incident Report Log Book. The Parent is notified in writing about the incident.

Second Incident (related or not related to the first incident):

The Head Coach will issue a written warning about the specific questionable behavior to the child and to the parent/guardian. A consequence determined by the Head Coach will be issued and communicated to the parent/guardian. A Second Incident Report will be logged in the Coaches Incident Report Log Book.

Third Incident (related or not related to the first or second incident):

The Head Coach will issue a written warning about the specific questionable behavior to the child and to the parent/guardian. The Head Coach will issue a consequence of either a suspension or expulsion from the team and will communicate this consequence to the parent/guardian. A Third Incident Report will be logged in the Coaches Incident Report Log Book.

Every swimmer will start each swim season with a clean slate and previous years' incidents will not be held against a returning swimmer. If however, a child is expelled from the team during the summer of 2009 or in any future year and wishes to return the following policy will take effect:

Prior Year Expulsion:

A child expelled from the USAI Swim Team will be admitted back onto to the Swim Team the next year on a probationary basis. If however, the conduct was so egregious as to endanger other swimmers or staff, then a review by the Managerial and Coaching Staff as well as the Board will occur to confirm that allowing this child back on to the team is appropriate. If they are allowed back on, the following will apply:

to get in to the water, which would be determined by the coach in consultation with the manager.

- Any incidents occurring while on probation will result in an immediate review between the coaching staff and management and a subsequent meeting with the parents of the child to determine whether the child will be allowed to stay on the team.

Swim Team Organizational Structure

- Assistant Coaches report to the Head Coach, carrying out all duties and assignments
- The Head Coach has overall responsibility for the USAI Swim Team and reports to the USAI President, or someone appointed by the President.

Parent Policy

Parents are responsible for delivering their children on time to practice, with the swimmer dressed and ready to enter the water.

Parental involvement is essential to the operation of the swim team. All parents are required to volunteer for team jobs (such as timer, snack stand, scoring table, or official).

10 COMMANDMENTS FOR SWIMMING PARENTS by Rose Snyder (adapted from Ed Clendaniel's 10 Commandments for Little League Parents and taken from the **Tarnsfield Torpedoes Swim Team Parent Handbook**)

"1. Thou shalt not impose your ambitions on thy child. Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do their personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming. "

"2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what. There is only one question to ask your child after a practice or a competition - "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate."

"3. Thou shalt not coach thy child. You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offer professional coaching, do not undermine the professional coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to provide unconditional love and support and a safe place to return at the end of the day. Love and hug your child no matter what. Tell them how proud of them you are. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy or any other area that is not yours. And above all, never pay your child for a performance. This will only serve to confuse your child concerning the reasons to strive for excellence and weaken the swimmer/coach bond."

"4. Thou shalt only have positive things to say at a swimming meet. If you are going to show up at a swimming meet, you should be encouraging, but never criticize your child or the coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. And remember "yelling at" is not the same as "cheering for". You also may want to consider being positive anytime you are around the pool."

"5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears. A first swimming meet, the 25 free or 100 IM or even jumping off the blocks, can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready to compete in it. Remember your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience. Most of their fears are ones you have given them."

"6. Thou shalt not criticize the officials. If you do not care to devote the time or do not have the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can. You too can be trained to be an official. "

presence of your child, it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming."

"8. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team *It is not wise for parents to take their swimmers and to jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long, long time by the teammates they leave behind and are slowly received by new team mates. Often times swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water."*

"9. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning. *Most successful swimmers are those who have learned to focus on the process and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well, I did that, but someone else did it too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and I lost. Does this make me a failure? No, in fact I am very proud of that swim." What a tremendous outlook to carry on through life."*

"10. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian. *There are 280,000 athletes in USA Swimming. Only 2% of the swimmers listed in the 10 & Under age group make it to the Top 100 in the 17-18 age group and of those only a small percentage will become elite level, world class athletes. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian is about .0002%. "*

"Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Ask your coaches why they coach. Chances are, they were not an Olympian, but still got so much out of swimming that they wanted to pass the love for the sport on to others. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships and much more. Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles far outweigh any medal they may have won. Swimming builds good people, like you want your child to be, and you should be happy your child wants to participate."