

First Time

If this is your child's first serious attempt at swimming, some of the following may be helpful to you in both preparing for the lessons and in doing "homework" during the very important initial period.

1. Discuss before hand the fact that your child is going to take swimming lessons. From a safety aspect, this should not be something left to choice or chance. Most children want to learn to swim unless they have had an unpleasant experience. In that case, explain that learning to swim will eliminate the possibility of more unpleasant experiences. One should not be afraid of the water, instead they should be concerned about not knowing how to swim (i.e. the swimmer who is afraid of the deep end), but once they learn to put their face in the water on their own, and begin to swim, now that's FUN!
2. At home, before the lessons begin, you can have your child practice holding their breath and putting their face in the tub, sink, wading pool, or bowl of water. Encourage them to keep their mouth closed, eyes open (babies will naturally have their eyes open), ears in and blow their nose when they come up. No bubbles. Increase the length of time they can hold their breath both in and out of the water. Preschoolers probably won't do this, but can get used to water in their face. Pouring water over their heads from the back to the front helps also. All children will benefit from showering to prepare them for physically and psychologically being under water. They can also practice lying on their back in a wading pool or the tub. (make sure ears are under water)
3. Make sure your child is comfortably dressed for their lesson. All children must wear a swim diaper if appropriate. No disposable swim diapers will be allowed in the pool. Hair should be out of your child's face by a pony tail or a swim cap. Improper hair styles can impair proper head position and good breathing. Fingernails and toenails should be trimmed too.
4. Avoid negative thoughts and words, such as using the words, "sink, deep end, or drown." Drowning plays no part in our program because learning to swim will help prevent drowning. Introducing the concept of "deep end" is unnecessary. All the water in the swimming pool is deep to a small child. Your child will learn to swim, as well as have fun in the water. Through our program, your child will gain a valuable skill and a healthy outlook in accepting new challenges in life.