

Infant Aquatic Survival™ Guidelines

NEVER CONSIDER A CHILD WATER SAFE OR DROWN PROOFED! ALL CHILDREN SHOULD BE CAREFULLY SUPERVISED WHEN IN OR AROUND WATER NO MATTER HOW MUCH TRAINING THEY HAVE RECEIVED.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR LESSONS?

For your child's safety and in consideration of all, CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 4 YEARS must wear our snugly fitting reusable, cloth swim diapers during lessons. Each participant will receive one complementary reusable diaper upon registration. These are also available for purchase at the **acac** logo shop. Please dress your child in the reusable swim diaper. (Swimsuits are optional) If your child has long hair, try to braid it, tie it back and use barrettes to keep the hair out of her eyes. **acac** provides bath towels in the locker rooms for members to use. We ask that you return towels to the designated towel drop prior to leaving the building.

DIETARY GUIDELINES

DO NOT FEED YOUR CHILD FOR TWO HOURS PRECEDING HIS LESSON. DO NOT ALLOW FRUIT, VEGETABLES, MEAT OR MILK PRODUCTS FOR SIX HOURS BEFORE THE LESSON. (THIS INCLUDES FORMULA, MILK, EGGS, CHEESE AND YOGURT). Breast milk, Rice Dream, toast and cereal (without fruit or nuts) may be given two hours before a lesson. Some children swallow a lot of air and some water during the lessons. When the stomach is distended the muscles tighten up across the abdomen, and a child will burp. If there is food in the stomach when this happens, the food will come out with the air and the child will spit up in the pool. The pool filtration system will clear the pool quickly, so if this happens to your child, do not be frightened or distressed. This happens to some children regardless and is not anything to worry about, but controlling feedings just before the lessons will help. You can usually expect an increase in appetite and longer naps as a result of this exercise. Please allow for good naps and try to avoid going shopping right after a lesson.

HOW SOON CAN I EXPECT MY CHILD TO LEARN TO SWIM?

Each child progresses at a different pace, has a different personality, and is at a different stage of development and coordination. Some will be very quick to acquire new skills, and others who may have a fear of water or who have learned ineffective behaviors in the water may take a little more time. Personality also plays a key factor in learning. An instructor will not rush a child, nor allow the parents to do so. Usually babies 12 to 24 months are doing very well after four or five weeks of lessons. Older children typically progress more quickly than these younger babies, particularly children over 4 years who receive 20 minute private lessons. Younger infants (6 to 9 months) who are "floaters" take less time initially (3-4 weeks) because they are learning only a part of the swim-float-swim sequence. Expect to spend between 4-6 weeks of lessons after your floater turns a year and is walking, depending upon individual development. Please note: there is an additional charge for private lessons to teach floaters the swim float swim

sequence. Whatever the case, we teach each student with a gentle and encouraging approach, recognizing that each child is uniquely different. Your child may learn one skill quickly and then it may take longer to acquire another skill. Like dance, sports skills or learning a musical instrument, learning to swim is a process that must be nurtured and developed over time. It is a motor skill that will improve with consistent exposure, repetition and practice. You may also notice that your child will learn some skills quickly and then be hesitant to learn anything new. This is perfectly normal for children (and adults, too!). Once a child has accomplished a skill, they will want to do it again and again. Just as we would, he/she feels secure, confident, and proud of their accomplishments. Rest assured that acquisition of new skills and allowing your child to feel confident with his/her ability in the water will be kept in balance throughout the learning process.

WHAT IF MY CHILD CRIES DURING LESSONS?

It is important to note that there are different reasons for crying and different degrees of crying. A certain amount of crying or complaining is to be expected from most beginners and is not cause for concern. At first, your child may show some reluctance. A positive attitude from Mom or Dad will go a long way in reassuring a reluctant child. You will see that as skills are developed, your child will settle into the lesson routine and may very well begin to enjoy his/her newfound skills. Our instructors use a variety of methods so that each child gains trust in the instructor and in the lesson process. Important: We believe no child should be subjected to a fearful or intimidating learning environment. However, it is unrealistic to say that children never cry during swimming lessons. In some instances babies may become tired or hungry during the lesson and sometimes they may cry as a means of complaining about having to work in the water. Frequently they cry because they are learning new skills, which they have yet to master. These cries are very different than a fearful cry and our instructors are in tune to those differences. It is important for parents to offer enthusiastic support, not sympathy, for their child's efforts and hard work.

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS A MEDICAL CONDITION?

If you believe your child has any medical condition that might reasonably affect his/her safe participation in lessons, please explain the condition on the registration form. A written clearance signed by a doctor may be needed prior to your child starting lessons.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS AFRAID OF THE WATER?

Some of the more common causes of early fear of the water have to do with the way parents or caregivers relate to children in and around water. Being involved in water activities before being properly skilled, having parents who are afraid of the water and who have either knowingly or unknowingly communicated this fear to their children, being raised in an environment that prohibits childhood water play, whether as a result of lack of opportunity or parental actions, and experiencing or witnessing a traumatic water incident can all cause very valid fears in young children. Because we understand this, we commit to be relaxed, patient, and understanding toward your child, provide a reasonable amount of control to a frightened child, and create a positive learning environment with praise, toys and activities that promote the learn-to-swim process.

LATE OR MISSED A LESSONS

Swimming lessons are approximately 10 minutes in length, four days per week, (Monday through Thursday) for children under 4 years of age, and 20 minutes in length, four days per week for children over the age of 4. Since your lessons are short, it is helpful if you arrive 10 to 15 minutes before your scheduled time. This allows sufficient time to have your child ready to go into the water (without rushing) at the scheduled time. If you are late, the instructor will try to fit you in whenever possible, but your lesson time might be shortened. Consistency is a very important ingredient of the program. Steady attendance will increase your child's rate of progress. If you find you have a conflict on a certain day, it may be possible to make advance arrangements with another parent to switch your lesson time. Sometimes it may be possible to add you to the end of the instructor's schedule. Please speak with Kelly should this occur.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

It is critical to bring a positive attitude to each lesson. We can teach your child skills, but it is your support that will most affect her attitude and progress. Children do much better when parents are involved and cheer as they acquire and develop new skills. It is also important to know the appropriate time to clap and cheer. Sometimes what the instructor is looking for during lessons is different from what might look good to you. If we together show approval for the same things, it will help your child feel successful and increase her chances of correct swimming behavior. For privacy reasons, videotaping of lessons is prohibited without express permission.

VISITORS

Adult visitors are welcome to observe lessons. It is best to check with the instructor to determine how this might affect your child's progress. Day passes for siblings and/or additional children to attend the **acac** Kids Zone can be purchased at the Member Services Desk.

COST & PAYMENT

Children who are walking and under 4 years receive four private 10 minute lessons each week for six weeks (\$900 or \$750 for **acac** members). Infants who are not walking receive four private 10 minute lessons each week for four weeks (\$600 or \$500 for **acac** members) to learn initial survival skills. Once they are walking, they return to private lessons to master the swim-float-swim sequence. This typically requires an additional 4-6 weeks of daily lessons, at \$150 or \$125 for **acac** members per week. Once your child begins lessons, your payment is non-refundable if you withdraw your child. Registration is a one-time process, and the non-refundable registration fee of \$125 or \$100 for **acac** members (half off for siblings enrolled in private lessons at the same time) is due at registration to reserve your child's spot on the schedule. The full program tuition is due before your child begins lessons.

MAKE UP LESSONS FOR ILLNESS & VACATIONS?

Once your child begins lessons, you are expected to pay for the 6 week program of ten minute lessons (4 weeks for infant floaters) or 3 week program of twenty minute lessons. Makeup lessons can be done on Friday's and need to be scheduled by the instructor.

REFUNDS

Please do not start your child in this program unless you fully intend to complete the entire learning process. Once your child begins lessons, the balance of your tuition is non-refundable if you withdraw your child. The reason for this firm financial responsibility is -- the initial training period is a very critical time of adaptation to a new environment, instructor, and technique for you and your child. It can be a time of very low self-confidence in the water because the child has not had time to acquire and perfect his/her skills in the aquatic environment. If the child's lessons are terminated during this time, the foremost thing the child will remember about the water is that lack of self-confidence in and around water. One of our instructors' specialties is working with children with water fear problems, and we not want to be involved in putting a child in that situation. Therefore, make sure that this program is for you (we know it is for your child) before you register, then stay with it and support your child in every way until he/she is skilled and ready to participate in group classes.

KELLY MELLO INFORMATION

BIO

Kelly is a certified Infant Aquatic Survival™ Specialist. She completed her intensive, six-week training with Judy Heumann, who is the founder of Infant Aquatics™, in 2016. She lives in Charlottesville, VA with her husband and two children.

CONTACT

If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Kelly. We want this program to be a positive experience for everyone involved!

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