

YMCA Stages of Swimming Parent Handbook

Warren County YMCA
212 Lexington Ave
Warren, PA 16365

814-726-0110
www.warrenymca.org

Dear Parents,

Thank you for enrolling your child/children in the Warren County YMCA Swim Lessons. Your child is in for a fun, safe and positive experience!

The Warren County YMCA's goal is to "drown-proof" Warren County. Because Warren County has an abundant source of recreational water, it is extremely important that children and adults know how to swim and enjoy water safely. Our YMCA is dedicated to this goal by providing a program for all ages and ability levels.

One way we hope to reach this goal is by updating our swim program to meet national YMCA standards. Our updates will focus on integrating water safety benchmark skills such as "Swim, Float, Swim" and "Jump, Turn, and Grab" at a beginner level to help children learn what to do in an emergency. Then at an advanced level we will prepare them for competitive swimming and lifeguarding. At the Y we celebrate your child's achievements, give them a sense of belonging, and build positive relationships. To foster this our program will teach the whole child by integrating character and safety lessons into each session. Lastly, we want to increase our communication with you. Therefore, you will receive end of session progress reports from your instructor.

We know that many parents, old and new, have many questions. For that reason, we are providing this parent handbook full of information that you will need to know for a successful lesson experience. Inside is information regarding locker room usage, credits, and other guidelines. Please take the time to read and review the handbook.

Feel free to contact me with any additional questions or concerns that you may have either by emailing me at dani@warrenymca.org or calling 726-0110, ext. 1116.

Sincerely,

Dani Mumford
YMCA Aquatic Director



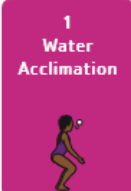
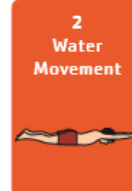







Objectives:

1. To teach swimming skills for personal safety
2. To provide aquatic activities for the purpose of improvement in range of motion, endurance, muscular strength, gross motor skills, perceptual motor skills and general physical fitness
3. To provide the basics for a lifetime sport
4. To provide character development and social-emotional skills needed to build self-confidence.
5. To enhance your child's enjoyment of the water

Lesson Program Overview:

Swim lessons run in 5-week sessions. Stages are offered for all abilities. During the school year we offer two water adjustment classes: **Water Discovery** for children aged 6-17 months and **Water Exploration** for children aged 18 months - age 3. There are 4 progressive stages for preschool levels (**Water Acclimation, Water Movement, Water Stamina, and Stroke Introduction**) and six progressive stages for 1st grade - adult (**Water Acclimation, Water Movement, Water Stamina, Stroke Introduction, Stroke Development, and Stroke Mechanics**).

the Program Overview

SWIM STARTERS Parent* & child lessons		SWIM BASICS (Safety Around Water) Recommended skills for all to have around water			SWIM STROKES Skills to support a healthy lifestyle			PATHWAYS Specialized tracks
<p>A Water Discovery</p>  <p>Introduces infants and toddlers to the aquatic environment</p>	<p>B Water Exploration</p>  <p>Focuses on exploring body positions, blowing bubbles, and fundamental safety and aquatic skills</p>	<p>1 Water Acclimation</p>  <p>Increases comfort with underwater exploration and introduces basic self-rescue skills performed with assistance</p>	<p>2 Water Movement</p>  <p>Encourages forward movement in water and basic self-rescue skills performed independently</p>	<p>3 Water Stamina</p>  <p>Develops intermediate self-rescue skills performed at longer distances than in previous stages</p>	<p>4 Stroke Introduction</p>  <p>Introduces basic stroke technique in front crawl and back crawl and reinforces water safety through treading water and elementary backstroke</p>	<p>5 Stroke Development</p>  <p>Introduces breaststroke and butterfly and reinforces water safety through treading water and sidestroke</p>	<p>6 Stroke Mechanics</p>  <p>Refines stroke technique on all major competitive strokes and encourages swimming as part of a healthy lifestyle</p>	<p>Competition</p>  <p>Leadership</p>  <p>Recreation</p> 
<p>Outcomes Accompanied by a parent, infants and toddlers learn to be comfortable in the water and develop swim readiness skills through fun and confidence-building experiences, while parents learn about water safety, drowning prevention, and the importance of supervision.</p>		<p>Outcomes Students learn personal water safety and achieve basic swimming competency by learning two benchmark skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Swim, float, swim—sequencing front glide, roll, back float, roll, front glide, and exit - Jump, push, turn, grab 			<p>Outcomes Having mastered the fundamentals, students learn additional water safety skills and build stroke technique, developing skills that prevent chronic disease, increase social-emotional and cognitive well-being, and foster a lifetime of physical activity.</p>			<p>Outcomes Students build confidence, cultivate their passion, and stay active through specialized tracks.</p>

*We define parent broadly to include all adults with primary responsibility for raising children, including biological parents, adoptive parents, guardians, stepparents, grandparents, or any other type of parenting relationship.

Most of our lesson instructor to student ratio is set at 1:8 for all lessons. Advanced levels may have a 1:10 ratio. Some classes may have smaller ratios if registration is not full. We must have a minimum of 6 registered students to run a class. Should we need to cancel a class due to lack of enrollment, we will make every effort to transfer your child into another class. If we are unable to transfer your registration, full credit will be issued.

Registration:

The date of registration for each session is printed in the YMCA program guide available on our website (www.warrenymca.org). You can also pick up an aquatic flyer located at the information area beside the front desk. Class size is limited, so if a particular day and time are needed to fit your schedule, we strongly recommend that you register early on the first day of registration.

For your convenience there are several registration options. On the very first day of YMCA member registration, phone registrations using a major credit card will be taken beginning at 7:00am. Those that chose to register by phone must already have a Swim Waiver on file. Registration can also be done in person. Please check the Aquatic Flyers or our website for registration dates. There is no registration via our website because we need swim waivers before registering someone for lessons. Due to changes in the YMCA insurance policy, all swim lesson participants **MUST** have a signed swim waiver on file. Anyone under age 18, must have a parent or legal guardian to also sign the waiver.

We also hold an early registration for YMCA members (except for the June/July and September/October sessions). This registration period takes place on the Monday of registration week from 8:00am-4:00pm for YMCA members. All participants MUST register for the same class, same day, same time. If you miss early registration, you must wait for member registration.

Open registration begins 5 days after member registration.

Credits:

Partial credit (75%) is issued to participants who drop out of class either before or during the first week. After the first week of classes, no credit will be issued. Any credit issued will be mailed directly to you. Credit may be applied to any YMCA program.

Absences & Make Up Sessions:

Participants are urged to attend all class sessions. Unfortunately, we are unable to make classes up due to illness or missed classes. We have many children enrolled in our programs and we adhere to strict ratios. It would be unfair to other participants to add an additional child to the class. If the YMCA cancels a class for any reason other than Holiday closings, credits will be issued for missed classes.

Cancellations:

If the building is closed for some reason, it will be announced on the radio (WNAE1310am) or a sign will be posted on the front door and credit will be issued. **There will be no makeup classes or credits issued due to inclement weather.** If the YMCA is open, classes will be held.

YMCA's Age Policy:

As of September 1, 2016, any child under the age of 10 may not enter the YMCA without adult supervision. If your child is enrolled in a program, please make sure a responsible adult escorts them to and from the program. Please do not drop them off at the curb and allow them to walk in by themselves, as this is no longer permitted. When you bring your child in, please park your vehicle in a parking spot, keeping the fire lane open.

If you need your child to ride the bus to the Y after school, we have 2 programs set up for your children under the age of 10 to participate in. The SAC (School Age Childcare) program is for children entering K through 2nd grade. The Live Yer's program is after school care for those in 3rd grade through age 9 only.

Locker Rooms/Lesson Preparation:

Boys in 1st grade and up **must** dress in the Men's locker room. Girls in 1st grade and up **must** dress in the Women's locker room. We also have a Family/ADA locker room available for parents to utilize with small children.

We strongly suggest that you leave no valuables in lockers. The Warren County YMCA cannot be held responsible for lost or stolen articles. You may bring a lock for your locker, but all locks must be removed from the locker after each daily use.

Please remove Band-Aids before entering the pool. Anyone with an open sore may NOT swim. Participants are not permitted to chew gum or candy in the pool area. Shoulder length hair must be tied back or capped to keep it out of the swimmers eyes, as well as to help keep the pool clean. All swimmers are asked to shower before entering the pool area. After class, swimmers should dry off in the drying area by the showers to help keep the locker area dry and safe.

Food and drinks (except water in a plastic container) are not permitted in the locker rooms. No glass containers in the locker rooms.

Please allow enough time to dress and shower before class, so children do not miss the beginning of the class. Please do not change your child in the bathroom stalls. These are not changing areas. If dressing in the changing cubicles, please put your articles of clothing and bags in a locker when finished dressing so that someone else can utilize the changing areas. Do not forget to ask your child if they need to go to the bathroom before class begins. Preschool children **must** wait in the locker room until the swim instructor opens the door and lets them know that it is time for class. This prevents the little ones from being run over by older children or adults.

Bathroom Policy:

Please have your child go to the bathroom **before** class. If your child needs to use the restroom during class, our swim instructors will lead them to the bathroom and wait for them by the door in case they need assistance. If you want to be notified of when your child needs to use the restroom, please inform the swim instructor, and we will call you from the lobby to take them to the restroom. Swimmers aged three (3) and older are **not** permitted to wear any type of diapers, including swim diapers. Children aged three (3) **must** be potty-trained to participate in our progressive swimming lessons.

Showers:

This is an important step in helping to keep the pool clean. Taking a shower to remove body oils, sweat, lotions, deodorants and perfumes, enables us to use fewer chemicals in the pool. Also, rinsing with cool water helps to lower your body temperature, so there is no shock to the body when entering the water. After swimming and taking a shower, everyone should dry off in the designated drying area beside the showers. This will help keep the locker room area dry and safe.

Shoes:

Children may wear water shoes, flip flops or sandals in the locker room, shower area and on the pool deck. Water shoes may not be worn in the pool for swimming lessons. The shoes add extra weight to the child's feet and lead to difficulty learning proper kicking techniques and supporting themselves in the water.

When should I not bring my child to lessons?

Open wounds and contagious diseases/illnesses are reasons to keep your child out of the pool until healed or well. At the Warren County YMCA, we abide by strict regulations regarding blood borne and other body fluids. Inform your child's instructor of any limitations or special needs your child may have, which could affect their health, safety, or ability to understand and follow directions or perform various skills.

Start of the class:

If children arrive early for class, they must wait in the locker room until it is time for their designated class. An instructor will open the door and tell them when it is time for class. You may accompany your child into the pool area and make sure that they get to the correct spot for their lesson. It is highly suggested that you leave your child's towel on the bar provided for immediate access after the lesson. Please have your child's name written on the towel. Parents are **NOT** permitted to stay in the pool area during swimming lessons. This is to ensure that the instructor can have the child's total attention. If children are distracted, they do not learn well and there could possibly be a safety issue.

Dismissal Time:

Please meet your children, particularly younger ones, in the locker rooms at the end of class time. Check if your child has the correct towel and any other items (goggles, water shoes, etc.). If you need to speak with your child's instructor, please be brief in consideration of the students who are waiting for the next class to begin; most instructors have classes back-to-back. If more time is needed for a discussion, contact the aquatic coordinator (814-726-0110 or dani@warrenymca.org) and someone will contact you by phone.

Parent Observation:

You are invited and encouraged to observe your child's final class of each 5-week session. Occasionally, observation is held on a day other than the last day due to holidays, teacher absences, etc. Parent observation signs are posted towards the end of the session stating the day of the next registration period and the day/time of the observation. We ask that parents never interrupt a lesson in progress. If you are needed, we will signal you.

There are bleachers provided for the parents to sit on during the observation day. Please do not allow siblings who are observing the lessons to get off the bleachers, run on the bleachers, run on the deck or go towards the water. This is a very important safety issue. They will be asked to leave if they are disruptive or are in danger of getting hurt.

Please make sure at the end of class you see your child's instructor for their Certificate of Achievement and Progress Report.

What should I do if my child is crying?

Many times, first time participants can become overwhelmed with the lesson experience. It is not unusual for a child to become upset upon initial separation from the parents. Your child may show great apprehension or cry during the first few weeks of lessons. He/she may not wish to return, or he/she may pretend to be ill. Be persistent and he/she will overcome his/her fears. Our instructors are trained to deal with this kind of situation. The best thing you could do for your child is to give your child to the instructor and leave the pool area immediately. Sometimes parents feel their child will be more comfortable with them on the pool deck, but this only makes the instructor's job more difficult and distracts your child and the other children in the class. Please let our trained instructors work with your child.

Extra Practice and At Home Practice:

Bring your child to the family or open swims and give him/her an opportunity to show you what they are learning to swim in class. The more opportunities given the child to practice, the faster their progress will be. **Frequency** is a very important factor in learning. On our website you will also find a link to Home Activities that you can do with your child to help with certain skills.

Practice in the bathtub at home is very beneficial if your child is not acclimating to getting their face and ears wet in the pool. Spend part of each bath time letting water drip over their face, blowing bubbles, getting face wet and lying on their back to get their ears wet. For some children, this is an unnatural feeling and must be done gradually. Have your child practice floating on his/her back. Begin in a small amount of water and then increase the depth. This helps the child become accustomed to having water in their ears and understanding buoyancy on their body. For advanced levels, have children practice arm movements for various strokes while standing on the floor. They can practice crawl stroke arms, back stroke arms, breaststroke arms and butterfly arms. Remember, **never, ever** leave a child alone in the bathtub or swimming pool.

Testing and Certificates of Achievement:

Children are being evaluated on their progress continually during class. There is no specific "Test Day." As mentioned earlier, we want to celebrate your child's achievements and will mark your child's progression on an individual basis when they are ready. Readiness is an important concept in learning; therefore, a child will never be pushed to perform skills that are beyond his/her ability.

During the 5-week session as a parent you will receive a End of Session Progress report. These will help you see your child's progress and help you understand which skills they need more work. Also, on the End of Session Progress Report you will find which class your child should be signed up for next session.

Individual Differences:

Each child differs in his progress in all activities including swimming. With our progressive swimming stages, we want to celebrate all their achievements, big and small. Our trained instructors have the experience and knowledge to differentiate the skills to the child's individual needs. Therefore, we do not compare one child's ability to another. Don't be discouraged if your child does not seem to be doing as well as another child.

Progress may be slow due to:

1. fear of water
2. slow acclimation to being comfortable in the water
3. poor coordination
4. short attention span
5. parent planting their own personal fear in child

Bubbles:

The bubble is **not** an approved PFD (personal flotation device). It is a teaching aid to be used like a kickboard or pool noodle. *We encourage children to find comfort and confidence in the water without a bubble.* The beginning stages of the swim program help the child learn what to do in the water if they are in an emergency without a floatation aid. If you choose to put a bubble on your child during Open or Family Swim you **must** always be in the water (a Family or Open swim if they are wearing a bubble and pay attention to them at all times.

Volunteers:

The YMCA is always looking for volunteers. If you have any free time during the day and would enjoy volunteering in our swim program, please contact the Aquatic Director. The more help that we have, the more time a child will receive in the water.

Other Questions or Concerns:

We want both you and your child to have a positive experience. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Dani Mumford, YMCA Aquatic Director, at 814-726-0110.

Stages of Swimming Skills and Benchmarks




Stages of Learning

↑ Infant & Toddler
6 mos.–3 yrs.
Stages A–B

↑ Preschool
3–5 yrs.
Stages 1–4

↑ School Age
5–12 yrs.
Stages 1–6

↑ Teen & Adult
12+ yrs.
Stages 1–6

SWIM STARTERS Parent & child lessons		SWIM BASICS Recommended skills for all to have around water			SWIM STROKES Skills to support a healthy lifestyle			PATHWAYS Specialized tracks
A Water Discovery	B Water Exploration	1 Water Acclimation	2 Water Movement	3 Water Stamina	4 Stroke Introduction	5 Stroke Development	6 Stroke Mechanics	Competition 
<p>Blow bubbles on surface, assisted</p> <p>Front tow chin in water, assisted</p> <p>Water exit parent & child together</p> <p>Water entry parent & child together</p> <p>Back float assisted, head on shoulder</p> <p>Roll assisted</p> <p>Front float chin in water, assisted</p> <p>Back tow assisted, head on shoulder</p> <p>Wall grab assisted</p>	<p>Blow bubbles mouth & nose submerged, assisted</p> <p>Front tow blow bubbles, assisted</p> <p>Water exit assisted</p> <p>Water entry assisted</p> <p>Back float assisted, head on chest</p> <p>Roll assisted</p> <p>Front float blow bubbles, assisted</p> <p>Back tow assisted, head on chest</p> <p>Monkey crawl assisted, on edge, 5 ft.</p>	<p>Submerge bob independently</p> <p>Front glide assisted, to wall, 5 ft.</p> <p>Water exit independently</p> <p>Jump, push, turn, grab assisted</p> <p>Back float assisted, 10 secs., recover independently</p> <p>Roll assisted</p> <p>Front float assisted, 10 secs., recover independently</p> <p>Back glide assisted, at wall, 5 ft.</p> <p>Swim, float, swim assisted, 10 ft.</p>	<p>Submerge look at object on bottom</p> <p>Front glide 10 ft. (5 ft. preschool)</p> <p>Water exit independently</p> <p>Jump, push, turn, grab</p> <p>Back float 20 secs. (10 secs. preschool)</p> <p>Roll</p> <p>Front float 20 secs. (10 secs. preschool)</p> <p>Back glide 10 ft. (5 ft. preschool)</p> <p>Tread water 10 secs., near wall, & exit</p> <p>Swim, float, swim 5 yd.</p>	<p>Submerge retrieve object in chest–deep water</p> <p>Swim on front 15 yd. (10 yd. preschool)</p> <p>Water exit independently</p> <p>Jump, swim, turn, swim, grab 10 yd.</p> <p>Swim on back 15 yd. (10 yd. preschool)</p> <p>Roll</p> <p>Tread water 1 min. & exit (30 secs. preschool)</p> <p>Swim, float, swim 25 yd. (15 yd. preschool)</p>	<p>Endurance any stroke or combination of strokes, 25 yd.</p> <p>Front crawl rotary breathing, 15 yd.</p> <p>Back crawl 15 yd.</p> <p>Dive sitting</p> <p>Resting stroke elementary backstroke, 15 yd.</p> <p>Tread water scissor & whip kick, 1 min.</p> <p>Breaststroke kick, 15 yd.</p> <p>Butterfly kick, 15 yd.</p>	<p>Endurance any stroke or combination of strokes, 50 yd.</p> <p>Front crawl bent-arm recovery, 25 yd.</p> <p>Back crawl pull, 25 yd.</p> <p>Dive kneeling</p> <p>Resting stroke sidestroke, 25 yd.</p> <p>Tread water scissor & whip kick, 2 mins.</p> <p>Breaststroke 25 yd.</p> <p>Butterfly simultaneous arm action & kick, 15 yd.</p>	<p>Endurance any stroke or combination of strokes, 150 yd.</p> <p>Front crawl flip turn, 50 yd.</p> <p>Back crawl pull & flip turn, 50 yd.</p> <p>Dive standing</p> <p>Resting stroke elementary backstroke or sidestroke, 50 yd.</p> <p>Tread water retrieve object off bottom, tread 1 min.</p> <p>Breaststroke open turn, 50 yd.</p> <p>Butterfly 25 yd.</p>	Leadership 
								Recreation 



Infant & Toddler / Preschool Skill Continuum

This continuum outlines the skills taught at each stage for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children. Though school-age children, teens, and adults also learn the skills listed in stages 1–4, they achieve distinct milestones compared to preschool-age children. As a result, their skills are presented in a separate skill continuum.

	A Water Discovery	B Water Exploration	1 Water Acclimation	2 Water Movement	3 Water Stamina	4 Stroke Introduction
Breath control	Blow bubbles on surface, assisted	Blow bubbles mouth & nose submerged, assisted	Submerge bob independently	Submerge look at object on bottom	Submerge retrieve object in chest-deep water	
Swim on front	Front tow chin in water, assisted Front float chin in water, assisted	Front tow blow bubbles, assisted Front float blow bubbles, assisted	Front glide assisted, to wall, 5 ft. Front float assisted, 10 secs., recover independently	Front glide 5 ft. Front float 10 secs.	Swim on front 10 yd.	Front crawl rotary breathing, 15 yd. Breaststroke kick, 15 yd. Butterfly kick, 15 yd.
Swim on back	Back float assisted, head on shoulder Back tow assisted, head on shoulder	Back float assisted, head on chest Back tow assisted, head on chest	Back float assisted, 10 secs., recover independently Back glide assisted, at wall, 5 ft.	Back float 10 secs. Back glide 5 ft.	Swim on back 10 yd.	Back crawl 15 yd.
Water safety	Roll assisted, back to front & front to back Wall grab assisted	Roll assisted, back to front & front to back Monkey crawl assisted, on edge, 5 ft.	Water exit independently Roll assisted, back to front & front to back	Water exit independently Roll back to front & front to back Tread water 10 secs., near wall, & exit	Water exit independently Roll back to front & front to back Tread water 30 secs. & exit	Dive sitting Resting stroke elementary backstroke, 15 yd. Tread water scissor & whip kick, 1 min.
Benchmark	Water exit parent & child together Water entry parent & child together	Water exit assisted Water entry assisted	Jump, push, turn, grab assisted Swim, float, swim assisted, 10 ft.	Jump, push, turn, grab Swim, float, swim 5 yd.	Jump, swim, turn, swim, grab 10 yd. Swim, float, swim 15 yd.	Endurance any stroke or combination of strokes, 25 yd.

Copyright © 2016 by YMCA of the USA. All rights reserved.



School-Age / Teen & Adult Skill Continuum

This continuum outlines the skills taught at each stage for school-age children, teens, and adults. Though preschool-age children also learn the skills listed in stages 1–4, they achieve distinct milestones compared to school-age children, teens, and adults. As a result, their skills are presented in a separate skill continuum.

	1 Water Acclimation	2 Water Movement	3 Water Stamina	4 Stroke Introduction	5 Stroke Development	6 Stroke Mechanics
Breath control	Submerge bob independently	Submerge look at object on bottom	Submerge retrieve object in chest-deep water			
Swim on front	Front glide assisted, to wall, 5 ft. Front float assisted, 10 secs., recover independently	Front glide 10 ft. Front float 20 secs.	Swim on front 15 yd.	Front crawl rotary breathing, 15 yd. Breaststroke kick, 15 yd. Butterfly kick, 15 yd.	Front crawl bent-arm recovery, 25 yd. Breaststroke 25 yd. Butterfly simultaneous arm action & kick, 15 yd.	Front crawl flip turn, 50 yd. Breaststroke open turn, 50 yd. Butterfly 25 yd.
Swim on back	Back float assisted, 10 secs., recover independently Back glide assisted, at wall, 5 ft.	Back float 20 secs. Back glide 10 ft.	Swim on back 15 yd.	Back crawl 15 yd.	Back crawl pull, 25 yd.	Back crawl pull & flip turn, 50 yd.
Water safety	Water exit independently Roll assisted, back to front & front to back	Water exit independently Roll back to front & front to back Tread water 10 secs., near wall, & exit	Water exit independently Roll back to front & front to back Tread water 1 min. & exit	Dive sitting Resting stroke elementary backstroke, 15 yd. Tread water scissor & whip kick, 1 min.	Dive kneeling Resting stroke sidestroke, 25 yd. Tread water scissor & whip kick, 2 mins.	Dive standing Resting stroke elementary backstroke or sidestroke, 50 yd. Tread water retrieve object off bottom, tread 1 min.
Benchmark	Jump, push, turn, grab assisted Swim, float, swim assisted, 10 ft.	Jump, push, turn, grab Swim, float, swim 5 yd.	Jump, swim, turn, swim, grab 10 yd. Swim, float, swim 25 yd.	Endurance any stroke or combination of strokes, 25 yd.	Endurance any stroke or combination of strokes, 50 yd.	Endurance any stroke or combination of strokes, 150 yd.

Copyright © 2016 by YMCA of the USA. All rights reserved.