



PARENT HANDBOOK

MTV MISSION STATEMENT

and abilities, located in Mt. Vernon, Indiana. It is our goal to provide the high school with swimmers who have been given the opportunity to learn competitive swimming skills and to compete at the highest level that their ability allows. Our coaches, provide every team member that opportunity, from novice to national competitor.

MTV Swim Team was formed in 1991 to serve as a developmental feeder program for the Mt. Vernon High School competitive swimming teams.

It is our belief that the efforts of our swimmers, coaches, parents and community helps create our "Swimming Family". As a club "We Care" about not only swimming performance but also personal development.

Within this framework the MTV Swim Team strives to provide a positive atmosphere in which to train and promote our swimmers. MTV swimmers are encouraged to develop and understand the value of perseverance and sportsmanship within an environment that provides both competitiveness and physical development.

Over the years, Mt. Vernon Swimming has quickly gained national, state, and local attention. Mt. Vernon swimmers are motivated to excel both in the pool and in the classroom. We attempt to teach to each swimmer the concept that in the end, a sincere effort does pay off.

The Mt. Vernon Swim Team, a non profit club, is run by its elected Board of Directors.

We are constantly growing and training young swimmers to maintain a well rounded competitive swim team. Thank you for learning about us. If you are a perspective new member we are looking forward to meeting you. Please feel free to [ask another member or coach](#) any question you may have.

MTV Parent Board and Committees

A successful swim club needs many volunteers willing to help and assume different responsibilities. The coaching staff is responsible for instruction, training, discipline, and workout/meet organization. However, the coaches cannot organize all the areas needed to have a successful U.S.A. Swim club. The coaches need the parent's help, input, and support. With that cooperative attitude in place throughout the team, the coaches will have the opportunity to do the most important thing they can- *help swimmers swim fast!* In order to insure the coordination of all team activities, several parents are needed to fill the following roles.

2009-2010 MTV Board of Directors

President – Tony Bruno
Vice President – Joe Bailey
Secretary – Kim Blair
Treasurer – Ruth Crawford
At-Large – Erika Thomas
At-Large - Doug Blair
At-Large –
Past President – Mark Hammelman
Aquatics Director - Larry Zoller

The Board of Directors shall consist of nine persons and shall oversee the business, property, and affairs of The Team. They shall consist of the four officers, the current Aquatics Director of the M.S.D. of Mt. Vernon, and the prior President. The remaining three directors shall be elected at-large at the annual meeting of the voting members.

President. The President shall be the chief executive officer of the Board of Directors of The Team He/She shall have general active management of The Team and shall see that all orders and resolutions of the Board of Directors are carried into effect. He/She shall be an ex officio member of all Committees and shall have the general powers and duties of supervision and management usually vested in the office of president of an organization.

Vice President. The Vice President shall perform the duties of the President during his or her absence or disability.

Secretary. The Secretary shall attend all meetings of The Team and shall keep true and accurate minutes of the proceedings at such meetings. The Secretary shall keep and maintain the corporate record book of The Team. The Secretary shall give all notices required by the By-Laws or by resolution of the Board of Directors.

Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have custody of the funds of The Team and shall keep accurate books and recorded, including accounts of all receipts and disbursements. The Treasurer shall timely deposit all funds, received and shall timely pay for all expenses incurred- The Treasurer shall submit an annual financial report to the voting members of The Team at the Annual Meeting. A copy of the Treasurers report shall be presented to the Secretary for inclusion in the corporate record book.

At Large. The remaining three directors shall be elected at-large at the annual meeting of the voting members.

Aquatic Director. The Aquatic Director shall oversee and coordinate the use of the Mt. Vernon facilities, interview and screen potential coaches, supervise the collaboration between the age group, senior and high school coaches, help select and approve the MTV officers for a one year term and announce them at the Annual Meeting.

Each office is entitled to one vote but the office maybe held jointly by husband and wife.

COMMITTEES

All committees must develop a proposed budget for the year and submit it to the Board of Directors for their approval.

1. Finance: This committee will analyze the financial stability of the club. This information will be utilized to develop a budget for the swim club on an annual basis. This committee consists of board members. As it reads in the MTV Swim Team By-Laws, under Article IX-Fees, Section 1, membership fees shall determined by the Finance Committee for all swimming members. The membership fee may be changed from year to year by a vote of two-thirds of the Board of Directors.
2. Publicity: This committee is responsible for placing positive publicity for the team in the local newspapers.
3. Social: This committee is responsible for organizing the social aspects of the club. (Christmas party, end-of year banquet, and other team events)
4. Equipment: This committee is responsible for purchasing team suits, managing the inventory of caps and goggles and making them available for purchase.
5. Award: This committee will put into use an incentive program to motivate and reward all swimmers on the team. Awards are based upon individual accomplishments, work ethic, team sportsmanship, and other items deemed good and necessary to the teams continued success.
6. Fundraising: This committee will recommend and implement procedures aimed at producing additional income for the MTV Swim Club.
7. MTV Winter Meet: This committee will be responsible for the overall coordination of our home meet and for recruiting the necessary personnel needed to run the meet.
8. Phone Tree: This committee will organize, update and distribute the phone tree each season.
9. Marketing: This committee will be responsible for the development of marketing strategies that further develop and keep MTV Swimming growing in the Tri-State Area. This includes recruiting and club development; this committee may conduct research and surveys necessary in the development of a marketing plan.

TEAM DUES

Team and USA Swimming fees are due at the beginning of the season by the deadline date indicated on the Fee sheet. If there are any questions contact the team treasurer.

Any swimmer who joins the team before the middle of the season will pay the full season's fee. Any swimmer who joins the team after the middle of the season will pay two thirds of the season's fee.

Any swimmer that quits the team prior to the middle of the season will receive a refund of one third of the team dues. USS fees are not refundable. Any swimmer that quits the team after the middle of the season will not receive a refund. Seasonal team dues are distributed at the beginning of each session. If you are not sure which group your swimmer will be swimming with this season, please contact Coach Zoller.

MEET SUIT , WARM-UP AND CAP

For all swim meets all MTV swimmers must wear a team colored suit and cap, if they choose to wear a cap. The reason for this is so that the coach can identify MTV swimmers during a race.

The coaches also prefer that swimmers wear a team warm-up and tee-shirt so that they can be identified when on deck.

PRACTICE EQUIPMENT

A team equipment fee is charged and at practice swimmers can use available equipment. However it is encouraged that swimmers purchase the following personal practice equipment:

Finis snorkels
Short fins
Long fins

Hand paddles
Kickboards
Pull buoys

Mesh bag
Extra goggles
Extra suit

Conference SWIM

Mt. Vernon is a member of Conference SWIM (SouthWestern Indiana Swimming)

We participate in dual meets and a relay meet in the winter season and in a conference championship in both the winter and summer seasons.

MEET ENTRY PROCEDURES

All MTV swimmers will be automatically entered in - Kickoff Meet, dual Meets, Candy Cane Classic, Conference SWIM Relays, Conference SWIM Championships and If they achieving qualifying standards for Divisionals and State Meets

The above mentioned meets are "REQUIRED" team meets. If you have a schedule conflict and / are unable to the required meets contact Coach Zoller 3 weeks prior to the meet or you will be entered and will be responsible for meet entry fees. Please understand that there is a lot of organizational time put into these meets and last minute changes create multiple problems.

All other meets are "OPTIONAL" meets. You will not be entered unless you sign up through the MTV website.

ENTRY ACCOUNT

When the coach enters your child in an upcoming meet, our team is required to pay your child's entry fee to the host team. Each swimmer is required to maintain an entry account to pay these fees. An initial deposit to this account of \$20.00 per swimmer is required at the time the team dues are paid. Your entry account must maintain this balance. If outstanding fees are not paid by the meet entry deadline your child may not be entered in the meet. Please remember that once your child has been entered in a meet, you are financially responsible for the entry fees. The team must pay the entry fees to the host team whether or not your child swims in the meet.

A system has been established to efficiently ADD/REMOVE your child from a meet in which they are currently signed up to attend. If you find you'd like to either sign your child up for a meet, or remove them, a form needs to be completed. Forms are located in the folders in the mailbox area_ They are printed on fluorescent paper. Forms must be submitted to the coach well in advance, so he can add/remove your child as needed. The coach will determine the date for ADD/REMOVE forms to be completed If forms are not submitted on time, you will be responsible for any fees your child may incur at the particular meet.

STROKE CLINICS & PRIVATE LESSONS

Optional stroke clinics may be offered during the year. These clinics are offered to assist new swimmers in learning the four strokes and for experienced swimmers to improve their stroke techniques. If you have any questions regarding stroke clinics, please speak to either the coach or a Board Member.

Individual coaches can offer private lessons in coordination with the head coach and aquatic director. Parents should contact the coach and arrange a time and fee.

SWIMMER'S EAR

"Swimmers Ear" is fairly common among swimmers and is no fun! In many cases, swimmers ear can be prevented.

Water normally flows into and out of your ears without causing any problems. You can nearly always shower, bathe, swim, and walk in the rain without a problem — which is remarkable, considering how large and deep an opening your ear provides. You're protected by your ear's shape, which tips fluid out, and by its lining, which has acidic properties that protect against bacteria and fungi.

When your ear is exposed to excess moisture, however, water can remain trapped in your ear canal. The skin inside becomes soggy, diluting the acidity that normally prevents infection. A cut in the lining of the ear canal also can allow bacteria to penetrate your skin. When this happens, bacteria and fungi from contaminated water or from objects placed in your ear can grow and cause a condition called swimmer's ear (acute otitis external, or external otitis).

Swimmer's ear is an infection of your outer ear and ear canal. It can be associated with a middle ear infection (otitis media) if the eardrum ruptures.

Usually, self-care steps can relieve the symptoms of swimmer's ear. However, a severe case of swimmer's ear will require a trip to your doctor.

Mix 1 part white vinegar with 1 part alcohol to make an effective eardrop to use before and after swimming. Pour 1 teaspoon of the solution into each ear and let it drain back out. This mixture may help prevent the growth of bacteria and fungi that can cause swimmer's ear. (MayoClinic.com)

SWIM MEETS

Here is some information to help you prepare for, understand, and enjoy your swimmer's competitions.

The first step is to have your swimmer entered by the coach. (This process takes place weeks before the scheduled meet) Most meets are conducted on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Next, you'll want to make sure you and your swimmer have all the necessary items for the meet. (See below: Swim Bag Packing List)

Make sure your swimmer eats properly and rests prior to the meet. Your swimmer needs to eat a decent meal before they come to the pool. They should have it finished about 30-60 minutes before Warm Ups. Let them eat what they like, within reason. (See below: Healthy Eating) For regular meets, a good night's sleep is essential. For championship meets, rest is extremely important. It supports the taper, so keep the extracurricular activities to a minimum.

Get to the pool early - in time to find a parking spot, get into the facility, for your swimmer to change, check in with the coach and be ready for Warm Ups. Our coaches want our swimmers on deck 15 minutes prior to the beginning of Warm Ups so they can get organized and stretch. It's generally best to have younger swimmers already in their suits when they get to the pool. Swimmers should be dressed appropriately for the weather, as sometimes, they will be walking a ways to get inside.

Coaches usually get to the pool early and stake out a place for the Team to sit. Swimmers should bring their bags with them when they check in with their coach. They will keep them on deck or in the swimmer's seating area. Parents are not allowed on deck at most meets (USA Swimming policy), so make sure your swimmer knows where you will be sitting. Usually there are separate seating areas for spectators (bleachers or a gym). It gets hot in indoor facilities, especially, in the bleachers. Wear cool, loose-fitting clothes-layer when it's cold outside.

Most meets have "camping" areas, which is where you will spend most of your time. See: Swim Meet Essentials for Parents, for a list of recommended items to take to the meet for a comfortable, enjoyable day.

On the way in, you can usually purchase a Meet Program (Heat Sheet) for \$2.00 to \$5.00. Most meets are pre-seeded, so the program lists the swimmers by event, heat, and lane. You can keep track of your swimmer's and their friends' performance. Occasionally, a meet will be deck seeded, so the Meet Program is a Psych Sheet, which lists the swimmers by event and entry time. It also includes the meet schedule and other important information.

Most venues don't allow food on the deck. Often, the host team runs a Concession Stand/Snack Bar that sells food and drink items. Some venues allow coolers in the spectator seating areas- you can bring your own drinks and snacks for you and your swimmers/siblings. Coolers are always welcome in camping areas, and allow you to pack the food you and your swimmer enjoy. Meets can be quite lengthy, and younger siblings find eating a great way to occupy themselves!

Swimmers usually stretch for about 10-15 minutes before they begin warming up in the pool. Teams are generally assigned lanes and times for their sessions. The coaches control warm-ups, which are designed to get the swimmer's muscles/bodies warmed up and loose and to work on technique and race strategies (pacing).

After Warm-Ups, the Meet Staff usually performs the last test of the Timing System and briefs the Timers. Most host teams will ask parents to help time the swims- either by assigning lanes to participating teams or just asking for volunteers. You should volunteer to help time (it's not difficult and it's a great place from which to watch the meet). The sign up sheet for timers will be passed around should MTV need to time.

This is a good time for your swimmer to come to you so you can mark their hands with their race information (event, heat, lane stroke). A Sharpie is good for doing this. Make sure they understand when they are swimming. If you don't see them heading to the coach, clerk of Course, or the blocks, prior to their race, it might be a good idea to look around for them. **If they miss their heat, they won't be allowed to swim in that event.**

Most host teams play the National Anthem at the beginning of the session to honor our country and begin the meet. Swimmers for the first event should be lined up behind the blocks, ready to swim (the Announcer will normally call swimmers to the block by event). The Referee will signal the swimmers to get ready and to step up. The Starter will give the start command and start the race. The Stroke and Turn Judges will observe each race to ensure that competitors follow the technical rules. If swimmers violate the rules, they will be *disqualified (DQ 'd)*. For young swimmers, you should view the DQ not as a punishment, but as constructive criticism to help them learn to swim legally. It identifies for the swimmer and his/her coach an area that needs to be worked on and improved.

During the swim, CHEER for your swimmer (and their friends/teammates)! Good sportsmanship starts with you. Remember that improvement and personal accomplishment are more important than winning.

After the race, the coach usually instructs your swimmer to report to them for a post-race discussion. During the meeting, the coach will review the race, go over splits, and talk about what went right/wrong. When they are done, they can come to the camping/spectator area to see you. Praise them and their effort. But remember, **let the coaches' coach!**

Generally, after the individual events, relay events are competed. In regular meets, the coaches will set up the relay teams are based on the swimmers who are signed up to stay for them. If your child is signed up for a relay, **please don't leave early and cause the relay team to scratch!**

Meets are great fun! It's a good time to get to know the other members of the MTV Swim Team Family. Sit together, talk, and help each other learn about the sport, our kids and their friends.

At the end of the meet, make sure you and your swimmer gather all their belongings and clean up their area before leaving the facility.

Swim Bag Packing List

Here's a list of items your swimmer's bag should contain for the meet. Be sure to label everything with your swimmer's name- bags, suits, goggles, towels, etc... look alike, especially new meet t-shirts!

- Team Suit- Always pack a spare suit (they do fall apart sometimes!)
- Team Swim Cap- Pack two, they tear easily! The coaches usually have extras at meets (you'll be charged on your bill for each one.
- Goggles- At least two pair (straps break!) You can also pack extra straps, so favorite goggles can be saved (but, replacement takes time)
- Deck Sandals- There's plenty of ways to pick up infection and get injured around the pool.
- Towels- Pack at least 2 (large ones). Everything around the pool gets wet!
- Something Warm to Wear- Team warm up suit, or Team sweats, or more towels.
- Water Bottle- A big one, with WATER in it! Or bottles of sports drink. Swimmers dehydrate easily. They don't realize they are sweating!
- Snacks- Raisins, trail mix, Ritz bits w/peanut butter, goldfish, grapes, small chunks of fruit or veggies; favorite dry cereals in Ziploc bags; string cheese; beef jerky; Gatorade Bars or Power Bars; ask around for ideas!
- Toiletries- Swim shampoo, conditioner, hairbrush, comb, girls-only stuff, deodorant, and other bathroom items.
- A DRY Change of Clothes- For after the meet. To keep dry, keep in separate compartment, or Ziploc bag.
- Tylenol/Motrin- For older swimmers, these are good for headaches and body aches.
- Entertainment Items- Books (for reading and school work), CD player (with earphones), CDs, Gameboys, playing cards, knitting, crafts, etc. There's a lot of time between events! You'll be surprised how much homework gets completed at a swim meet!

PARENT'S SWIM BAG PACKING LIST

- √ A Black Sharpie Marker- For marking E/H/L info for each race on your swimmer's hand (E Event #, H=Heat#, L=Lane #)
- √ A Highlighter- For marking their race info on the heat/program. (Most parents write this on the back of their hand).
- √ A Pen- For writing down the times your swimmer achieves at the meet.
- √ Stopwatch- To get splits/times, if there's no scoreboard.
- √ Folding Chairs- To sit in at the camping area or if there are no bleachers
- √ Cooler- Filled with drinks and snacks (many venues don't allow coolers in the pool, but do allow them in the camping area)
- √ Entertainment Items- For You. Books, newspapers, playing cards, work items, hobby items, etc.

OTHER INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

To have a successful program there must be understanding and cooperation among parents, swimmers, and coaches. The progress a swimmer makes depends to a great extent on this triangular relationship. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider this section as you join the MTV Swim Team.

The coach's job is to teach swimming technique, to constructively criticize the swimmer's performance, and to motivate the swimmer to perform well in competition. The swimmer's job is to attend practice regularly, listen to the coaches, follow directions, and to do his/her best at all times. Parents supply the love, recognition and encouragement necessary to give the swimmer confidence.

Watching Practice: Parents are also welcome to observe practices, but please remember that practices are learning situations, and swimmers need to be able to concentrate to improve their technique and times.

Be Enthusiastic: Positive enthusiasm creates an environment, which promotes the swimmer's improvement. In addition to self-motivation, swimmers need encouragement and positive feedback from parents and coaches. Be enthusiastic about taking your swimmer to practices and meets, participating in fundraising projects, meetings, etc...

The Proper Place to Complain: The coaches and board members want you and your swimmer to have a positive and enjoyable swim team experience. When something is not going well for an individual, or group of people, discuss the problem with the head coach or a board member. The MTV Board has a compliment/complaint box located in the mailbox area of the pool. Please address any concerns/compliments you may have. Your input is important to us, and it is you who helps us keep open lines of communication with our swimmers and parents.

HEALTHY EATING

Nutrition is a vital part of any sport-specific planned program. To prepare for better performance in competition, follow these simple guidelines:

- √ Always maximize glycogen stores by ingesting 50-60% carbohydrate in your daily diet.
- √ In training, practice the effects of changing your diet, see what works for you_ What you eat and drink influences the quality of your performance.
- √ Plan your food intake for the day before your competition, and for the day of the meet.
- √ Time your eating around your events to allow the digestive system to rest sufficiently long enough to work for you not against you

WHAT SHOULD A SWIMMER EAT?

The ability to practice at the level which could ensure success in competition, may be considerably affected by your swimmer's diet. A healthy diet is one that provides the energy you need in training requirements.

Energy is made up of three basic nutrients: carbohydrates, proteins and fats. Carbohydrates are broken down and stored as glycogen; most is stored in the muscle, although some is stored in the liver. Fat is stored in the adipose tissue and muscle cells. Swimmers who eat sensibly should get all the vitamins, proteins and minerals they need from any food intake.

A swimmer should eat foods rich in carbohydrates. These should be starchy, unrefined, complex carbohydrates such as whole grain cereals and cereal products (i.e., whole grain bread, muesli, rice, pasta, potato, etc.), beans, peas and lentils. These foods also contain protein, vitamins and minerals and have a high content of fiber.

You should not, as an athlete, rely heavily on simple carbohydrates such as confectionery, preserves, junk food, and sugar to provide the carbohydrates in your diet.

Night before a competition: High carbohydrate, low fat meal with plenty of liquids (fruit juice, water). Do not try to "stock up" and over eat to the point of discomfort. Stick to normal sized meals.

Noodles

Rice or pasta (use low fat sauce)

Deep pan pizza (vegetarian or ham, stay away from fatty meats) Beans on toast

Cereal and toast

Potato in any form, but stay away from CHIPS!!

Pre-competition Meal You should aim to eat a meal 2-4 hours before a competition. Satisfy hunger with carbohydrates and fluid, but not to the level of discomfort due to eating too much, too close to the start of the race. The chosen meal should be high in carbohydrates and low in fat and protein, as these nutrients will slow down the

absorption of carbohydrates you need to turn into energy.

Never go without food or drink. Fluids to ingest are water/fruit juice/sport drink. Mashed bananas, rice pudding, yogurt, jelly cubes, savory popcorn, and teacakes can be an attractive alternative.

Drink small amounts and often, up to the start of the race. Carry your drink bottle at all times, and drink! Here are some suggestions:

Rice/pasta/potato dish/Toast with marmalade/honey/jam Breakfast cereals/pop tarts/Muffins/crumpets/Scones/raisin bread Pancakes with banana/Banana sandwiches/Toasted sandwiches

Snacks for Competition

- Pop Tarts
- Jelly Cubes
- Scones
- Muffins Bowl of Cereal
- Toast
- Low fat rice pudding
- Low fat yogurts
- Crisp breads
- rice cakes
- crackers
- Slice of Pizza
- Pancakes
- Sandwiches
- Roll/Pita Bread
- Granola Bars and dried fruit – Popcorn
- Fresh/dried/canned fruit
- Dried Cereal
- Sesame snack/sticks
- Veggies/Dip
- Plain type biscuits
- Juices/carbohydrate drink

MTV TEAM PRACTICE STRUCTURE

Senior	Coach Zoller Coach Brenda	12 & over	All High School students and any younger swimmers who have achieved a Senior State cut.
"M" Team	Coach Loehrr	9 +	Can do all strokes and turns to Coach Zoller's approval. Can make 10x100 free on a 1:30 cycle. Can make 10x100 IM on a 2:00 cycle. If group exceeds 24 only the fastest 24 swimmers in a 400IM will be permitted in the group.
"T" Team	Coach Eaton	6+	Can do a legal 100 IM Can do basic freestyle flip turn Can do a safe racing dive off the starting blocks
"V" Team	Coach Boyer		Can do 100 freestyle and 50 backstroke with legal turns Can do a safe racing dive off the edge of the pool
Guppies	Coach Boyer		Can safely swim in deep water

MTV ENCOURAGES THE FOLLOWING PARENTAL ATTITUDES

- ✓ Keep open communications between swimmers and coaches and emphasize goal-setting and personal responsibility.
- ✓ Scheduling meetings with the coaches outside of practice times to discuss any issues.
- ✓ Positive reinforcement of swimmers through supporting coaches, demonstrating team spirit and team loyalty.
- ✓ Involvement in organizing, running, and helping at meets and other team events.
- ✓ Be a "Team Player/Parent" and only make positive comments relating to our swim club in the community.
- ✓ Practice *teamwork* by supporting the values of *Discipline, Commitment and Hard Work*.
- ✓ Provide positive support in terms of cheering, and clapping for all swimmers, both MTV and opponents.
- ✓ Be gracious in victory and dignified in defeat.
- ✓ Do not use alcohol, tobacco products or indulge in any types of illegal activities in the presence of the swimmers.
- ✓ Do not tolerate any sexual or racial harassment or intolerance and bring any instances of those behaviors to the attention of Coach Zoller.
- ✓ Be a positive role model for your children and their teammates.
- ✓ Provide your children with proper nutrition and show them with a personal example of correct eating habits.

THE FOLLOWING BEHAVIOR FROM MTV PARENTS IS UNACCEPTABLE

- ✓ Coaching children at practice or during meets. Being on the pool deck during practice or meets.
- ✓ Interrupting or confronting the coaching staff during practice or meets.
- ✓ Abusive language towards swimmers, coaches, parents, and/or officials.
- ✓ Any behavior that brings discredit or disruption to our swimmers and our organization.
- ✓ Only members of Mt. Vernon Swim Team coaching staff will communicate directly with swim meet officials.
- ✓ Negative comments and attitudes towards toward other team parents, swimmers, coaches and board members.

Maintain self-control at all times.

Remember:

- ✓ Swimmers - Swim
- ✓ Coaches- Coach
- ✓ Officials - Officiate
- ✓ Parents - Parent

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR MTV SWIMMING PARENTS

(adapted from Ed Cledaniel's "Ten Commandment for Little League Parents")

I. 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 his or her personal best.

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

III. Thou shalt not coach your child. You have taken your child to a professional coach do not undermine that coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to support, love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy. That is

not your area. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent that swimmer/coach bond from forming.

IV. 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 cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.

V. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears. At a first swimming meet any race can be cause 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.

VI. Thou shalt not criticize the officials. If you do not have the time or the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.

VII. Honor thy child's coach. The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child, it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.

VIII. Thou shalt not jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer at the other 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. Oftentimes swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

IX. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning. 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. This does not make me a failure, in fact, I am very proud of that swim."

X. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian. There are over 350,000 athletes who swim. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are 1 in about 6,000. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics.

Ask your coach why they coach. Chances are, they were not Olympians, but still got enough out of their swimming experiences that they want to pass that 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 and you should be happy that your child wants to participate.