

## **The Benefits of Competitive Swimming**

### ***Physical Development:***

Swimming provides aerobic endurance and is the most beneficial form of cardiovascular exercise. It is the best sport for proportional muscular development. It enhances natural flexibility, develops superior coordination, is the most injury free sport for children and can be a lifetime sport.

### ***Intellectual Development:***

Learning proper technique engages the thinking process as new skills are learned. Swimmers must develop and plan movement sequences. They learn that greater progress results from using their creative talents and exploring new ideas. Structured programs of physical activity develop a stronger self-image. The commitment of time required for competitive swimming teaches time management skills. They learn about self-discipline and sportsmanship. Swimmers learn about nutrition and body cycles. Swimmers learn that excellence can be continually sought. WEST swimmers are taught and participate in community service.

### ***Emotional Development:***

The nature of the sport dictates the swimming is a self-achievement activity: the responsibility of the performance ultimately lies with the individual in any give lane in a race. That individual over time will have many experiences positive and negative, encouraging and discouraging. Learning how to handle the success and failure AND self-achieving responsibility develops self-confidence. Through perseverance, the swimmer learns courage, dedication, commitment and how to overcome adversity. Swimmers learn to handle pressure and stress, sometimes self-imposed, sometimes by others. Through experiences in swimming, swimmers learn attitudes and habit that will remain with them throughout their lives. Most swimmer learn to be “can do” people.