

# PARENT BEHAVIOR

WEST COAST AQUATICS | SWIMMING

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## PARENT EXPECTATIONS :

### How to Support Your Competitive Swimmer

There is and has always been much discussion on the importance of the Support Triangle structure of parent, athlete, and coach. Each plays a critical role in the development and success of the swimmer. Swimming is a very demanding sport, but through the hard work and perseverance, invaluable lessons are instilled. We strive for the athlete's long-term success and our goal is that they will continue swimming past high school. With such long swimming careers ahead of them, each part of the triangle plays an important part in determining how the swimmer develops as a person, not just as an athlete.

### Working together is crucial and we must keep in mind several general rules of thumb.

Maximizing success for each individual swimmer relies heavily on support from both parents and coaches. Coaches, Parents and Swimmers each have an important role to play and it is crucial that each party stay within the confines of their respective role to maximize benefit for the swimmer. However, the Support Triangle will crack if it is getting pressure from all sides.

- **Coaches:** must maintain current certification with USA Swimming and attend regular clinics for continued education. Develop annual training plans, determine all group placement and assess all individual swimmer performance and progress.
- **Swimmers:** must meet attendance requirements while maintaining academic standards and performing at a consistently high level. Attention to detail, ability to take criticism and change habits are crucial to success. Each individual athlete must take full ownership of their athletic career.
- **Parents:** must make sure the swimmer is maintaining academic standards, getting adequate sleep, proper nutrition and generally staying healthy. Parents must remain supportive of the team, coaches, officials and other swimmers always, even when in disagreement with a decision. Disagreements should be addressed at an appropriate time and place.

### Parent's should encourage their swimmer to maintain a healthy diet by following a few key aspects:

- **Nutrition:** As a parent, you primarily influence your child's diet. They exercise a lot and will need to eat a lot, but we want to maximize performance and development, so it is important they are getting what they need.
- **No Supplements:** (Unless directed by your coach) Get what you need from real food first. Take a multi-vitamin (+maybe vitamin D in the winter). Soil nutrient levels aren't what they used to be and the demand on the athlete's body requires adequate vitamins and minerals.
- **Water, Water, Water! :** We don't really need to drink anything else. Hydration plays a major role in performance and recovery. Athletes should come to practice prepared with a water bottle.
- **"Shop the Perimeter" :** It has been said that everything essential for your body to survive can be found on the perimeter of the grocery store: Veggies, Protein, Grains, and Dairy.
- **"Eat a Rainbow" :** Have a variety of colors of vegetables with every meal. One can't eat enough veggies.
- **Get Plenty of Rest! :** Growing bodies need extra rest, and with training, rest becomes that much more important; 6-8 hours per night minimum.

**Hands Off Doesn't Mean You Don't Care:** there are many ways to show your swimmer that you take interest and are invested in their success while still allowing them to maintain ownership of their individual swimming career. Don't ask details about their swimming; instead simply ask them if they had fun and worked hard. Don't pay attention to times; instead focus on effort, attitude, schoolwork, nutrition and sleep.



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## PARENT EXPECTATIONS (CONTINUED):

- **Show Your Swimmer that you Support Them! :** Being “Hands-Off” doesn't mean you can't get involved with your child's swimming. They need to know that you support their hard work, dedication to the sport, and most importantly, that you care about them!
- **Volunteer & Stay Connected:** Help out at meets, introduce yourself and interact with other swim parents. WEST isn't just a swim team, it's a swimming community.
- **Provide Transportation :** We understand that our busy practice schedule and attendance expectations also put heavy demands on parents. We strongly encourage carpooling.
- **Keep Your Swimmers Happy! :** Although we all go through ups and downs, kids should be overall happy. If they aren't, please speak with their respective coaches so we can work on a solution.
- **Family, THEN School, THEN Swimming :** Whenever facing hard decisions, remember the order of priorities.

**ALWAYS SUPPORT:** the team, our coaches, your swimmer. If you are unhappy with a coaching decision or have a disagreement, resolve it by talking with the coaches and do not attend meets or practices until you do. Too often parents air their personal frustrations and complaints to other parents. This is unprofessional and reflects poorly on all of us. We are a small team and word travels fast, creating unnecessary stress and bad feelings that negatively impact everyone.

- **Support** ALL WEST swimmers, yours and others.
- **Support** your age group and level.
- **Support** the coaches.
- **Support** other parents.
- **Support** positive communication.
- **Support** ALL WEST hosted meets as a volunteer.
- **Support** WEST and PNS / USA Swimming at all meets.
- **Support** ALL WEST fundraising opportunities.
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### And For Your Swimmer :

Keep them fed, clothed and healthy.  
Bring them to practice & meets.

## EXAMPLES OF POOR PARENT BEHAVIOR

### Parents must NOT:

- Attempt to coach their child
- Make requests to alter training plans
- Make requests for exceptions to team policy
- Question coaching decisions regarding meet schedules / group placements / practice expectations.
- Interrupt coaches during practice & / or meets.
- Text & call coaches outside of reasonable operating business hours.

### More Examples of Inconsiderate Behavior

- Inappropriate complaining to other team parents.
- Yelling down from the stands at swim meets
- Bribing your swimmer for time drops.
- Pressuring performance from your swimmer in other ways are also examples of unacceptable behavior.
- Undermine WEST team policy or Code of Conduct.

**Micromanaging Your Swimmer** Leads to Insecurity, Loss of Passion, and Inhibits Progress. Swimmers **MUST** take ownership of their swimming career in order to survive long-term in the sport. Swimming is simply too hard for anyone to do for someone other than themselves. Motivation **MUST** come from within and individuals must develop perseverance to be successful in swimming. Typical swimming careers are roughly 14+ years long with only 2-3 weeks off each year. Long-term success is a gradual process that will undoubtedly ebb-and-flow. Swimmers will occasionally need a gentle push or reminder of the commitment they have made, but ultimately will need to own the decision to swim. Burn-out, loss of interest or any outside factors that may hinder their performance must be communicated to their coach immediately.



# EXPECTATIONS

WEST COAST AQUATICS | SWIMMING

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## WEST COACHES' EXPECTATIONS :

Our goal is for each swimmer to reach his or her full-potential, not only as an athlete, but as a well-rounded person. Although we strive to maximize performance in the water, our main goal is to help our athletes grow and develop into highly successful young adults consistent with the WEST Core Values of Honesty & Integrity, Sportsmanship, Respect, Hard Work, and Pride.

## GENERAL EXPECTATIONS :

- **Arrive in a timely manner.** "If you're on time, You're late"
- **DON'T COACH YOUR CHILD.** Recent studies have shown that for many athletes, their least favorite aspect of sports was "the ride home" and the pressure put on them by their parents. Side-coaching from parents confuses the child.

As coaches, we give your swimmers critical feedback and focal points for improvement. We understand how challenging these items are, and we demand the highest level of quality. We typically prioritize a few items to focus on and reinforce those items until they are mastered.

Parent coaching puts additional stress and pressure on the swimmer, often times reducing the amount of fun they have, which often leads to poor performance, burnout, and self-confidence issues.

## PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS :

- Follow coach instructions at all times.
- Don't interrupt or talk when coaches are speaking.
- Reserve your questions for when it is not disruptive to the rest of the group.
- Bring required training and dryland equipment to each practice.
- Always watch the pace clock and leave on the correct interval between swimmers.
- Swimmers must be picked up within 20 minutes of practice ending.

## MEET EXPECTATIONS :

- Warm-up during designated warm-up times, regardless of what time individual events are scheduled to happen.
- Swimmers are expected to warm-up with the team and be at the meet to support the team effort.
- Swimmers are to sit with the team during the meet, not in the stands with parents.
- Relays – Swimmers will support the team effort by competing on relays even if they do not compete in individual events on the same day.

Meet schedules are available online at [www.westswimteam.com](http://www.westswimteam.com) under our EVENTS page, as well as a general season outline located at the end of this registration packet.

Swimmers must declare which meets they plan to attend using the Meet Declaration feature on the Events page, which will be available to all registered team members in September. Coaches (and occasionally swimmers) will choose the events in which swimmers will compete. Parents WILL NOT decide which events their swimmer will compete in.

Parents MUST Decline prior to declaration deadline. Coaches WILL enter all swimmers who qualify for a meet that are marked as UNDECLARED.

# CODE OF CONDUCT

## WEST COAST AQUATICS | SWIMMING

### WEST CORE VALUES & CODE OF CONDUCT :

The WEST Code of Conduct is designed to maximize positive experiences of all WEST swimmers and ensure we are providing a fun, safe, and positive learning environment.

Team members will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that is not consistent with WEST Core Values.

**ALL** members, including parents, must follow the Code of Conduct as listed below.

- Honesty and Integrity
- I will refrain from lying, cheating, stealing and all other illegal behavior.
- I will engage in appropriate conversation at all WEST functions and whenever in a public setting, including online.
- I will refrain from destructive, hurtful, and negative behavior.
- **Sportsmanship**
- I will be humble in my victories and gracefully accept my failures and criticism.
- I will support my teammates and cheer for them whenever possible.
- I will remain in the water after my races and wait for all competitors to finish.
- I will follow proper lane etiquette and refrain from behavior that will inhibit the progress of others.
- **Respect**
- At all times, I will show respect for myself, teammates, coaches, officials, competitors and spectators.
- I will respect the WEST facility by adhering to the Pool Rules and refrain from destructive behavior.
- I will arrive on-time for all practices, competitions, and other team events.
- I will bring all necessary equipment to practices and be responsible for my belongings.
- I will not talk while coaches are addressing the group and will listen to directions carefully.
- I will respect the decision of coaches and officials.
- Hard Work
- I will always put forth my best effort.

- **Pride**

- I will wear designated WEST gear to all meets, including team suit, cap and shirt.
- I will always act in a manner that myself, my parents, and my coaches will be proud of.

### I Also Understand That :

- The possession or use of alcohol, tobacco products, or controlled substances by any athlete is prohibited.
- Disrespectful, indiscreet, or destructive behavior will not be tolerated.
- It is the responsibility of each swimmer to make every effort to avoid guilt by association with such activities at any time.

### WEST DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESS

If a swimmer (or parent) feels that he/she is not being treated in accordance with the above expectations, they should ask to address their concerns by scheduling a meeting with:

1. The Group Coach
2. The Head Coach
3. A WEST Board of Directors member

If any swimmer or parent is in violation with the above Code of Conduct, discipline will be handled in the following (but not limited to) format based on the severity of the offense:

- Removal from practice and sent home for the day
- Meeting with swimmer(s), parents, coaches, and/or Board of Directors
- Further suspension
- Expulsion from the team

Training fees are non-refundable due to suspension for misconduct.

Should one be necessary, a committee shall be appointed by the Board, comprising the Head Coach, and a neutral adult member. In the event that the Head Coach is personally involved in a dispute, a neutral adult member(s) shall be appointed. The membership of the committee shall remain the same until there is total resolution of any given problem, but may change for any other non-related disputes.