



2020-2021

**Member
Handbook**

Updated 1/10/21

Vision

To instill a life-long love of swimming and to build a program of excellence in training, team unity, character development, and family support where all swimmers have the opportunity to achieve their potential and compete at the highest level.

Our Mission

The mission of the Hawks Swimming Association is to provide youth a safe, healthy, enjoyable, and positive competitive environment for swimmers of all abilities. Through high quality coaching, team-building, and individual goal-setting, our swimmers are provided the opportunity to reach their highest potential, as a person and as an athlete.

Board Members

We are a non-profit organization, run by an elected Board of Directors. Meetings are held monthly – all members are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings.

President

Kevin Saunders

Vice President

Nancy Lischinsky

Treasurer

Nancy Lewis

Secretary

Jane Farrell

Registrar

Allison Lucchesi

Club Development/Safe Sport Coordinator

Paul Benkert

Website Coordinator

Kevin Saunders

Volunteer Coordinator/Parent Liaison

Michele Napoli

Coaching Staff

Erin Quinn: Head Coach

This is my tenth year as Head Coach of Hawks Swimming. I began as a volunteer parent assistant coach and within two years was named Head Coach. I inherited a small, young team and have been proud of its exponential growth both in terms of number, performance and as a swim family/community.

My first athletic love was swimming, having joined the local summer recreation team, The New Paltz Seahawks when I was five years old. I lived at the local pool all summer long, but unfortunately, there was no club or Varsity team in New Paltz at that time. My parents could not afford to pay for me to join and travel to a year-round swim team. In the off-summer months I pursued and excelled as a gymnast, a cross-country runner and eventually as a Nordic skier.

I was able to compete at the Division 1 collegial level in Nordic Skiing at New England College, probably one of the greatest challenges in my life. I also continued to be a distance runner, entering all kinds of races, including biathlons, 5K's, half-marathons and marathons. Because of the incessant pounding I became injured and required surgery on both feet. It was then that I returned to my aqua-home, hitting the pool at the University of Oregon every day reaffirming my love, proficiency and passion for swimming. And, I can still do handstands, so the gymnastics paid off!

Like me, our three children joined the Seahawks at age 5 and I soon heard about the Hawks. I was delighted to learn of a year-round swim team right here in New Paltz! I quickly signed our first son, Seamus, up for the team and the rest is history. I understand swimming from the competitive level, the professional level and as a swim parent to our three Hawks swimmers.

Swimming, like any art-form or athletic endeavor is always evolving and to that end, I'm constantly attending clinics, conferences with the best minds in the business, and the best athletes on the worlds stage. I've been asked to be interviewed by *Swimming World Magazine* about my approach to "taper." I've also covered many elite swim meets for *Swimming World* and have published two articles for them including one on Michael Phelps second DUI and the ramifications for his young fans as well as an in-depth article on Nation's Capital Swim Team, home to World Record holder, Katie Ledecky.

I never stop learning, nor does my passion for the sport abate. I'm always seeking to improve my knowledge, place more tools in the proverbial coaching tool-box and learn from my peers and my role-models in the swim world. More than anything, I see swimming as a life-metaphor with so many valuable lessons for myself, our coaching staff, our parents and most importantly our swimmers.

Jane Farrell: Assistant Coach

Kevin Saunders: Assistant Coach

Doug Thompson: Assistant Coach

Parent Code of Conduct

The purpose of a code of conduct for parents is to establish consistent expectations for behavior by parents. As a parent/guardian, I understand the important growth and developmental support that my child's participation fosters. I also understand that it is essential to provide the coaching staff with respect and the authority to coach the team. I agree with the following statements:

- I will set the right example for our children by demonstrating sportsmanship and showing respect and common courtesy at all times to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials, parents, and all facilities.
- I will get involved by volunteering, observing practices, cheering at meets, and talking with my child and their coach about their progress.
- I will refrain from coaching my child from the stands during practices or meets.
- I understand that criticizing, name-calling, use of abusive language or gestures directed toward coaches, officials, volunteers, and/or any participating swimmer will not be tolerated.
- I will respect the integrity of the officials.
- I will direct my concerns to the Board of Directors.
- I understand the above expectations and that my failure to adhere to them may result in disciplinary action.

Violation of any provision in the HAWKS Parent Code of Conduct, as set forth above, may lead to Disciplinary action, including but not limited to, suspension and/or termination of my family's HAWKS membership.

Swimmer Code of Conduct

As a HAWKS swimmer, you agree to follow the rules for behavior and sportsmanship wherever and whenever HAWKS is represented.

- Show respect and be polite to EVERYONE.
- Respect the property of HAWKS and of others. Do not use others' property without their permission.
- Do not steal or vandalize anything that doesn't belong to you.
- Do not use profanity. Do not make ugly comments to others. Do not gossip or lie.
- Do not behave in a manner that makes coaches or other swimmers uncomfortable (public displays of affection, sexual harassment, bullying).
- While at HAWKS functions, facilities and meets always represent the team in a positive and respectful manner.

Swim Practice Etiquette

- Arrive on time to practices.
- Listen to coaches and follow their directions.
- Do not disrupt your coach or bother others in your lane.
- Practice good sportsmanship and encourage teammates.
- Work hard.
- Promote team spirit.

Meet Etiquette

- Wear your HAWKS swim cap and team uniform. Show team pride.
- Show up to the meets on time (early) for check in.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship. Win gracefully. Lose graciously. Congratulate and encourage opponent(s).
- See your coach immediately after your races.
- Questions about a disqualification? Talk to your coach. Do not approach officials at a meet.
- Remember to be a positive representative of HAWKS at all times. Cheer for and support your teammates.

Prohibited Behavior

- Use or possession of drugs, firearms, alcohol, tobacco, or any other hazardous substances.
- Theft.
- Conviction for any unlawful act.
- Demonstration of disrespect to property or individuals (vandalism, bullying, harassment). Anything that is against USA Swimming rules.

If you violate these codes or behave in a manner that brings discredit or discord to HAWKS or USA Swimming, you may be subject to disciplinary action. HAWKS maintains the right to suspend or terminate any membership with or without cause

USA Swimming Code of Conduct

ARTICLE 304 CODE OF CONDUCT 304.1 The mission of USA Swimming is to encourage participation and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of swimming. USA Swimming grants the privilege of membership to individuals and organizations committed to that mission. The privilege of membership may, therefore, be withdrawn or denied by USA Swimming at any time where USA Swimming determines that a member or prospective member's conduct is inconsistent with the mission of the organization or the best interest of the sport and those who participate in it. In order to assist all members to better serve the interests of those who participate in swimming, USA Swimming has adopted this Code of Conduct. 304.2 Any member, former member, or prospective member of USA Swimming is subject to the jurisdiction of the Board of Review. Any member, former member, or prospective member of USA Swimming may be denied membership, censured, placed on probation, suspended for a definite or indefinite period of time with or without terms of probation, fined or expelled from USA Swimming for life if such person violates the provisions of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct, set forth in 304.3, or aids, abets or encourages another person to violate any of the provisions of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct. USA Swimming shall initiate an investigation of any former member of USA Swimming when a report required under 306.1 is received. 304.3 The following shall be considered violations of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct: Measures to be adjudicated by the USA Swimming National Board of Review .1 Violation of the right to compete provisions set forth in Article 301. .2 Discrimination in violation of the Amateur Sports Act which requires that USA Swimming must provide an equal opportunity to athletes, coaches, trainers, managers, administrators, and officials to participate in the sport of swimming. Athletes must be allowed to participate and compete to the fullest extent allowed by the Rules and Regulations. Discrimination against any member or participant on the basis of age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, genetics, mental or physical disability, or any other status protected by federal, state or local law, where applicable, is prohibited. .3 Repeated violation of any of the Minor Athlete Abuse Protection Policies [see page 95]. .4 Any violation of the FINA Rules on the Prevention of Manipulation of Competition as found in the current FINA Manual, including (i) betting; (ii) manipulating competitions; (iii) corrupt conduct; (iv) misuse of inside information; (v) failure to report; and (vi) failure to cooperate. .5 The sale or distribution of illegal drugs or the illegal sale or distribution of any substance listed on FINA's recognized list of banned substances. .6 The use of illegal drugs in the presence of an athlete, by a coach, official, trainer, or a person who, in the context of swimming, is in a position of authority over that athlete. .7 The providing of alcohol to an athlete by a coach, official, trainer, manager or any other person where the athlete is under the legal age allowed to consume or purchase alcohol in the state where the alcohol is provided. .8 The abuse of alcohol in the presence of an athlete under the age of eighteen (18), by a 304.3 2020 Rules & Regulations 95 coach, official, trainer, or a person who, in the context of swimming, is in a position of authority over that athlete. .9 Any act of fraud, deception or dishonesty in connection with any USA Swimming-related activity. .10 Any non-consensual physical contact, obscene language or gesture, or other threatening language or

conduct directed towards any meet official and which is related to any decision made by such official in connection with a USA Swimming sanctioned competition. .11 Action, other than through general advertising, by a coach, owner, officer, volunteer, representative, or employee of a swim club, or a USA Swimming or LSC employee, either through direct contact with an athlete or the encouragement of others, to recruit or otherwise encourage an athlete who is already a member of a USA Swimming member swim club to leave that club, unless the acting party receives prior written approval to recruit or encourage the athlete to change affiliation from the designated club representative of the athlete's existing USA Swimming-member swim club or contact is initiated by the athlete, the athlete's parent or authorized representative. General advertising includes any information that is: A Distributed to an identifiable general population where there is a reasonable expectation that the majority of that population are not current members of USA Swimming; or B Placed in or on any item that is sold. In the event of a violation of this section, a sanction may be imposed against any coach, owner, officer, volunteer, representative or employee of a swim club, or against any such club, or any combination thereof, as appropriate. .12 Any other material and intentional act, conduct or omission not provided for above, which is detrimental to USA Swimming, an LSC or the sport of swimming. Measure to be adjudicated by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency .13 Violation of the anti-doping provisions set forth in 303.3. Measure to be adjudicated by the U.S. Center for SafeSport .14 Violation of the SafeSport Code. [see www.usaswimming.org/code]

Communication

Please do not communicate with coaches or swimmers during practice. This serves as a distraction to all. Coach Erin's email address and phone number have been provided – she will return (and/or forward) any messages at her earliest convenience.

Facilities / Parking

(N/A until further notice due to Covid-related change of practice venue)

Please remember that we are GUESTS of the college and use of the pool is a privilege. All families are required to have SUNY ID Cards for entry to the facility through the back pool door (adjacent to the lower parking lot). ID cards need to be updated for the current year. Additionally, ALL swimmers 15-years-old and younger are to be escorted to and from the pool deck. They may not simply be dropped off outside and have to fend for themselves inside the college building. These rules are here for the protection of our children on a public property, as well as to comply with the rules of New York State.

EVERYONE is to enter and exit ONLY through the back pool door (adjacent to the lower parking lot). Neither swimmers nor family members are to be walking through the building.

Parents may watch practice in the bleachers or may sit in the upper lobby just outside of the pool (near the rec basketball gym). Please refrain from eating on the pool deck or in the bleachers. Also, please stay away from the lower lobby as there are many coaches' offices, athletic trainers, and group fitness classes that meet there and that area needs to be clear.

Parking for our team is designated to LOT # 30 (the lot adjacent to the baseball field). Anyone parking on a weekday prior to 6:00pm needs to have a parking pass or is subject to being ticketed. ***Please help us maintain a friendly relationship with the college and its staff by observing the rules and regulations.***

Team Merchandise / Uniform

Hawks Swimming team colors are navy and orange. We are now in contract with Speedo, which requires that our team be outfitted with Speedo gear (suits, bags, etc.) as much as possible, and in Speedo swimsuits exclusively at competitive meets.

The team suit and other merchandise can be ordered through the following link:

www.thedeependonline.com. username: HAWKS password: SWIMMING

Competition

Sportsmanlike behavior is something our team has been recognized for over the years, and we will continue to strive for that recognition. Swimmers are to behave like champions, regardless of their own personal swim. Our golden rule is to stay in your lane after you swim and be sure to extend a congratulatory hand to swimmers on either side of you before exiting the pool. Cheering on teammates, and respecting all coaches, officials, and competitors is priority to our program.

Swimmers will be trained and encouraged to attempt all strokes and distances during meets. Our coaches know your swimmer's ability and will have his or her best interest in mind when signing them up for meets.

Work Credit Requirement

(Suspended until further notice due to Covid)

Each Hawks family is required to work a **minimum of 10 CREDITS** for the swim year, which runs from September 2020 through August 2021.

WAYS TO EARN WORK CREDITS

1. Volunteer to work at the swim meets.

- In general, families will earn **1 credit per session** worked at a swim meet.
- Families will earn **2 credits per session** worked at each of our **2 Hawks home meets**, which are held in January and July.
- All families are required to work a **minimum of 2 sessions** at each of our Hawks home meets. This means that families should plan to work 2 sessions at our January home meet (4 credits) and 2 sessions

at our July home meet (4 credits).

- In order to receive credit for time worked, **families are responsible for checking** in with the volunteer coordinator, Michele Napoli (or her representative), prior to the start of the meet session in which they are scheduled to work.
- There are a number of different jobs to choose from at the meets - see job list below in Parent Responsibility section.

2. **Other Jobs.** Credits can be earned by working other jobs throughout the season (e.g., door monitor at practice, holiday party, pep rally, etc.). See job list below in Parent Responsibility section.

3. **Special assignments.** Families may be able to earn credits by completing special assignments, if needed.

PLEASE NOTE: Families that do not earn all 10 credits by the end of the season in August will be charged **\$50 per unearned credit PER SWIMMER IN THE FAMILY.**

EXAMPLES:

Single Swimmer Family

A family that has one swimmer and earns 8 work credits during the season will owe \$100 at the end of the season.

$$\begin{array}{l} 2 \text{ (credits owed)} \times \$50 = \$100 \\ \quad \quad \quad \underline{\times 1} \text{ swimmer} \\ \quad \quad \quad \$100 \text{ owed} \end{array}$$

Two Swimmer Family

A family that has two swimmers and earns 8 work credits during the season will owe \$200 at the end of the season.

$$\begin{array}{l} 2 \text{ (credits owed)} \times \$50 = \$100 \\ \quad \quad \quad \underline{\times 2} \text{ swimmers} \\ \quad \quad \quad \$200 \text{ owed} \end{array}$$

Age Group Swimming / Level Progression

Groups 1 and 2 (Developmental)

- Have a skill set that is checked off and reviewed bi-monthly through our Assistant Coach. Swimmers progress through the developmental group through several skills/components.
- To progress out of our developmental group into Group 3, swimmers must be able to be competent and legal in all four recognized USA strokes.
- Swimmers' attention span and focus must be such that they can be promoted to Group 3, which requires greater practice time, sets, and attention to the clock and circle-swimming.
- Our developmental swimmers need to be physically strong enough, in terms of endurance, to be able to move up to the Group 3 group, and be able to complete a typical Group 3 practice.
- The developmental training groups are critical towards creating a solid foundation for each and every swimmer. It is up to the coach's discretion when he or she believes the swimmer should move to Group 3. The coach must be convinced that moving the swimmer to Group 3 would be beneficial and not detrimental to the swimmer's technique, focus, and/or enjoyment of the sport.

Group 3

Group 3 is our most diverse group, and uses, at times, two to three lanes of our six-lane pool. The criteria for remaining in Group 3 and to be considered to move up to Group 4 is based on the following progressive steps:

- Being able to utilize the clock for interval training.
- Making a commitment to be at practice no less than three days a week.
- Having the ability to finish successfully increasingly difficult practices as the season progresses.
- Showing up on time, ready to swim, not getting out of the water for non-emergency issues, and having impeccable lane etiquette and respect for coaches and training partners.
- Maintaining solid technique, drill progression, and focus.
- Group 3 swimmers, based on the above mentioned criteria, are promoted to a more developed lane with harder intervals and greater swimmer responsibility if they are able to commit to more practices per week and increased practice intensity.

Group 4

This group requires a five-practice per week commitment (with an exception for Varsity Swimmers during their 16-week training period.)

Group 4 swimmers must be able to hold an intense interval, lead a lane, respect the lane leader, respect the coach's instructions, and demonstrate the highest level of endurance and technique ability.

- These swimmers can, at any point, be placed back to Group 3 if they're unable to make the required practice, do not demonstrate leadership skills, get sloppy with technique, and/or fail to show up for practice five times a week, or are late to practice.
- If swimmers are unable to make the intervals set forth by the coach, they can also be placed into a Group 3 lane to ensure that they are training at a more appropriate intensity.
- The highest level Group 4 lane is held to the highest standard and most intense practices. It is a privilege to be in this lane, and swimmers know that, reverse that lane, are to push themselves to their greatest

ability, execute each drill perfectly, go off the clock, and be prepared to conduct their own practice if a coach is pre-occupied with a swimmer conflict, an injury or some other emergency issue.

While the above mentioned progression steps are what coaches use to best guide training groups, placement of swimmers is always at the discretion of the coaching staff. Because of limited lane space, the coaching staff understands that the groups are fluid, and use their discretion at each practice to mold swimmers into the best training group/lane available to ensure that they have the most productive workout.

Swim Meets

You must sign up for swim meets online. Please note that there are deadlines for entries.

- **HAWKS SWIMMING** is a member of **USA Swimming** and **Adirondack LSC (AD)**. We also have the opportunity to attend a few **Metro Swimming** meets each year.
 - In order to qualify to swim in the *Adirondack Silver Short Course Championship Meet* in March, your swimmer must have competed in and registered qualifying times in at least ONE Adirondack Sanctioned meet.
 - In order to qualify to swim in the *Adirondack Gold Short Course Championship Meet* in March, your swimmer must have competed in and registered qualifying times in at least TWO Adirondack sanctioned meets, one of which can be the Silver Championship Meet.

- **PLANNING FOR MEETS**
 - Please arrive to the pool 15 minutes before scheduled warm-ups. After warm-ups is a good time to make sure your swimmer uses the restroom, and gets food and/or drink as necessary.
 - It is crucial that you AND your swimmer are aware of the event numbers that they are swimming. Swimmers need to be at the blocks or seeding area in a timely manner, so that they are on time for their races. Swimmers are to remain ON the pool deck at ALL TIMES during a meet (unless you've talked to a coach beforehand).
 - Parents are to remain OFF the pool deck at ALL TIMES (NO EXCEPTIONS), unless you are timing or working in another capacity that requires you to be on deck.
 - Electronic devices are not permitted on the pool deck (i.e. cell phones, iPods, gaming systems, etc.) with the exception of immediately before a race. Otherwise, please discuss with your swimmer the importance of supporting their teammates, regardless of age group or gender.

- **POSITIVE CHECK-IN**
 - Please note that some meets require a POSITIVE CHECK-IN. This means that your swimmer must sign-in prior to the assigned positive check-in time in order to be eligible to participate in the meet.
 - Positive check-in requirements are generally listed in the meet announcement for the meet,

which can be found on our website under Meets.

- **PARENTS/SPECTATORS** – The pool area during meets tends to be very warm, regardless of the weather conditions outside. Please dress appropriately so as to make your meet experience more enjoyable.

WHAT TO BRING

- Team suit (mandatory for meets)
- Team cap (mandatory for meets)
- TWO pairs of goggles
- TWO towels
- Sweatshirts
- Sweatpants
- T-shirts
- Water bottle

SWIMMER'S GRID – Please put this grid on your child's arm before he or she arrives to a swim meet. Once on the pool deck, our coaching staff will fill in the grid accordingly.
(*E*-Event, *H*-Heat, *L*-Lane, *S*-Stroke)

E	H	L	S

Parent Responsibility

Support

Thank you for allowing us to work with your swimmer. Your number one role is to be a supportive parent. It is essential in developing your child's love of swimming. Encourage good sleep habits and diet, as both are very beneficial to training. Please know the difference between coach and parent. If you have a question relating to your child's training and/or practice sessions, please address the coach directly and not through your child. It is vital that your child recognizes the coaches' ability to make sound decisions regarding what is best for individual swimmers and the entire team.

Awareness

It is important to keep up-to-date with all information (practice and meet schedules, weather cancellations). Each family will have a folder in the file box located in the lower pool area, near the lost and found. This box is primarily used to distribute ribbons, newsletters, clinic information, etc. **Time sensitive information will be posted on our website and sent via email.**

Volunteering and Earning Work Credits

Parent assistance is required to help with all aspects of this team. We welcome your participation and appreciate your willingness to get involved. You will never be left alone to learn a job – many veteran parents will be willing and able to show you the ropes. Please don't be intimidated by any job and don't shy away from helping because you are "new" – we were all new at some point. The more you get involved, the more fun and rewarding your experience with Hawks will be.

Job Descriptions

Runner (@ meets)

Responsible for collecting the timers' sheets and posting event results at various locations at the pool for review.

Meet Clean-Up / Set-Up (@ meets)

For home meets, someone needs to see that the pool is ready for the meet (bleachers open and cleared, scoring table set up, chairs placed as necessary, timing pads in place, lane lines in place) and help with necessary clean up following the meet.

Meet Marshal (@ meets) as per USA Swimming Guidelines

Shall enforce warm-up procedures and maintain order in the swimming venue for the entire meet. The marshal shall have full authority to warn or order to cease and desist and with the concurrence of the referee, to remove, or have removed from the swimming venue anyone behaving in an unsafe manner or using profane or abusive language, or whose actions are disrupting the orderly conduct of the meet. Marshals should arrive at the swim venue at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to the beginning of warm-ups. They should check in with the referee to receive instructions, i.e. where they will be positioned, special safety concerns for the meet, etc. The head marshal should have a whistle. Marshals should be easily identifiable by a distinctive article of attire. (Hat, jacket, vest, etc.)

Warm-down areas must be marshaled throughout the meet. Marshals must not leave the area until coverage is provided or until excused by the referee. Marshals duties include: Making sure that swimmers behave in a safe manner. (No running, abusive behavior, etc.) During general warm-ups, make sure that swimmers enter the water feet first from the starting end only. Swimmers should ease into the water. Swimmers should not enter from the far end or the sides of the pool. ABSOLUTELY NO DIVING! Being alert to dangerously overcrowded warm-ups. Alerting the referee and/or meet director if such a situation exists. Notifying the appropriate swimmer, coach and/or referee if anyone is behaving /acting in an unsafe manner. Making sure that lanes are cleared before sprints begin. The marshal's role is to help maintain a safe environment. Please use appropriate language and PLEASE PAY ATTENTION.

Locker Room Monitor (@ meets)

Responsible for regularly checking locker rooms before, during, and after meets.

Door Monitor (during practices)

All parents should sign up for this duty as much as possible, as the college has notified us that there will be NO practice if there is no door monitor. Ensure that there is no socializing in the downstairs hallways and corridors, keep swimmers in the pool area, and monitor locker room / bathroom entrances

Yearbook Design (end of season)

Responsible for acquiring photos taken by parents and swimmers, gathering yearbook comments and profiles from swimmers, possibly securing paid ads from businesses and families to underwrite the cost, collecting senior recognition data, and working with a printer to assemble the yearbook in time for the team banquet.

Concession Committee (throughout the season)

Coordinates and supervises food and beverage sales at the home meets. Duties include organizing and scheduling volunteers to run the concession stand, directing purchases of needed items, and delivery of proceeds to the treasurer.

Fundraising Committee (throughout the season)

Decide upon and organize various fundraisers during the year and organize and oversee the selling of 50/50 raffle tickets at home meets. Soliciting local businesses for sponsorship of Hawks Swimming Association.

Merchandise Committee (throughout the season)

Take orders and collect money for team apparel and merchandise. Organize sales via a contracted vendor at home meets..

Social Committee (throughout the season)

Cupcake Night (once a month for the entire season).

Party Committee (throughout the season, 3 or 4 bigger events) / Awards Banquet (end of year – mid March / April).

Meet Schedule

<https://www.teamunify.com/EventsCurrent.jsp? tabid =168115&team=adhsa>

CHECK WEBSITE FOR MEET SCHEDULE, UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION & POSSIBLE CHANGES

Hawks Swimming Association

www.hawksswimming.org

USA Swimming

www.usaswimming.org

(Speedo National Junior Championship / Olympic Team Trials Swimming Time Standards)

* times – time standards – national meet standards – learn more *

Adirondack LSC

www.adirondackswimming.org

To find USA time standards (B, BB, A, AA, AAA, AAAA), use this link <http://adirondackswimming.org/standardsintro.htm>

TEN COMMANDMENTS FOR SWIMMING PARENTS

- 1. Don't impose your ambitions on your 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 could be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do their personal best.
- 2. Do be supportive no matter what.**

There is only one question to ask your child: "Did you have fun?" Your child should not be forced to participate.
- 3. Don't 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. This is not your area. This will only serve to confuse your child and prevent that swimmer/coach bond from forming.
- 4. Do have positive things to say at a swimming meet.**

If you are going to attend a swimming meet, you should cheer and applaud, but never criticize your child or the coach.
- 5. Do acknowledge your child's fears.**

A first swimming meet, 500 free, or 200 IM can be 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.
- 6. Don't criticize the officials.**

If you do not have time or desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.
- 7. Do honor your child's coach.**

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

8. Don't jump from team to team.

The water isn't necessarily bluer at the other team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long, long time by the teammates they leave behind. Often times swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

9. Do have goals besides winning.

Giving an honest effort, regardless of the outcome, is much more important than winning.

10. Don't expect your child to become an Olympian.

Your child's odds of becoming an Olympian are about 1 in about 4,300. Swimming is much more than just the Olympics. Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it builds self-esteem and fitness; it provides lifelong friendships. Swimming builds good people and you should be happy your child wants to participate.

Adapted from: "Ten Commandments for Swimming Parents" by
Rose Snyder