

**Ten Commandments for Swim Parents**

(Adapted by Rose Snyder from Ed Cledaniel’s “Ten Commandments for Little League Parents”)

1. **Thou shall 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 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/her personal best.

1. **Thou shall be supportive no matter what.**

There is only one question to ask your child:  “Did you have fun?”

1. **Thou shall 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.

1. **Thou shall only have positive things to say at a swim meet.**

Only positive cheering and applauding are allowed. Never criticize your child, fellow team members or the coach.

1. **Thou shall acknowledge thy child’s fears.**

At a swim meet, any race can be stressful. Do not yell, or belittle your swimmer. Instead provide your child comfort and help build his/ her confidence.

1. **Thou shall not criticize the officials.**
2. **Honor thy child’s coach.**

The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and is one that contributes to your child’s success.  Do not criticize or speak negatively about the coach in the presence of your child, or any swimmer.

1. **Thou shall not jump from team to team.**

The water isn’t necessarily bluer at the other team’s pool. Every team has its own internal issues, even teams who build champions. Often, swimmers who do switch teams, never perform better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

1. **Thy child shall have goals besides winning.**

Giving an honest effort regardless of the outcome is more important than winning. An Olympian once explained: “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.”

**10 Thou shall not expect thy child to become an Olympian.**

Swimming is much more than the Olympics! Swimming teaches self-discipline and sportsmanship; it provides life-long friendships and much more.  Most Olympians will tell you that these intangibles outweigh any medal they may have won.  Swimming builds good people and you should be happy that your child wants to participate.

***“Empowering Young Athletes to be Champions in Life Through Excellence in Swimming”***



**Role of Parents in Swimming Success**

* ·BE SUPPORTIVE
* ·AVOID CRITICISM OF THE COACH IN FRONT OF THE SWIMMER
* ·LET THE COACH, COACH

**·AVOID PRESSURING THE SWIMMER**

**·REMEMBER SWIMMING SHOULD BE FUN**

*“The swimmers I’ve had who have had the most success were unencumbered by parents calling the shots behind the scenes,”* says John Collins, and Olympian coach. *“These parents are very good about backing up their kids, but they are hands off when it comes to swimming business.”*

Parents are not participants on their child’s team, but contribute to the success experienced by the child and his/her team. Parents serve as role models and their attitudes are often emulated by their children. Be aware of this and strive to be positive models.  Most importantly, show good sportsmanship at all times towards COACHES, OFFICIALS, OPPONENTS and TEAMMATES.

*“Parents are the greatest influence on their children, even when it is in the athletic arena. Good parents, like good coaches, can make the sports experience one that is memorable and worth repeating,”* Cathy Sellers USOC Coaching Manager

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