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**Parents:**

Many of you are not swimmers and have some questions such as

1. What is going on in practice
   1. Coaches are usually setting up a template for the week and season based on what the swimmer needs to do in order to accomplish goals
   2. Speed, drills, stroke count, number of kicks off the wall, etc. are things that need to be worked on
   3. It takes three months to initiate a change
2. It seems like all they do is laps? Are they learning anything?
   1. Again, since the seasonal plan is set up, there are different training phases that take place
   2. Early season – usually work on drills, skills and endurance or aerobic work that will allow the athlete to build up his stamina for the rest of the season. Aerobic gains are only made at certain ages!
   3. Fast work has to have more rest – even more for older or more muscular individuals in order for them to recover and have the speed
3. Why are they always kicking - I want to see them swimming?
   1. Kicking is one of the most important aspects of this sport
   2. Since the legs have larger muscles, they need more training and oxygen to operate – building up the oxygen capacity in the legs will allow the arms to be able to function better as they do not take up as much oxygen
   3. For 100 metres free, back or fly, 60 metres of this race may be performed under water kicking as per the rules – that is a huge advantage, since the butterfly kick underwater is the second fastest stroke!
4. I think my 8 year old could go to the Olympics! s/he has the drive and wins everything and look at that great swimmer body!
   1. Swimmers develop at different rates – early maturer – usually have to get them to race faster at a young age and hope that they can keep going; versus – late maturer – keep them on technical issues so that when they do grow and gain the muscle mass, they are able to perform. One of our swimmers who swam with us from 10 – 17 years of age, grew 10 inches in grade 12 and was 6’10” after that – he kept getting beat by shorter more muscular athletes at younger ages but was persistent in making all practices and doing what was asked – he broke the Canadian Record eventually and was a rookie of the year in collegiate swimming, also attended the Commonwealth games and placed 8th.
5. My swimmer is swimming to get a scholarship to university?
   1. Very good intentions – again, need to follow the program laid out – universities want swimmers who are dedicated and have good work ethics overall – most either contact the coach of the club they are in or meet with them to go over what they can offer – time management skills of making morning workouts, going to school and then coming back for workout in the afternoons as well as keeping their grades up!
6. Why won’t the coach let my 10 year old come to practice every day and swim with the older kids
   1. Again, making sure that the development of the athlete is key to their growth in the sport and life
   2. Parents should understand that the swimmer may be with the club for over 5 – 10 years and in that time, need to be challenged and brought up doing everything correctly – technique, speed, growth and maturation, muscular development, peak height velocity and mentally challenging them
7. Why does the head coach only coach the older ones? I think he should be coaching all the kids.
   1. Hopefully if your child grows and develops in to the swimmer that follows the correct path, all athletes will be coached eventually by the Head Coach
   2. Most of the swimmers that the Head coach currently coaches were formerly the swimmers in the developmental groups
   3. Swimmers may change and eventually not want as much in the area of performance and that is why we have different levels of groups
   4. Peers are good for swimmers and our top athletes need others to help them out just as much as the other way around
8. Swimming takes so much time, is it worth it?
   1. Is a life skill worth it? – probably – even if you just go through the first few phases of the club, it will enable the athlete to probably move forward in to other areas of the sport such as lifeguarding, sport management, volunteerism?
   2. Drowning is one of the biggest causes of death and the better and more equipped your swimmer is at the swimming skills, then hopefully there will be less chance of them being a weaker swimmer if something goes wrong at the beach or pool.

**Coaches:**

* See the overall development of each child
* Act in the best interest of ALL children in the program
* Balance the needs of the individual with the needs of the group – not everyone needs to do the same thing and coaches sometimes need to make decisions based on what they think or past experiences – I know a lot of parents, swimmers believe that there should be equal treatment, but this is different for various swimmers – body type, drive, etc. – as a coach, we need to look at individuals and surmise what their strengths and weaknesses are and project a program that hopefully helps them in different ways
* Need parents to share the commitment to the team goals and philosophy – mission statement

**Parental objectives and challenges**

* My child is much more important to me than any other child in the program –
  + That holds so true, but as a club – we need to do what is best for the program, everyone in the program is important – that is why it is a club
* My child’s happiness and success is more important than team goals or achievement
  + Value swimming excellence – support everyone’s action for excellence
* I am paying $$$ and expect my money’s worth
  + Again, everyone pays money, swimmers are part of a team and need to bond and help each other along the way

***Parents needing answers:***

* Please communicate, by email preferably
* We know that all parents are engaged with their own child’s needs and in turn need to be willing to help them out – volunteerism, going to parent meetings, etc.
* When joining CDSC, parents need to know the mission statement
  + We are not a learn to swim program, but rather, a competitive swim program
  + Our club has 60+ years of history and our goal is to develop and train swimmers to the highest level they can attain
  + Only a small percentage will ever reach the Olympic level, but there are many other levels and as a club, we have maintained a National level swimmer every season over the past 60 + years, with many going on to National Junior teams, etc. as well as reaching medal performances in the Age Group Nationals (CJC), Trials, CSC, Commonwealth Games and also reaching the Olympics
  + Throughout the years, I have seen many anxious parents try to fast track their athletes, but remember that they do need to building blocks along the way if they will eventually end up successful. Taking short cuts may end up hurting their development.

**Coach to parent communication:**

**Methods Meetings**

* Website - new parent meeting – go over expectations
* Email - beginning of season, entire team
* Hard copy newsletters - training group meetings
* Blast email - pre event meetings
* Bulletin boards - wrap up meeting
* Office hours - planned, ongoing educational series
* Social events
* One on one
  + Please understand the channel of communication
    - Coach of group, Head Coach, executive member – should try to follow these lines – get to know what the coach is expecting for the swimmers such as goals for attendance, efforts within workouts, etc. – why?; getting everyone on the same page and moving in the same direction – again back to the mission statement within the club
  + Read the club manual – posted online under Youth swimming
  + Athlete development model – posted on the web site
  + Get to know how to sign up – for meets, for volunteering,
  + Volunteer for various activities that your child may be involved in
* Parent meetings usually go over
  + Team philosophy
  + Mission
  + Basic team rules and expectations of the group
  + How to communicate
  + Meet schedule and entry procedure – importance of attending meets
  + Team structure
  + Outfitting and equipment needed
  + Expectations of parents

***Excitement:***

* I am very excited about the upcoming season.
  + Swimmers have already shown that they can compete within Canada – rankings have some of our athletes in the top 10 within Canada at the present time!
  + The younger groups are growing and will be the future of the program – again, understand the development and that each swimmer along the way will get what the others at the top are receiving now! Patience in the development and proper training of each swimmer
  + I started to coach a younger group in order to work with those athletes and establish what I am looking for in their progress to the top group
  + We have one CSC qualifier now, let’s see how many more we can get
  + Goal to have medallists at Westerns
    - If they follow the attendance, effort and desire model to get where they need to
* Records are starting to be broken again, goals are getting tougher in order to bring the club forward at a faster rate – expectations for attendance, effort and desire need to be established
* A pro active board –
  + One that has jobs for each person serving on the board that will allow the coaches to do more coaching and not worry about other things that take away from the coaching aspect