

## 6 Tips on How to Be a Happy Swim Parent

Courtesy of Elizabeth Wickham through SwimSwam

I've read some stories from softball and soccer parents about how happy they are when the season is finally over and they no longer have to drive their kids to practice and games. One mom blogged about how happy she was because life was finally back to "normal." As swim parents, we don't have that luxury. We don't have a "season" of swimming like other sports parents. We have short course and long course seasons and a couple-week break. We definitely don't have a "normal" schedule for our families. I wanted to tell the softball mom blogger that she'd never cut it as a swim mom. One of the happiest moments as a swim parent is when our child drops time. We're happy when our swimmer reaches a goal of a coveted Age Group, JO, Sectional or Junior cut. It's easy to smile when our kids are elated, right? We also need to be encouraging when things aren't going so swimmingly. I truly believe that if we enjoy the process, our kids will, too.

Here are my tips on how to be happy as a year-round swim parent:

### **1. Don't treat each meet like it's life or death.**

There will be good meets and bad meets, good swims and less than stellar ones. Don't get too caught up in the moment, but look towards the big picture.

### **2. Don't compare your swimmer with teammates.**

It's easy to wonder why your kid isn't making the same progress as their friends. All kids are different and they learn and develop in their own time. I promise that comparing your swimmer's times with others will not make you happy.

### **3. Cheer loudly for other swimmers.**

Being enthusiastic for your child's teammates will help you focus less on your own kid. Spread positive energy on the pool deck and encourage other swimmers' success.

### **4. Invite the team over to your house.**

Some of my favorite swim mom moments were having the entire team over for a potluck, cooking spaghetti for the senior group, or having the girls over to paint t-shirts for a big age-group meet. Make some happy memories.

### **5. Get your swimmer to practice consistently.**

Your swimmer will not experience success and will be frustrated if their practice is hit and miss. The only way to get better in this sport is to be there and put in the hard work on a daily basis. There are no short cuts.

### **6. Volunteer.**

Busy parents are happy parents. I believe that being involved will give you a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction that you're giving back to your team and this great sport.