

I have been part of the SSAN family for the past 12 years with 10 years as an USA swimmer and 4 years as a lesson instructor and swim coach. Coming from that background, I have grown as a child and adult in the swimming world and have grown a lot through this experience. I live and breathe swimming! From the 5:00 a.m. morning practices to the long meet days, swimming has taught me dedication, hard work, and team spirit. I think all SSAN swimmers can connect with the fact that this team has truly helped them to grow and become better as both swimmers and as individuals. I want to focus this article on the importance of swimming in the developmental level since I have had the privilege to lead the Inway pool this year under our developmental coach, Coach Andrew.

Although all sports can benefit children, swimming has the unique ability to develop the children mentally, physically, and socially. Starting with the mental side of development, something that researchers have found particularly impressive is that, on average, swimmers are twenty months ahead of non-swimmers in their ability to understand and follow instructions as well as showed more expertise at recalling short stories than non-swimming. This information accounts for little ones having to listen to coaches as they explain sets, connect these sets with body movement, and then, focus on slight differences in stroke technique that can make the difference in them getting faster in an event. Looking at the physical advantages, swimming works out the body in ways many other sports do not. Developing a child's lungs and heart, swimming works on oxygen control and intake in a safe and manageable way that promotes strength. Exhaling air into the water and taking a quick side breath is a rhythmic process that stretches their lungs both gradually and safely. In contrast to exercises involving running, swimming also allows a child to keep up their heart rate for a longer amount of time without putting lots of stress on their body and joints.

Many of the friends that I have made as a swimmer, I have until this day. It is the kind of friendship one can only have after seeing each other grow and working together everyday in the pool for 2-4 hours until exhaustion took over. Cheering each other on at meets and competing together are some of my fondest memories because we all supported each other and built each other up. On the hard days and the fun days, I always looked forward to times with my team in the pool and outside of the pool. Even though we live all over the map now, we will have that bond all of our lives and keep in touch. Swim Streamline is my second family, and I love being with the kiddos everyday as a part of continuing to grow this amazing team.

I attached this article if you wanted to include it. I thought it was pretty good.

<https://www.yourswimlog.com/benefits-of-competitive-swimming/>