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## Coach/Parent Relationship

The relationship of the coach and athlete is extremely important and it increases in importance with age and ability of the swimmer. How you, as a parent, react and treat the coach will be the example your young swimmer will follow. You would have your swimmer treat the coach as you would have them treat a teacher, with respect.

You want your swimmer to learn to communicate with the coach directly. The more you take over and communicate the less chance the swimmer will have to learn to do for themselves.

Try to talk to the coach in a non-crisis situation. Touch base once in a while. Try to have a congenial conversation.

Let the Coach, coach. He or she has your swimmer's best interest in mind and is thinking about the long term picture for your swimmer. Remember, he or she is the expert. Don't try to talk to the coach on deck at practice or at a swim meet. Catch them afterwards or make an appointment. You wouldn't like it if every other parent on the team was distracting the coach and he wasn't coaching.

Many coaches offer their home numbers. Avoid using it unless there is an emergency. Coaching is their profession and you and your swimmer are doing this for fun. Parents often do not realize how little spare time coaches have.

Avoid talking to the coach about your child in front of other parents. Many coaches will not talk about an athlete in front of other people; conversations should be private.

Remember, your swimmer and the coach will have disagreements. Stay out of it. Let them work it out as much as possible on their own. It is part of life's lessons that swimming offers.

If your swimmer is punished by the coach for misbehavior, assume the coach was there and has to control the situation. Avoid stepping in to fight your swimmer's battles. If you do, your swimmer will soon realize he can work the two of you against each other. Every time you step in you win, the coach concedes, and your swimmer loses. If your swimmer complains that the reason he was punished was stupid and made no sense, tell them the coach is the authority at swim practice and if the swimmer knows that something irritates the coach (even if you think the punishment was unjustified), don't do it anymore. Remember the coach usually has a large group of children to manage in a very physical activity.

If your swimmer is in the one of the older groups, the coach will become one of the most influential people in their lives. You want this experience to be a beneficial one.