

Helpful Hints from a NCAA Recruiter

1. Should I be doing something now as an Age Group Parent?

Nothing related to college recruiting just yet BUT a parent is the first coach a child has. Children follow the example of their parents. Showing a swimmer how important it is to eat the correct foods, get the proper rest, stress the importance of education and show them how to be a part of a team can be the biggest draw for a recruiter. The lesson they are taught now will be the lesson they take with them through high school and into college. Setting those standards now will ensure that the swimmers will continue on a healthy path into the future.

2. Varsity –vs.-Age Group in High School?

When asking 10 different coaches a parent will get 10 different answers. The personal opinion of the recruiter we spoke to said that he preferred students that swam with the varsity team in high school. He stated that a high school varsity team will give the swimmers a good look at how college swimming is run. Everything is about their teammates. You get to swim your 2 events and then the rest of the meet is spent cheering on your team. While apart of age group swimming, a swimmer is on a team but with so many events packed into one weekend for each swimmer they sometimes are so busy preparing for their next event that they forget that others from their team are swimming an event. In his opinion, high school varsity athletes tend to acclimate to the college atmosphere better and faster than high school age-group swimmers. He also said that High school swimming is such a power house in NW Indiana that there are always colleges following those swimmers and their times. He said we are in a good area for swimming and that should help when looking into colleges. With that said, every situation is different. Not swimming a varsity team in high school will never be held against a swimmer. Every situation is different. Some towns do not have a high school team or the high school team near-by could have a bad coach. He looks at everyone and at their situations that surround their swim careers. All his opinion was saying was that he felt the varsity swimmers adjusted better but he enjoys looking at everyone.

3. When should a parent start setting up their child for the recruiting process?

At the start of their 10th grade year in high school a parent should go to (collegeswimming.com) and start filling in their swimmer's times and information. College recruiters can't be everywhere and would sometimes miss a good swimmer because there are so many kids. This website is available for every college coach in the country to look at every day. The recruiter we spoke with said that he visits this site about 3-4 days a week to check in and see what is happening. These types of sites will give your swimmer the exposure they need without having to send all of your information to each individual school you are looking into. Also, this gives the colleges the opportunity to start watching and following these swimmers prior to their official "ok" date for contact to begin. The recruiter will already have the swimmers history in front of them when they call and make that first contact.

4. What is the best advice for an age group swim parent?

He said the best advice he can give is for the parents to remain being the parents and let the coaches be the coaches. Many times the parents get too involved with the coaching side of the sport and forget to be a cheerleader for the swimmer. The swimmers get yelled at a lot from their coaches and usually just want their parents to tell them they did a great job. Too much coaching is never a good thing and sometimes this is what turns swimmers off of swimming. Be the cheerleader after a good swim, console them after a bad swim, celebrate with them after a goal is reached and let the coach be the bad guy 😊

5. What are some educational standards looked at when recruiting?

A student on A/B honor roll says a lot to a college recruiter. Not only is that swimmer a great swimmer but they have proven they can be a great student too. Colleges like to see that. They have grades requirements to stay eligible and a student needs to be able to maintain eligibility in order to be helpful to the team. They have tough restrictions on purpose. He says that while he loves swimming he is very aware that these swimmers need to leave college and go into their careers. They do not want a swimmer to leave them and have nowhere to go or nothing to do. Contrary to belief....Swimming isn't everything!

6. Would setting goals based around college times be good for the swimmers or is that too much pressure at this age?

Giving each child some goals each year is always a good idea. This gives them something to work towards. As a parent you can know in your head what goals you are pushing for and where you would like to see them sit but the more a parent pushes the more a child may rebel. Give them goals but do not stress to them that they have to get to that goal or they will not make it into college. If they are meant to swim in college then they will. Not every kid wants to swim in college and not every kid is a good fit for college swimming either.