

OMNI Otters Swim Club Coaching Philosophy

The coaches of the OMNI Swim Team are committed to the following goals:

- **Lifelong swimmers:** We strive to create a team environment in which our swimmers feel safe and accepted, as well as one in which they experience great achievements but with minimal pressure. It is our hope that these things combined will provide our swimmers with the skills necessary to enable them to swim in high school, college, and beyond. Swimming is a great sport throughout the lifespan and can be both a motivator for and a relaxing break from the activities of each day. We do not want to see our swimmers “burn out” as a result of high intensity, high pressure coaching, nor do we want them to be on the injured list at the very young ages of middle and high school.
- **Healthy bodies/healthy adults:** It is our goal to prepare our young swimmers for a lifetime of healthy living. In addition to continuing to swim, we accomplish this in two ways:
 - Throughout the season, we invite our swimmers and their families and friends to join us for outdoor events, including running, biking, walking. These are optional events, occurring as frequently as weather and the swim meet schedule allow, but the hope is to broaden our swimmers’ horizons and teach them to love all activity as well as to view active events as good pasttimes for family or friend time.
 - We strive to educate our swimmers on healthy eating. We do not promote dieting, but rather want to empower our swimmers to make healthy choices both at the pool and at home. We encourage our swimmers to participate in food choices at home and learn how to enjoy sweets and snacks when appropriate, but ensure that their bodies get the fuel they need for both academic and athletic pursuits.
- **Injury prevention:** We accomplish this in a few ways:
 - Education - creating awareness of overuse injuries in more experienced swimmers for early identification of possible problems.
 - Quality not quantity of swimming - we believe that swimmers can excel with minimal yardage provided that that yardage is both high intensity and with strong focus on stroke and race technique. By limiting the amount of yardage during training, swimmers avoid building muscle imbalances, which occur when the primary muscle fatigues and the body asks other unprepared muscles to take over for the primary muscles. These muscles are not strong enough or aligned properly to do the job and they become aggravated, leading to overuse injuries.
 - Dry land training – in addition to time spent in the pool swimming, OMNI swimmers also train outside the pool – called dry land training. Included in this training are exercises that can also be done at home and are designed to strengthen muscles and joints that are used in swimming.
 - Technique. Technique. Technique. We teach swimmers how to move through the water in a way that is both effective and efficient. Efficient swimming not only minimizes energy use while maximizing speed, but it also promotes the use of natural movement patterns, which are sustainable for the body’s muscles and joints.

- **Competitive drive:** By minimizing the external pressures to succeed, we hope that our swimmers will find a love for the sport that will internally drive them, allowing them to take ownership through dedication, focus, and a strong desire to compete and improve their times and races.
- **Organizational skills:** In an effort to build lifelong skills and well-rounded bodies, we encourage our swimmers to participate in activities outside of the pool. They then must learn time management skills that will allow them to complete all school work, family responsibilities, and household tasks, as well as athletic and extracurricular endeavors while maintaining a consistent sleep schedule.