

EDGE Swim Parent,

Swimming is truly one of the greatest individual AND team activities your child can be a part of. It teaches discipline, excellent work ethic, time management skills, the ability to communicate and work well with others, perform under pressure, meet and make friends with peers from differing towns and backgrounds, and so much more. Swimming also comes with some risks: comparing one's self to others in a negative manner, excessive self-pressure, and obsession over a result – all of which tend to be created by the athlete all on his/her own!

These risks are primarily prevalent at swim meets.

Your swimmer works hard each and every day at the pool to learn new techniques, race strategy, and to improve their endurance so that they may display what they've learned at competitions. Parents play a much larger role than they may think with regards to a successful meet, which in itself, may be different than what you think.

A successful meet happens when a swimmer:

- Has taken the proper steps in both rest (sleep) and nutrition before, during, and after each session or the meet
- Checked in with a coach before and after each race
- Has given their very best effort to each and every race
- Has spent quality time with and encouraging their teammates
- Has left the meet or a race learning something they did well along with something they can improve on

TIME or PLACE does not determine a successful meet. Here is how a parent helps ensure all of the above happens. When these elements happen, the time and place your swimmer finishes, will take care of itself.

- ALWAYS be positive and encouraging. Your swimmer may already put pressure on themselves to perform. The last thing they need is you telling them you're disappointed simply because they did not drop time or win their heat.
- ALWAYS congratulate the effort! Your swimmer just won their heat and got a best time. They got a ribbon or ducky. They're celebrating. Enjoy that moment with them, but acknowledge *more*. Acknowledge how hard they worked. How much fun they seemed to be having. Take the focus off the outcome, and place it on the process. The number of ribbons or ducks does not increase or decrease the value of a swimmer.
- NEVER coach your child. You must trust the EDGE coaching staff. Providing additional coaching without the consent on the staff is not allowed and can have a serious negative impact on your child's performance. They can become confused, as mom or dad are saying one thing, and coach is saying another.
- NEVER set goals for your swimmer. Additionally, do not incentivize with an award, such as "you'll get a dollar if you get a best time". If they do not meet this goal, letting a parent down is worse than letting a teammate, coach, or themselves down. It also will add

extra pressure and self-doubt before a race. Goals are for practices. At meets, it's time to just GO! Instead...

- ALWAYS remind your swimmer to have FUN! Encourage them to focus on being happy and energetic behind their blocks.
- WATCH OUT for heat sheets. They can be a trap. Heat sheets should only be used by the parent to determine where and when their child is competing so that they do not miss their race. Do not use the heat sheet and your child's seed time to determine the success of his/her race! Just because your child added time, does NOT mean it was a poor performance. In fact, if your child added time, the LAST thing you should do is to be upset. Instead...
- COMFORT your child when they seem upset or disappointed in their result. Encourage them to see their coach. Remind them that they're doing great and working hard!

In short, your role as a parent is to SUPPORT and be POSITIVE with your swimmer. Let the coaches COACH and EVALUATE your swimmer. This will ensure your swimmers has a positive attitude at meets, which will more than likely lead to a positive and successful outcome!

Thank you for your support!

Caleb Hall-Potvin
EDGE Swim Club Head Coach