



Advantages of USA Swimming Membership for YMCA Swim Teams

USA Swimming membership doesn't change your YMCA identity, it can enhance it.

Keep your YMCA program structure, leadership, meet schedule, & budget. USA Swimming will not make you change it. In fact, USA Swimming has special offerings for YMCA teams, recognizing the unique aspects of competitive swimming at a local YMCA.

USA Swimming membership offers many opportunities, not restrictions.

Swimmers may participate in different competition formats in addition to their YMCA meet schedule. They can also be included in several motivational programs and challenges such as the national age group rankings and times database, the IM Xtreme Challenge, the Virtual Club Championships, the Select Camp programs, the Club Recognition program, and the Club Excellence program.

USA Swimming membership provides many benefits and resources, not requirements.

The resources available to USA Swimming member athletes, coaches, parents and volunteers are available to all, regardless of affiliation, team size or level of competitive achievement. Information and consultants are available in several areas including:

- Facility Development
- Team Development
- Sport Performance
- Coaches' Education
- Parents' Education
- Diversity
- Fundraising
- Learn to Swim

In addition, members receive Splash magazine, a bi-monthly publication designed for swimmers to share what is happening in the world of competitive swimming and to motivate young athletes toward their goals. Member teams receive a yearly highlight video with race footage and other materials to motivate athletes and potential team members. Member coaches receive a credential indicating that their safety certifications and background screens are current. These cards are recognized at YMCA and USA Swimming meets alike.

Did you know...

- 61% of USA Swimming member clubs have fewer than 100 swimmers.
- 58% of all USA Swimming swimmers have been competing for 2 years or less.
- In most areas of the country, USA Swimming offers a seasonal 150-day seasonal membership for swimmers who do not swim year-round.
- YMCA of the USA and USA Swimming are collaborating on Make a Splash, a national LTS initiative as well as delivery of officials training, competitive rules and times recognition.
- There are currently 335 YMCA teams who are also members of USA Swimming.



Benefits of USA Swimming Membership for the YMCA Community

USA Swimming offers many potential benefits to the YMCA. Acclaimed as one of the most successful sports governing bodies in the Olympic movement, USA Swimming's core objectives of "Build the Base, Promote the Sport and Achieve Competitive Success" are perfectly in tune with the YMCA. At the grassroots level, USA Swimming is most concerned with "Building the Base" by encouraging participation and involvement in a healthy lifetime activity. Following is a listing of the potential benefits to the YMCA leadership and its membership.

Executive Directors

1. Swim teams provide a stable, sustainable stream of membership fees often past the time that a family has children participating on the swim team. Swim teams promote increased family memberships and long-term loyalty to the YMCA.
2. Generally, swim teams are financially self-supporting entities whose members provide additional revenue opportunities for YMCA branches; siblings and parents of YMCA swim team members tend to participate in and support other YMCA programs and activities.
3. Swim team parents are an excellent source for YMCA volunteers, leaders, and fund raisers.
4. Swim teams provide a viable programming option for teenagers that keep the whole family active in the YMCA.
5. Feedback from YMCA swim coaches indicates that YMCA teams that are USA Swimming members enjoy greater success in retaining team members.
6. USA Swimming membership enhances the training and certification of coaches and provides a variety of resources to support the ongoing education of those coaches.
7. USA Swimming membership provides sports parenting education for YMCA parents that will be effective across several different sports and activities.
8. USA Swimming's Club Leadership & Business Management School and Strategic Planning Seminar provide valuable governance and leadership training for volunteers in a non-profit organization
9. Swim teams participating in open competition provide ongoing community awareness and recognition for the YMCA. In addition, YMCA's with swim teams throughout America can benefit from increased media exposure swimming tends to receive around major events like the Olympic Games and World Championships.

Aquatic Directors

1. Swim teams help expand the continuum of aquatic programming offered by YMCAs.
2. Swims teams provide an ongoing source of potential staff members and volunteers for all aquatic programs – lifeguards, instructors, program assistants, and future coaches.
3. USA Swimming membership provides access to the USA-S Facilities Department services for programming support, operational issues, renovation projects, and new facility construction.
4. Swim teams tend to be an indirect method for marketing and promoting other aquatic activities particularly the learn-to-swim program.

5. The USA Swimming Foundation's "Make a Splash" Initiative offers partnership opportunities to assist and support YMCA efforts to serve local communities.
6. USA Swimming educational programs and field consultants can assist with coach education and development relative to participation in the overall YMCA environment.
7. The combination of training and consulting support will promote greater stability and result in reduced turnover in YMCA coaching staffs.

General Benefits for Swim Teams

1. Participation in the Club Recognition program which offers swim teams a working blueprint for developing strong, stable, financially sound and athletically productive organizations.
2. Participation in the Virtual Club Championships (VCC) which recognizes teams that are developing athletes at multiple levels in the club swimming continuum and emphasizes the team element in swimming. YMCAs participate in the current program and USA Swimming is launching a separate VCC ranking for YMCA teams in the fall of 2010.
3. Participation in the Club Excellence program which identifies and rewards up to 200 USA Swimming teams that have attained a high level of athlete performance as well as organizational success. In 2008, the Sarasota YMCA became the first YMCA team to achieve a Gold ranking. All Gold and Silver level teams are eligible for financial grants.
4. Access to the Club Leadership & Business Management School (we are updating the school to create a version focused on YMCA teams).
5. Ability to create a Club Portal on the USA-S web site to access past and current team membership and performance data.
6. Option to conduct a Swim-A-Thon fund raising event. In 2009, 321 swim teams raised \$2,287,530 for an average of \$7,100 per team. 30 different clubs earned in excess of \$20,000.
7. Annual highlight video from USA Swimming's major international competitions (i.e. the World Championships, Pan Pacific Championships, and Olympic Games).
8. Access to marketing support and recruiting materials for teams to attract new members.
9. Coverage under USA Swimming's General Liability and Accident Insurance programs.
10. Participation in USA Swimming's safety education and risk management program.
11. Access to all of the news and educational information available on the USA Swimming web site (usaswimming.org) and Swimnetwork.com.

Athletes

1. Access to competition in sanctioned, officiated swim meets that are generally organized by level to provide equitable competitive opportunities for swimmers of all ages and abilities.
2. All performances in sanctioned meets are recorded automatically in the USA Swimming national times database.
3. All members receive *Splash* Magazine bi-monthly.
4. Ability to create a "My USA Swimming Page" personal account that allows swimmers to track personal performances and rankings in the SWIMS database.
5. Participation in the Top 10 Times Program (formerly Top 16).
6. Participation in the IM Xtreme Program, an online pentathlon-type event. Prior to the end of 2010, USA Swimming will add a YMCA-only IMX ranking.
7. Participation in the Scholastic All America program.
8. For swimmers who meet the selection criteria, participation in the USA Swimming camp program including LSC Camps, Zone Select Camps, National Select Camp, Open Water Select Camp, and the Diversity Select Camp.

9. For qualified athletes, travel support to attend national level meets.
10. Access to educational information on a wide range of topics including personal nutrition, stroke analysis and biomechanics, race analysis, and doping control information. The Nutrition Tracker feature on the website is a great, easy-to-use teaching tool for young athletes and their parents.

Coaches

1. Participation in USA Swimming's coaches' education and certification programs, which offer both required and optional educational opportunities.
2. Participation in USA Swimming's required safety training program which includes certification in CPR and First Aid Training as well as the competitive swimming specific Safety Training for Swim Coaches course.
3. Required participation in USA Swimming's background screening program.
4. One of the most valuable benefits is access to USA Swimming's field services program. Seven full-time staff and two part-time staff travel the country visiting clubs and coaches providing advice and support on everything from team operations and administration, to parent education, to the latest innovations in stroke analysis, physiological training and seasonal planning.
5. Coach publications including regular blast emails, the *Coaches Quarterly* e-magazine and access to the CQ archives.
6. Participation in a variety of USA Swimming hosted coaches' clinics including regularly scheduled online coaches' clinics.

Parents

1. Access to ongoing parent education programs including the award-winning *Successful Sports Parenting* CD.
2. In-person educational presentations presented by USA Swimming's field service consultants.
3. Collaborative officials' education and training programs.
4. Participation in the USA Swimming Swimposium program and training workshops for volunteers and club leaders.