

Your First Swim Meet

The Night Before

Have your child pack their swim bag

Suggested: Have your child lay-out their suit and what they plan on wearing for “Warm-Up” clothes. Wear the suit and warm-up clothes to the meet.

*If you do this, have them pack clothes for **AFTER** the Meet.*

Must Haves

Suit, Team cap, goggles, 2 towels, healthy snacks, water

Suggested Brings

Sports drink (*Gatorade is good, but you **MUST** also bring water. They **NEED** to drink **BOTH***), games, book, iPod (*Music*), sleeping bag or blanket (*For gym*), playing cards, game(s), other forms of entertainment that **ENCOURAGE** them to be with Teammates (*Stay away from video games*)

***** After your child packs their bag and have gone to bed, **CHECK THEIR BAG** *****
***** to see what, if anything, they have forgotten *****

Items YOU Want

Pen, highlighter, camp chair (*For gym*), Condensed Meet Information, Meet Entry Report for your child

Morning of the Meet

Eat a nice light but healthy breakfast. Toast with jam, water, juice, lean meats like ham, eggs. **STAY AWAY FROM MILK** due to their nervousness.

What to Expect

Chaos, “Bad nervousness” (*“Mom...I can’t do this”, “I’m afraid”, etc*), possible tears

When you Arrive

Get there 15 minutes Early (*You may want to plan for 25 minutes...something **ALWAYS** go wrong on Meet Morning*)

Pay admission and buy a Program

Find a spot in the gym

Send your child to the pool deck to find their coaches

Find your child’s events in the Meet Program and highlight your child

Meet Warm-Ups

The Coaches always have a plan. Warm-ups are structure to provide time for your children to be best prepared for the Meet. Items that are taken into consideration when running a warm-up are skills needed to race and proper work for their bodies to be ready to perform. Please **DO NOT** arrive late in order to avoid swimming in warm-ups. This will only hinder what coaches’ are trying to accomplish.

After Warm-Ups

Children will dry off and place warm clothes on. Their bodies need to stay warm in order to race well. Wearing a towel is **NOT ACCEPTED**. Towels get wet and actually make them colder. “I’m nice and warm” coming out of a child’s mouth who is in a suit, or suit and towel is not tolerated by the Coaches.

Once the Meet Starts

Your child should stay in the gym, or watch swimmers from the pool deck along side Coaches

Your child will be spoken with by a Coach **BEFORE** and **AFTER ALL** their races

For your child, seeing a Coach before and after their race is **MOST IMPORTANT**

*Sorry, but Coaches are more important than parents on Meet Day. Only we can give them the advice they need on their swimming. If your child sees you before a Coach, **PLEASE** send them to a coach **IMMEDIATELY** and don’t even start a conversation with them. A Coach’s job is to help the athletes, that’s who is most important. Forcing your child to speak to a Coach first and foremost encourages them to realize that they are there for themselves.*

Be your child’s biggest cheerleader. Let them know you’re proud of their effort.

After the Meet

Don’t try to give advice to your child. If you want to be a part of their swimming, ask strategic questions. “*What did you think of your Meet?*”, “*What did your Coach have to say about your races?*” You will find that as the Meets roll by, asking questions and listening to your young athlete will help you create a wonderful relationship with your child and you will be able to share this sport with them much better. A parent who gives advice usually gets seen as “Pushy” in child’s eyes and they will tend to “Shut-down” and not talk, or speak little about, their swimming and the Meet.

Enjoy Your Experience

You only get once “First Swim Meet”. You will never get this chance again! Honestly, embrace the moment. Don’t stress about it. As your child goes through the years of swimming you may not remember where they make their first 100 Butterfly, where they qualify for their first “Big Meet”, but you **WILL** remember this day. You’ll probably even get a nice story or two to share with your athlete as they get older. Embarrassing stories are always fun and remembering where your child started this journey when they’re 18 years old and heading off to swim in college may just bring a smile to your face, some great laughter, and possibly even a tear or two.

Stay cool & calm
Be your BEST cheerleader
Give hugs & high 5’s when needed
Remember, “Failure” leads to “Success”

*When all this is said and done. Find yourself a quiet spot and unwind.
You’ve probably had a long day and 15 minutes of peace and quiet will go a LONG WAY.*