



# Swim Team Parent Handbook

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### How to be a good swim parent?

There is and has always been much discussion on the importance of the Support Triangle structure of parent, athlete, coach. Each plays a critical role in the development of the swimmer. Swimming is a very demanding sport but through the hard work and perseverance, invaluable lessons are instilled. We strive for the athlete's long-term success and our goal is they continue swimming past high school. With such long swimming careers ahead of them, each part of the triangle plays an important part in determining how the swimmer develops, not just as an athlete.

It is crucial we all work together and keep in mind several general rules of thumb:

1. Swimming is a sport, sports are supposed to be fun.
2. Each part of the Support Triangle plays a specific role. By each maximizing our specific roles and working together, we maximize the potential for the swimmer.
  - a. Athletes: always put forth best effort and strive for perfect attendance.
  - b. Coaches: provide training and council on demands of the sport of swimming.
  - c. Parents: provide consistency, love and unconditional support for your athlete.
3. Nutrition – as a parent, you primarily influence your child's diet. They exercise a lot and will need to eat a lot, but we want to maximize performance and development, so it is important they are getting what they need.
  - a. No supplements – get what you need from real food first
  - b. Take a multi-vitamin (+maybe vitamin D in the winter) – soil nutrient levels aren't what they used to be and the demand on the athlete's body requires adequate vitamins and minerals.
  - c. Water, water, water – we don't really need to drink anything else. Hydration plays a major role in performance and recovery.
  - d. "Shop the Perimeter" – it has been said that everything essential for your body to survive can be found on the perimeter of the grocery store: Veggies, Protein, Grains, Dairy.
  - e. "Eat a Rainbow" – try to have a variety of colors of vegetables with every meal. You can't eat enough veggies.
4. Rest – growing bodies need extra rest already, and with training, it becomes that much more important. 6-8 hours per night minimum.
5. No Pressure – anyone that spends as much time with their face in the water learns to take it pretty seriously. Swimmers should already put pressure on themselves to perform. As Coaches, we need to be able to also put pressure on the athlete to perform. However, the Support Triangle will crack if it is getting pressure from all sides. It has been regularly noted, and through my own experience swimming and the people I swam with, the ones that made it the farthest in the sport had parents that we most "Hands-Off" and did not put any additional pressure on them to succeed.

6. Show the swimmer that you support them – Being “Hands-Off” doesn’t mean not to get involved with your child’s swimming. They need to know that you support their hard work and dedication to the sport and that you care about them.
  - a. Volunteer & Stay Connected – help out at meets, meet and interact with other swim parents. WEST isn’t just a swim team, it’s a swimming community.
  - b. Provide transportation – we understand that our busy practice schedule and attendance expectations also put heavy demands on parents. We strongly encourage more carpooling.
  - c. Keep them happy – although we all go through ups and downs, kids should be overall happy. If they aren’t please speak with their respective coaches so we can work on a solution.
7. Family, School, Swimming – whenever facing hard decisions, remember the order of priorities.

The most important job as a parent is to SUPPORT:

- Support ALL WEST swimmers, yours and others.
- Support your age group and level.
- Support the coaches.
- Support other parents.
- Support positive communication.
- Support ALL WEST hosted meets as a volunteer.
- Support WEST and PNS / USA Swimming at all meets.
- Support ALL WEST fundraising opportunities.

and for your swimmer...

- Keep them fed, clothed and healthy.
- Bring them to practice.





## WEST Coaches Expectations

Our goal is for each individual swimmer to reach his or her full-potential not only as an athlete, but as a well-rounded person. Although we strive to maximize performance in the water, our main goal is to help our athletes grow and develop into highly successful young adults consistent with the **WEST Core Values** of *Honesty & Integrity, Sportsmanship, Respect, Hard Work and Pride.*

### General Expectations

- Be on-time - “Early” is on-time “On-Time” is late.
- Don’t coach your child.
  - Recent studies have shown that for many athletes, their least favorite aspect of sports was “the ride home” and the pressure put on them by their parents.
  - It confuses the child. As coaches, we give them critical feedback and focal points for improvement. We understand how challenging these items are and we demand the highest possible level of quality. We typically prioritize a few items to focus on and reinforce those items until they are mastered.
  - It puts additional stress and pressure on the swimmer, often times reducing the amount of fun they have, which often leads to burnout and self-confidence issues.

### Practice Expectations

- Follow coach instructions at all times, don’t interrupt or talk when coaches are speaking and ask questions when it is not disruptive to the rest of the group.
- Swimmers must be picked up within 20 minutes of practice ending.
- Bring required training equipment to each practice.
- Always watch the pace clock and leave on the correct interval between swimmers.

### Meet Expectations

- Warm-up during designated warm-up times, regardless of what time individual events are scheduled to happen. Swimmers are expected to be warm-up with the team and be at the meet to support the team effort.
- Swimmers are to sit with the team during the meet, not in the stands with parents.



## **WEST Code of Conduct**

The WEST Code of Conduct is designed to maximize positive experiences of all WEST swimmers and ensure we are providing a fun, safe, and positive learning environment. Team members will refrain from any illegal or inappropriate behavior that is not consistent with WEST Core Values. All members, including parents must follow the Code of Conduct as listed below.

- **Honesty and Integrity**
  - I will refrain from lying, cheating, stealing and all other illegal behavior.
  - I will engage in appropriate conversation at all WEST functions and whenever in a public setting, including online.
  - I will refrain from destructive, hurtful and negative behavior.
- **Sportsmanship**
  - I will be humble in my victories and gracefully accept my defeats and criticism.
  - I will support my teammates and cheer for them whenever possible.
  - I will remain in the water after my races and wait for all competitors to finish.
  - I will follow proper lane etiquette and refrain from behavior that will inhibit the progress of others.
- **Respect**
  - At all times, I will show respect for myself, teammates, coaches, officials, competitors and spectators.
  - I will respect the WEST facility by adhering to the Pool Rules and refrain from destructive behavior.
  - I will arrive on-time for all practices, competitions, and other team events.
  - I will bring all necessary equipment to practices and be responsible for my belongings.
  - I will not talk while coaches are addressing the group and will listen to directions carefully.
  - I will respect the decision of coaches and officials.
- **Hard Work**
  - I will always put forth my best effort.
- **Pride**
  - I will wear designated WEST gear to all meets, including team suit, cap and shirt.
  - I will always act in a manner that myself, my parents and my coaches will be proud of.



### **Volunteering Requirements**

WEST is a volunteer-run program and parent volunteering is critical to the overall financial health and operations of both the swim team and the facility. WEST relies on parents, family members, and significant others to be dedicated not only to their swimmer but to the team effort as well. WEST is only as strong as the members that make up and support our program. Volunteering at meets is an important way to show support for your swimmer and reinforce the countless hours of hard work and dedication that he/she displays on a daily basis.

WEST-hosted swim meets generate team revenue necessary to meet operating costs not covered by training fees. By requiring volunteer participation we ensure that our budgeted operational needs are met and our training fees are kept as low as possible.

All swim team members benefit from WEST-hosted meets and are expected to share in this responsibility. Upon registration, you are agreeing to work at each WEST-hosted meet, especially PNS Long Course Championships at the end of the summer season.

NOTE: Some variation in the overall volunteer requirement will be due to your swimmer's training group level. This number will also vary depending on the total number of registered WEST families. Families with multiple swimmers are counted at the highest training group level and therefore will be responsible to meet the volunteer and fundraising requirement for that group.

### **Failure to Meet Volunteer Requirements**

Since WEST is a volunteer-run program, all families must contribute their *fair share* of volunteer hours. Failure to complete volunteer hours will result in a fee of \$15.00 per unfulfilled hour. This charge will be added to your account at the end of the season, and must be paid in full before your family will be allowed to re-register for the following season.

### **WEST Hosted Meets**

WEST is a volunteer-run program and parent volunteering is critical to the overall financial health and operations of both the swim team and the facility. WEST relies on parents, family members, and significant others to not only be dedicated to their swimmer but to the team effort as well. WEST is only as strong as the members that make up and support our program. Volunteering at meets is an important way to show support for your swimmer and reinforce the countless hours of hard work and dedication that he/she displays on a daily basis.

WEST-hosted swim meets generate team revenue necessary to meet operating costs not covered by training fees. By requiring volunteer participation we ensure that our budgeted operational needs are met and our training fees are kept as low as possible.



All swim team members benefit from WEST-hosted meets and are expected to share in this responsibility. Upon registration, you are agreeing to work at each WEST-hosted meet, especially PNS Long Course Championships in July.

**NOTE:** Some variation in the overall volunteer requirement will be due to your swimmer's training group level. This number will also vary depending on the total number of registered WEST families. Families with multiple swimmers are counted at the highest training group level and therefore will be responsible to meet the volunteer and fundraising requirement for that group.

### **Failure to Complete Fairshare Sessions Fee**

Since WEST is a volunteer-run program, all families must contribute their *fair share* of volunteer hours. Failure to complete minimum hours will result in a fee of \$20.00 per unfulfilled hour. This charge will be added to your account at the end of the season, and must be paid in full before your family will be allowed to re-register for the following season.

### **Service Requirement for All Families**

**Explore: 32 Hours**

**Discover: 34 Hours**

**Challenge: 38 Hours**

**Accelerate: 40 Hours**

**Senior: 40 Hours**

**Senior Elite: 42 Hours**



## **Fundraising Requirements**

WEST is a 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization and in order to offset operation costs, we rely heavily on fundraising to help keep membership dues down. Each family is REQUIRED to participate in all team fundraising activities. A parent volunteer run program succeeds only with consistent, dedicated parent participation. Each family is asked to work at ALL WEST-hosted meets and site clean-up days.

WEST-hosted swim meets and team fundraising events generate team revenue necessary for operating costs not covered by training fees. By requiring participation we ensure equal participation from all team members in helping to satisfy our budget operating needs. This helps us keep training fees as low as possible.

WEST has a minimum fundraising amount required of each swimmer based on training group. Families with multiple swimmers are responsible for the fundraising amount that corresponds with the swimmer in the highest training group level as listed below:

NOTE: Fundraising, as discussed on this page, relates to Swim-A-Thon® fundraising efforts. Any other fundraising (such as Scrip, garage sales, etc.) help out the team and create additional sources of revenue, but do not apply to the minimum required fundraising amounts.