



Parent & Swimmer Handbook

2019-20 • Arlington Aquatic Club

Contact & General Info

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- Washington-Lee Aquatic Center 703-228-6262
- Yorktown Aquatic Center 703-228-8754
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Inclement Weather

The standard policy for the cancellation of AAC practice: In the event that Arlington Public Schools are cancelled due to snow or inclement weather, an AAC Coach will send an email notifying you of the status of that day's practice.

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AAC, PVS & USA Swimming Info

Who We Are

Since 1974, the Arlington Aquatic Club (AAC) has provided a safe, positive and productive environment for athletes of all ages and abilities to help them achieve their fullest potential as both swimmers and people. AAC has produced Potomac Valley, Zone, and Junior National Champions, as well as Senior National finalists and Olympic qualifiers.

AAC began as a one night per week swim clinic. Through the years, AAC has grown into a USA Swimming year round competitive swim team offering high quality professional coaching and technique instruction for all ages and abilities. The goal of our team is to provide every member an opportunity to improve swimming skills and achieve success at his or her level of ability, from novice to international competitor.

All of our coaches, as members of USA Swimming, have access to the most comprehensive training and certification program for youth coaches of any sport in the United States. They provide assurances that the time children spend in swimming will be quality time.

The Club is supported by Arlington Aquatic Club Boosters, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit created with the sole purpose of making the AAC program operate successfully and efficiently. The AAC Booster Board is comprised of parents and the head coach. The Board coordinates fundraising and other activities. All parents are encouraged to be involved in team activities and fundraisers. The bylaws of the AAC Booster Club are available for your review on our website. Scheduled board meetings are posted on the AAC website and are open to any booster club member. Minutes from the meetings are published on our website.

The Arlington Aquatic Club is offered and administered by Arlington County's Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). As such, AAC must follow all DPR rules, guidelines and policies, including the DPR Code of Conduct. All coaches and staff are DPR employees, and practices are held at Arlington Public Schools high school pools.

AAC Mission

The mission of AAC is to develop well rounded swimmers who will excel both in the pool and in the community. The program provides an atmosphere that will enable any swimmer to reach their individual goals, foster a desire for excellence, and a love for the sport of swimming.

AAC Booster Club Mission

The AAC Booster Club's mission is to support the swimmers and coaching staff through financial support; by promoting and increasing team visibility; by increasing community and parent interest and involvement with the team; by recognizing the endeavors and achievements of the team as a whole, as well as, individual athletes; and by helping provide services and activities to help the team run efficiently and successfully while promoting team spirit and unity.

Ways in which the AAC Booster Club has and will continue to support the team and its membership, shall include, but is not limited to:

- Providing financial support by seeking out local community sponsorships, hosting fundraising events, and through the collection of team dues.
- Supporting the coaches by providing equipment, training, and volunteering man-hours needed to get daily/weekly/monthly tasks accomplished, supplementing stipends, etc.
- Promoting and increasing team visibility by assisting with the placement of updates on the AAC website, and providing information and submitting articles of interest in local event magazines/publications and on their social media outlets.
- Requiring parents to volunteer throughout the season and at other booster club sponsored events.
- Hosting an annual awards banquet to celebrate team and individual successes.
- Serving as positive role models for all AAC athletes and the Northern Virginia community.
- Keeping open and honest communication with coaches via emails and meetings on a regular basis.
- Making sure the lines of communication are open between the AAC Booster Club Members and the Booster Club leadership by providing board contact information in this handbook, on the AAC website, as well as through emails by providing updated information on a regular basis throughout the swim season.

Our Vision

Challenging Greatness, in the pool and in life.

Our Values

The following is a list of what we live for everyday and try to instill in each of our coaches and athletes:

- **Respect** — Respect teammates, coaches, traditions and ourselves
- **Community** — Promote a family atmosphere within AAC and serve AAC and the broader community through our example and our service
- **Teamwork** — Recognize the need to work as a team and support our teammates
- **Integrity** — Do the right thing by being honest, loyal, trustworthy, fair and sincere
- **Growth** — Commit to growth and development of all individuals within AAC
- **Lifelong Learning** — Learn from our experiences and mistakes in and out of the pool
- **Resilience** — Demonstrate grit and persistence to overcome setbacks and obstacles
- **Inspiration** — Motivate ourselves and others to achieve our fullest potential in and out of the pool

Teaching & Training Philosophies

AAC Pre-Competition Teaching & Training Philosophy

- Develop proper stroke mechanics for competitive swimming

- Provide individual attention to all swimmers, regardless of age or ability level
- Promote psychological development of each swimmer by providing opportunities for goal-achievement which result in positive self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment
- Prepare swimmers to enter into the competitive swimming environment

AAC Competition Teaching & Training Philosophy

- Teach and reinforce the techniques of competitive swimming
- Build physical strength and endurance
- Promote team spirit and unity through competition and social interaction
- Develop a sense of commitment, responsibility and time management skills necessary for achieving success
- Teach and reinforce starts, turns and finishes appropriate for competition
- All swimmers will learn how to set individual goals that are high, yet attainable, as well as learn the processes that it takes to reach these goals
- Teach and reinforce race strategy

United States Swimming Info

USA Swimming is the national governing body for swimming in the United States. It was founded in 1980 as a result of the 1978 Congressional Amateur Sport Act. USA Swimming is composed of 59 Local Swimming Committees (LCSs) with more than 3,000 swim clubs and more than 400,000 registered swimmers across the United States.

USA Swimming offers a variety of programs which are geared for all levels of swimmers from youngsters learning to swim to world class athletes. These programs enable the youngsters to participate at their own levels of competition. The USA Swimming Age Group program is designed to benefit younger athletes in the early stages of their competitive swimming careers. Age Group swimming is administered by thousands of local volunteers across the country and it's this program which produces the reservoir of talent which keeps the United States at the top of the world in swimming.

Age Group swimmers participate in local, regional, and national meets and championships. Regionally, Zone Meets are held in four areas of the country at the end of each short course season and long course season. Locally, the USA Swimming sponsors National Junior Olympic Championships leading up to these Zone Meets. These meets help prepare our swimmers for the national championships. The Junior and Senior National Championships and specially conducted trials, are used to select swimmers for the United States National Teams including the Olympic Games.

The local swimming committees offer local and regional competitions, register swimmers and clubs, train officials, and encourage swimming interest in local areas. The following information may be of interest:

United States Swimming

One Olympic Plaza
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80909
719-866-4578

USASwimming.org

General Inquiries: info@usaswimming.org

Potomac Valley Swimming

Potomac Valley Swimming (PVS) is a member of USA Swimming and is the Local Swim Committee (LSC) that governs our geographic area. Its responsibilities include processing memberships, scheduling competitions, training/certification of officials, athlete, recognition programs, and assembling the PVS Zone Team.

Visit the PVS website at pvswim.org for more information.

Protecting Athletes

We believe that the experience of children and young athletes in all organized sports should be guided by what is best for the safe and healthy development of the young person. Young athletes who participate in organized sports activities have a unique opportunity for learning. In working with each child, it is essential that we are mindful of their physical, emotional, and developmental needs. We must also be particularly diligent in recognizing the unique vulnerabilities that are an inherent part of childhood. It is the responsibility of all adults, to not only recognize these vulnerabilities, but to develop the knowledge and skills needed to create and maintain a safe and child-centered sports environment.

We recognize the important role that USA Swimming plays in providing leadership and creating an organizational culture that is focused on the safety and well-being of young people. The protection of children requires that all adults work together to support young athletes. As the child's first and enduring resource for safety, parents and guardians play a critical role in athlete protection. When parents participate they are able to help educate other adults about the needs of the child, and help prepare the child to participate in sports programs in a way that promotes safety, enjoyment, and learning.

Adults, including coaches, officials, staff, facility workers, volunteers, chaperones, and others who interact with children, are in also positions of great trust and influence. The ability to use this position of trust to support the well-being of children is critical. The overwhelming majority of these adults fulfill their roles in a positive and responsible manner. Nonetheless, we must also understand that a few adults may seek to use the trust and authority that comes with their access and status to take advantage of a child.

USA Swimming strives to continually improve the programs and services it offers to its members and among these some of the most important relate to the safeguards for protecting young athletes. Because USA Swimming aspires to foster safe and positive environments within all our member clubs, it believes it is especially important to provide our member adult leaders with policies and best practice guidelines that help define elements of appropriate behavior and conduct.

Swim Groups

Goals and Objectives

AAC strives for continuity across all of our programs, so that children can enter swim lessons, enter AAC's developmental programs, progress into a competitive team member, and return as a masters swimmer. Similarly, we strive for continuity and developmental progression through our competitive team divisions. Just like a new school year, the beginning of a swimming season is a great time to review the foundation we've built and look forward so we can set goals for the future. AAC coaches talk with student athletes about expectations for their practice groups and go over some of the basics to establish (or re-establish) good habits.

AAC Group Placement Philosophy

AAC coaches work toward a common goal of continuity and developmental progression. Each season, swimmers are evaluated for the best placement within our team structure, and may be assigned to a different group as they age and/or evolve. Swimmers may move to a different level which is generally, but not exclusively, driven by age.

Group placement and transitions are based on many factors, including a fair bit of coaching instinct. But AAC coaches are guided by a team-wide philosophy that drives our decisions, and we hope that communicating these ideas will allow for a better understanding of group placement decision-making. Some of the most important factors driving group placement are a swimmer's commitment (practice attendance, meet participation, prioritization of the sport), maturity (chronological age, physiological age and emotional development), training ability, and technique. Racing times are not a primary factor, although they are taken into consideration because times translate to meet qualification and training needs. Finding the appropriate group for each swimmer is the goal, and our top priority is to place every swimmer in a group that will allow them to develop and shine while continuing to progress at AAC. The coaches want swimmers to focus on the process of what they are doing every day in practice and to be immersed in an environment that will help them succeed in all areas of their swimming.

We understand that group moves are not a small change in your lives as parents. The change in schedule can potentially affect other activities, carpools, team dues, coaches and expectations. But just like going from middle school to high school, or from one level of math to the next, these moves are necessary steps along the path towards successful long-term swimming.

At AAC, we believe that teaching each swimmer to take pieces of ownership in their sport is critical to self-development and success. A major part of ownership is building a relationship with their coach through open communication and trust. As parents, you play a critical role in how your swimmer thinks and feels about this process, and we encourage you to model open communication by setting up a meeting with your coach if you have questions or concerns about group changes.

Developmental and Conditioning Groups

The developmental and conditioning groups are designed for beginner swimmers and swimmers who desire to stay in shape for their summer, middle school and high school teams, but are not able to make the full-time commitment to swimming. There are no practice or competitive requirements for these groups, though swimmers may compete in meets if they choose by paying their own individual meet fees with a separate check made out to AAC Boosters.

MINI GATORS

Ages 6–9 — Wakefield Swimming Pool

This is our basic skills training program. The program is designed to introduce young swimmers to the sport of competitive swimming. It will focus on improving freestyle, learning a technically correct backstroke and breaststroke, and will introduce butterfly.

Level 1 is the entry level and has one 30 minute practice a week; Level 2 and 3 have one 40 minute practice per week; Level 4 has two 40 minute practices a week.

Requirements: Swimmers must be able to easily enter the water and swim one full length of the pool (25 yards) freestyle with side breathing without stopping, and swim a length of backstroke. Swimmers must be comfortable swimming in deep water and able to swim laps.

Optional Meet participation approximately 6 meets a year. Meets are strongly encouraged.

GATORS I

Ages 7–9 — Wakefield Swimming Pool

This is our beginner level swim program. The program is designed for younger swimmers interested in improving their swimming skills during the winter months. It program is designed for swimmers new to year-round swimming and focuses on the basic competitive skills including diving off the blocks and learning proper turning techniques for all four competitive strokes. Gator I's primary focus is on the improvement of the freestyle and backstroke skills and techniques and will introduce the skills and techniques necessary for breaststroke and butterfly.

Requirements: Swimmers must be able to swim freestyle and backstroke. A basic understanding of breaststroke and butterfly is recommended, but not required.

GATORS II

Ages 8–11 — Wakefield Swimming Pool

This is our second level of the Gator program. This program is designed for swimmers with a stronger swim background who are looking to improve their skills and technique during the winter months. Swimmers in this program will continue to focus primarily on the basic competitive skills including diving off the blocks and proper turns. They will also practice more advanced stroke drills and techniques for all four competitive strokes.

Requirements: Swimmers must be able to swim freestyle and backstroke, and have a basic understanding of breaststroke and butterfly to qualify for this program.

GATORS III

Ages 10-14 — Wakefield Swimming Pool

Our third level swim program. Gators III is designed to offer intermediate skills training to swimmers looking to increase their skills and techniques over the winter. It is designed for older swimmers who may be new to year round swimming or are just looking for stroke improvement. This group teaches advanced drills and stroke techniques for all four competitive strokes and works on improving competition skills such as diving and proper turns.

Requirements: Swimmers must be able to swim freestyle and backstroke proficiently and have a close to legal breaststroke and butterfly.

SWIM CLINIC

Ages 10-14 — Yorktown Swimming Pool

This program is our first level of training for swimmers interested in staying in shape for their summer, middle school, or high school teams who are not able to commit to swimming full time. This program focuses on improving and refining the skills used in all four competitive strokes, while providing an aerobic workout to prepare swimmers for summer and school competitions. The goal of this program is to provide swimmers a place to improve their swimming skills and endurance without the demands of our competitive programs.

Requirements: Swimmers must be able to swim freestyle and backstroke proficiently and have a close to legal breaststroke and butterfly.

MIDDLE SCHOOL SPRINT

Grades 6-8 — Yorktown Swimming Pool

This program is our second level of training for swimmers that would like to stay in shape for their summer or middle school season but who are not able to commit to full-time swimming in the winter. This program will work on improving the technique and skills of all four competitive strokes while also offering a challenging workout to keep swimmers in shape.

Requirements: Swimmers must be able to swim all four competitive strokes legally.

HIGH SCHOOL SPRINT

Grades 9-12 — Wakefield Swimming Pool & Yorktown Swimming Pool

This program is our second level of training for swimmers that would like to stay in shape for their summer or high school season, but do not able to commit to full-time swimming in the winter. This program will work on improving the technique and skills of all four competitive strokes, while also offering a challenging workout to keep swimmers in shape.

Requirements: Swimmers must be able to swim all four competitive strokes legally.

Competition Swim Groups

Our competitive groups are for swimmers who are interested in swimming and competing year round. These groups are for swimmers who are considering or want to make swimming their primary sport. *Swimmers must be legal in all four strokes to be eligible for all competition groups.* Some programs also have Practice and Meet Attendance Requirements.

Registration Fee: All swimmers must pay an annual, non-refundable/non-transferable registration fee. The registration fee is not part of the program fees. This fee includes USA swimming membership, meet entry fees associated with your groups meet schedule for the swim season, and two AAC t-shirts and one AAC swim cap.

AGE GROUP PREP

Ages 7-10 — Wakefield Swimming Pool, Washington-Lee Swimming Pool, Yorktown Swimming Pool

This program is our entry-level competitive swim program. Age Group Prep is designed for young swimmers with limited competitive experience. The program emphasizes basic development of the four competitive strokes, instruction on proper competitive starts and turns, and an introduction to basic training principles, such as using the pace clock and how to properly train for competition. Swimmers in this program will practice twice a week and swimmers who prove they are able to handle the training and are willing to make the commitment to train more may be eligible to move up into the Age Group program.

Requirements: Swimmers must be able to swim all four strokes legally.

AGE GROUP

Ages 8-12 — Wakefield Swimming Pool, Washington-Lee Swimming Pool

This program is our second level of competition training for age group swimmers. Swimmers are expected to swim 2-3 times a week. This program will continue to focus on proper stroke development in all four competitive strokes, but will include work on the competition skills required for advancement into one of our higher level competitive programs. These skills will include increased practice attendance and commitment to the program, increased aerobic training, and the introduction of proper racing techniques.

Requirements: swimmers must attend a practice before joining this program. Swimmers wishing to move up into the Age Group Performance or Senior Prep programs must maintain proper practice attendance, must compete in at least 4 meets during the season. It is highly recommended that swimmers attend the Long Course session held during the summer.

AGE GROUP PLUS

Ages 12-14 — Wakefield Swimming Pool

This is our program designed for the older age group swimmer who wants to be competitive but may not be ready for the Senior Prep group. Swimmers are expected to swim 2-3 times a week. This program continues to focus on proper stroke development in all four competitive strokes, but emphasizes an increase in training and it includes work on the competition skills required for advancement into one of our higher level competitive programs. These skills will include increased practice attendance

Swim Groups

and commitment to the program, increased aerobic training, and the introduction of proper racing techniques.

Age Group Plus A: Practices at Wakefield on Monday and Wednesday from 7:15–8:30 p.m. and on Friday, you have the option to go from 5:15–6:30 a.m. or 4:30–5:45 p.m. with Age Group Wakefield.

Age Group Plus B: Practices at Wakefield on Monday and Wednesday from 7:15–8:30 p.m. and on Friday, you have the option to go from 5:15–6:30 a.m. at Wakefield or 4:15–5:30 p.m. with Age Group Washington-Lee.

Requirements: Swimmers must attend a practice before joining this program. Swimmers wishing to move up into the Senior Prep programs must maintain proper practice attendance, must compete in at least 4 meets during the season. It is highly recommended that swimmers attend the Long Course session held during the summer.

AGE GROUP PERFORMANCE

Ages 9–12 — Wakefield Swimming Pool

This program is our advanced 12 month training program for age group swimmers who have displayed a dedication to the sport and are willing to make the commitment to practice and train at a higher level. Swimmers must attend 4–5 practices a week. Swimmers will be held to a very high standard of practice discipline and attitude and will be given advanced training on underwater kicking, race preparation and strategy, mental training, as well as increased swim training and dry land exercises. Swimmers in this group will be expected to train for and compete in high levels of competition, such as PVS Junior Olympics and the Eastern Zone IMX and Eastern Zone championship meets.

Requirements: Swimmers must attend a swim practice before being able to join this program. The goal of this group is to be an elite age group training group. Swimmers in this program **MUST** maintain a 75% monthly practice attendance and must compete in the competitions selected by the coach in order to remain in this program or be considered for advancement to the Senior Prep program.

SENIOR PREP

Ages 11–14 — Washington-Lee Swimming Pool

This 12 month program is designed for swimmers who have made swimming one of their priorities and are capable of handling the increased training that will lead to one of AAC's senior swimming programs. Swimmers in this group are expected to make the commitment to train 5 days a week and display the proper practice discipline and attitude required to train at the next level. This program will have increased yardage and dry land practices compared to our Age Group and Age Group Performance programs and is designed to prepare swimmers for advancement into our Senior and Elite programs. Swimmers in this group will be expected to train for and compete at high level PVS Championship meets, as well as preparing for Zone and Sectional level competitions.

Requirements: Swimmers interested in joining this group must attend a practice to try out. Swimmers must maintain a 75% monthly practice attendance and must attend the meets selected by the coach in order to remain in this program and be considered for advancement into our Senior program.

SENIOR

Ages 13 & Older — Wakefield Swimming Pool

This is our most advanced training group offered. It is designed for swimmers that have chosen swimming as their primary sport and have made the commitment to train to compete at the National level. Swimmers in this elite training group should plan on mandatory 6–8 practices per week, competing once a month at the meets selected by the coach, training at the level required to qualify for National Level competitions. This program will offer the most advanced training techniques and dry land exercises designed to help swimmers reach the highest level of competition, as well as prepare swimmers to swim in college.

Requirements: Swimmers interested in joining the Senior program must attend a practice to try out. This is a 12-month program and swimmers will be expected to train and compete throughout the Long Course season. Swimmers in this group must maintain an 85% monthly practice attendance and compete in all meets chosen by the coach to remain in this program.

ARLINGTON MASTERS

Washington-Lee Swimming Pool

The Arlington Masters Swim Team welcomes all ability levels and ages, 18 years and older. Swimmers train in the same lane as others with similar abilities. Yardage per practice ranges from 2,000–3,000 yards during the week and 3,000–5,000 on Sundays. Visit their website at arlington-masters.org.

Costs, Payments and Registration

Annual Registration Fee

Registration Fee: All swimmers must pay an annual, non-refundable/non-transferable registration fee. This fee is for all swimmers, regardless of practice group assignment, and covers the swimmer's flex membership in USA Swimming, two AAC team t-shirts, one AAC swim cap, and administrative costs.

All groups with the exception of Mini Gators, will have the option of upgrading their flex registration (\$100) to a premium registration (additional \$65). The difference between the two registrations is based on what type of USA Swimming membership your swimmer is looking for. The flex registration will limit you to participating in only two swim meets per year. The premium registration has all the benefits of the flex registration plus unlimited swim meets and the Splash magazine. If your swimmer falls in love with swimming and would like to participate in more meets they can upgrade to the premium registration any time during the year. If you anticipate swimming in more than two meets this year choose to upgrade to premium at time of registration.

The registration fee is NOT part of the program fee. For all developmental and conditioning groups, meet fees are not included in the registration fee.

By registering your swimmer, you are committing to a season and will be responsible for all costs you incur during that season. This commitment runs from September 1st of the swimming year through August 31 of the following year. The registration fee for swimmers in the competitive groups (Age Group Prep, Age Group, Age Group Plus, Age Group Performance, Senior Prep, Senior and Elite) includes all meet fees for meets each swimmer's group within AAC attends.

The annual registration fees have been set based on the anticipated meets that each group will attend. If a swimmer competes at a meet that their group is not attending, they may be asked to pay for those meet fees.

The meet fees are NOT included for the developmental and conditioning (pre-competition) groups in the annual Registration fee. The Registration fee paid to the AAC Boosters is SEPARATE from the monthly program fees paid to Arlington County on a monthly basis from October through May.

Registration & Payment

Team participants can now pay fees in full or set up a monthly payment plan for the fees payable to Arlington County.

1. Go to registration.arlingtonva.us
2. Login with your User ID and Password. If you have participated with the team or any county programs in the past (recreation classes, summer camp, etc.) you already have an ID and password. If you do not know your ID and Password, please contact our Registration Office at 703-228-4747. If you are new to the team and have never participated in any other County program in the past, you will need to create a new account.
3. Go to the Sports > AAC > Setup Payment Plan menu.

4. Select the appropriate practice group.
5. Select your payment option.
 - a. **Pay in Full:** You will pay all your fees upfront when you checkout.
 - b. **Auto Charge Fees to Credit Card:** Your fees will be billed to your credit card on the 1st of the month (October–May). You can select to use a card which you have used with us in the past or you may enter a new credit card. Please note, County staff have access ONLY to masked credit card numbers. We DO NOT store complete credit card information in our system. If your credit card is declined during the course of the year, charges will be added as a balance due to your account, and late fees will apply to balances not paid in full by the 15th of the month.
 - c. **Add Fees as Balance Due:** Your fees will be added as a balance due to your account on the first of each month (October–May)
6. Checkout to complete the registration process.

Account Balances may be paid as follows:

- Credit Card payments payment can be done online (registration.arlingtonva.us), by phone (703-228-4747) or in person (Registration Office, 3700 S Four Mile Run Dr, Arlington, VA 22206).
- Check payments can be made in person or by mail. Send to address above and be sure to include child's name and "AAC" on memo line.
- Money Order or Cash payments must be made in person.

If you have questions regarding AAC billing, please contact Arlington County at 703-228-4747.

Withdrawals/Suspensions

If a swimmer/family withdraws from AAC, a 30-day written notice must be provided to Bethany Ellis at bellis@arlingtonva.us so that the spot may be filled by an individual on the waiting list. Please use this Request for Team Cancellation form. After 30 days, no additional financial obligations remain. Withdrawn swimmers will not be allowed to pre-register as existing swimmers for the following swim season, and practice group assignments will be subject to availability.

Financial Assistance

The AAC Boosters Association understands that life can be unpredictable. If a swimmer or swim family finds that their financial obligations cannot be met, please contact our Head Coach or Treasurer. All family information is kept confidential.

AAC is a yearlong program with year-round commitments. Team dues represent a large part of the operating expense of our swim club. Team dues are structured as annual fees. You will remain responsible for all fees even if you leave the team before the end of the season. Team dues are non-refundable unless the program is terminated by the club.

Swimming 101: The Basics

Swimming 101: The Basics

The four competitive swimming strokes are **freestyle**, **backstroke**, **breaststroke** and **butterfly**.

Each swim meet offers a variety of events and distances, depending on the age group and classification. Each swimmer will have a limit to the number of events he or she may swim each day, depending on the meet rules.

In **freestyle** events, the competitor may swim any stroke. The stroke most commonly used is sometimes called the crawl, which is characterized by the alternate stroking of the arms over the water surface and an alternating (up-and-down) flutter kick. On turns and finishes, some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. Most swimmers do a flip turn.

Backstroke consists of an alternating motion of the arms with a flutter kick while on the back. On turns, swimmers may rotate to the stomach and perform a flip turn and some part of the swimmer must touch the wall. The swimmer must finish on the back.

Breaststroke requires simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. The hands are pressed out from in front of the breast in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick is a simultaneous somewhat circular motion similar to the action of a frog. On turns and at the finish, the swimmer must touch the wall with both hands simultaneously at, above or below the water surface.

Some consider **butterfly** to be the most beautiful of the strokes. It features a simultaneous recovery of the arms over the water combined with an undulating dolphin kick. In the kick, the swimmer must keep both legs together and may not flutter, scissors or use the breaststroke kick. Both hands must touch the wall simultaneously on the turns and the finish. Butterfly is the newest stroke and was developed in the early 1950s as a variation of the breaststroke.

The **individual medley**, commonly referred to as the IM, features all four strokes. In the IM, the swimmer begins with the butterfly, then changes after one-fourth of the race to backstroke, then breaststroke and finally freestyle.

In the **medley relay**, all four strokes are swum. The first swimmer swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the final swimmer anchors the relay with freestyle.

The **freestyle relay** events consist of four freestylers, each swimming one quarter of the total distance of the event.

Starts

In the start the swimmer is called to the starting position by the starter who visually checks that all swimmers are motionless. When all swimmers are set, the starting horn is sounded to start the race. If the starter feels that one of the swimmers has moved forward, left early, or gotten an unfair advantage, the offending swimmer may be disqualified after the race for a false start. Under USA Swimming rules, one false start disqualifies the swimmer.

Rules

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer.

Courses

Competition pools may be short course (25 yards or 25 meters), or long course (50 meters). The international standard (as used in the Olympics) is 50 meters. World records are accomplished in 25- and 50-meter pools. USA Swimming maintains records for 25-yard, 25-meter and 50-meter pools

Seasonal Structure (Short vs. Long Course)

Swimming is a year-round sport that is divided into two seasons, with championship-level meets held at the end of each season. The short course season lasts from September through March. All practices and meets are typically conducted in 25-yard pools. The United States is the only country that competes in 25-yard pools. High school and collegiate competition is conducted in the 25-yard format and is considered a winter sport. The long course season lasts from April through early August. Swim meets are conducted in 50-meter pools. Practices are held in a combination of 25-yard and 50-meter pools. All international competition takes place in either 25-meter or 50-meter pools. The Olympics are always held in a 50-meter pool.

Glossary of Swimming Terms

A Glossary of those strange and wacky words we use in the sport of swimming. You may or may not find these words in the English Dictionary, and if you do, their definitions will probably be radically different than the ones listed in this Glossary. Relax and take your time reading.

Age Group — The Division of swimmers according to age. The National Age Group divisions are 10-under, 11-12, 13-14. Some LSCs have divided swimmers into more convenient divisions specific to their situations (i.e. 8-under, 13-Over, 15-Over, Junior, Senior).

Bell Lap (Or, "The Bell") — The part of a freestyle distance race (400 meters or longer) when the swimmer has two lengths plus 5 yards to go. The starter rings a bell over the lane of the lead swimmer when the swimmer is at the backstroke flags.

Blocks — The starting platforms located behind each lane. Some pools have blocks at the deeper end of the pool, and some pools have blocks at both ends. Blocks have variety of designs and can be permanent or removable.

Bulkhead — The wall constructed to divide a pool into different courses, such as a 50-meter pool into two 25-yard courses.

Championship Meet — A meet held at the end of a season. Qualification times are usually necessary to enter meet.

Check-In — The procedure required before a swimmer swims and event in a deck seeded meet. Sometimes referred to as positive check in where the swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.

Circle Seeding — A method of seeding swimmers when they are anticipate making finals in a prelims/finals event. The fastest 18 to 24 swimmers are seeded in the last three heats, with the fastest swimmers being in the inside lanes (i.e.) Lane 4 in the final 3 heats if there are 8 lanes.

Circle Swimming — Performed by staying to the right of the black line when swimming in a lane to enable more swimmers to swim in each lane.

Clinic — A scheduled meeting for the purpose of instruction (i.e.) Official's clinic, Coaches clinic.

Consolation Finals — After the fastest 8 to 10 swimmers, the next 8 or 10 (depending on the number of pool lanes in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. Consolations are the second fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held and are conducted before the Championship heat.

Course — Designated distance (length of pool) for swimming competition (i.e.) Long Course = 50 meters and Short Course = 25 yards or 25 meters.

Deck — The area around the swimming pool reserved for swimmers, officials, and coaches. No one but an "authorized" USA Swimming member may be on the deck during a swim competition.

Deck Entries — Accepting entries into swimming events on the first day or later day of a meet.

Deck Seeding — Swimmers report to a bullpen or staging area and receive their lane and heat assignments for the events.

Disqualified/DQ — A swimmers performance is not counted because of a rules infraction. A disqualification is shown by an official raising one arm with open hand above their head.

Dive — Entering the water head first with arms over head. Diving is not allowed during warmups except at the designated time, in specific lanes that are monitored by the coach.

Dropped Time — When a swimmer goes faster than the previous performance.

Dryland — The exercises and various strength programs swimmers do out of the water.

Entry Fees — The amount per event a swimmer or relay is charged, usually included with AAC's annual Team Registration Fees. The fees vary depending on the LSC and type of meet.

Entry Limit — Each meet will usually have a limit of total swimmers they can accept, or a time limit they cannot exceed. Once an entry limit has been reached, a meet will be closed and all other entries returned.

Eligible to Compete — The status of a member swimmer, that means they are registered and have met all the requirements.

Event — A race or stroke over a given distance. An event equals a preliminary with its final, or a timed final.

False Start — When a swimmer leaves the starting block before the horn. A false start will disqualify a swimmer or a relay team, although the starter or referee may disallow the false start due to unusual circumstances.

FINA — Fédération Internationale de Natation. The international rules-making organization for the sport of swimming.

Final Results — The final and published results of all races in a swim meet, with times posted to the USA Swimming official database.

Finals — The top 8 to 10 swimmers (depending on the # of pool lanes) in a Prelims/Finals meet who, after the Prelims swim, qualify to return to the Finals. The fastest heat of finals when multiple heats are held.

Flags — Pennants that are suspended over the width of each end of the pool approximately 15 feet (or 5 meters) from the wall.

Heats — A division of an event when there are too many swimmers to compete at the same time. The results are compiled by swimmers time swam after all heats of the event are completed.

Heat Award — A ribbon or coupon given to the winner of a single heat at an age group swim meet.

Heat Sheet — The pre-meet printed listing of swimmers seed times in the various events at a swim meet. These sheets vary in accuracy, since the coaches submit swimmers times many weeks before the meet. Heat sheets are often sold at the admissions table and are used mainly to make sure the swimmer has been properly entered in all the events they signed up for. Parents enjoy looking at the seedings prior to the race, plus swimmers can tell the order the events which will be conducted and get a rough idea how long the meet sessions will last.

High Point — An award given to the swimmer scoring the most points in a given age group at a swim meet. All meets do not offer high point awards; check the pre-meet information to determine if a high point award is given.

Horn — A sounding device used in place of a starting gun. Used mainly with a fully automatic timing system.

Illegal — Doing something against the rules that is cause for disqualification.

Interval — A specific elapsed time for swimming or rest used during swim practice.

Invitational — A type of meet that requires a club to request an invitation to attend the meet.

J.O.'s — Junior Olympics. A championship meet for swimmers who are 14-years-old or younger.

Lap Counter — The large numbered cards (or the person turning the cards) used during the freestyle events 500 yards or longer. Counting is done from the end opposite the starting end. The numbers on the cards are "odd numbers" only with the final lap being designated by a bright orange card.

Late Entries — Meet entries from a club or individual that are received by the meet host after the entry deadline. These entries are usually not accepted and are returned to sender.

Leg — The part of a relay event swam by a single team member. A single stroke in the IM.

Long Course — A 50-meter pool.

LSC — Local Swim Committee. The local level administrative division of USA Swimming with supervisory responsibilities within certain geographic boundaries.

Marshall(s) — The adult official who controls the crowd and swimmer flow at a swim meet.

Meet Director — The official in charge of the administration of the meet. The person directing the “dry side” of the meet.

Mile — Refers to the 1500-meter or the 1650-yard freestyle, both of which are short of a mile.

Nationals — USA Swimming National Championship meet conducted in November/December, June and July/August.

Natorium — A building used for the purpose of housing a swimming pool and related equipment.

NRT — National Reportable Time. A time list published once a year, which if a swimmer equals or better the time on the list, they may submit their time in that event for consideration for national recognition.

NS — No Swim. An acronym used in results for when a swimmer did not swim the event.

NT — No Time. The abbreviation used on a heat sheet to designate that the swimmer has not swam that event before.

OT — Official Time. The swimmers event time recorded to the hundredth of a second (.01).

Open Competition — Competition which any qualified club, organization, or individual may enter.

Pace Clock — The clocks with highly visible numbers, positioned at the ends or sides of a swimming pool so the swimmers can read their times during warmups or swim practice.

Positive Check In — The procedure required before a swimmer swims an event in a deck-seeded or pre-seeded meet. The swimmer must mark their name on a list posted by the meet host.

Prelims — The session of a Prelims/Finals meet in which the qualification heats are conducted.

Prelims-Finals — The Type of meet with two sessions. The preliminary heats are usually held in the morning session. The fastest 8 or 10 (Championship Heat) swimmers, and the next fastest 8 or 10 swimmers (Consolation Heat) return in the evening to compete in the Finals. A swimmer who has qualified in the Consolation finals may not place in the Championship Finals even if their finals time would place them so. The converse also applies.

Pre-seeded — A meet conducted without a bullpen in which a swimmer knows what lane and heat they are in by looking at the Meet heat sheet or posted meet program.

Proof of Time — An official meet result, or other accepted form. Swimmers/Coaches must supply proof of time with some meet entries, and other meets it is not required unless a swimmer misses a cut of time at the meet.

Psych Sheet — An entry sheet showing all swimmers entered into each individual event.

Qualifying Times — Published times necessary to enter certain meets or achieve a specific category of swimmer.

Relays — A swimming event in which 4 swimmers participate as a relay team, each swimmer swimming an equal distance of the race. There are two types of relays: medley relays, where each swimmer swims a different stroke; and freestyle relays where all swimmers swim the freestyle stroke.

Sanction — A permit issued by an LSC to a USA Swimming group member to conduct a meet.

Sanction Fee — The amount paid by a USA Swimming group member to an LSC for issuing a sanction.

Sanctioned Meet — A meet conducted with a permit from the LSC. The meet must be conducted according to USA Swimming rules. All participants, including coaches, athletes, and officials must be USA Swimming members.

Scratch — To withdraw from an event after having declared an intention to participate. Some meets have scratch deadlines and specific scratch rules, and if not followed, swimmer can be disqualified from remaining events.

Sectionals — Nickname for a Speedo Sponsored Championship Series.

Seed — Placement of the swimmer. Swimmers heats and lanes are assigned according to their submitted or preliminary times. In Deck-seeding swimmers are called to report to the Clerk of the Course. After scratches are determined, the event is seeded. | Pre-Seeding swimmers are arranged in heats according to submitted times, usually at least a day prior to the meet.

Session — A portion of meet distinctly separated from other portions by locale, time, type of competition, or age group.

Short Course — A 25-yard or 25-meter pool.

Split — A portion of an event, shorter than the total distance that is timed (i.e.) A swimmer's first 50 yard (or meter) time is taken as the swimmer swims the 100 yard race. It is common to take multiple splits for the longer distances.

Starter — The USA Swimming meet official at a meet responsible for starting each heat and calling the next swimmers to the blocks.

Stroke Judge — A certified USA Swimming official, who determines the legality of swimmers' strokes and disqualifies those who do not conform to USA Swimming rules.

Submitted Time — Times used to enter swimmers in meets. These times must have been achieved by the swimmer at previous meets.

Swim-Off — In a Prelims/Finals type competition, a race after the Scheduled event to break a tie. The only circumstance that warrants a swim-off is to determine which swimmer makes finals or is an alternate, otherwise ties stand.

Taper - The resting phase of a senior swimmer at the end of the season before the championship meet.

Timed Finals — Competition in which only heats are swum and final placings are determined by those times.

Time Standard — A time set by a meet or LSC or USA-S (etc) that swimmer must achieve for qualification or recognition.

Time Trial - An event or series of events where a swimmer may achieve or better a required time standard.

Top Times — A list of times compiled by the LSC, Zone or USA Swimming that recognizes the top times for swimmers in each age group (boys and girls) by each event and distance.

Touch Out — To reach the touchpad and finish first in a close race.

Touch Pad — The removable plate (on the end of pools) that is connected to an automatic timing system. A swimmer must properly touch the touchpad to register an official time in a race.

Unattached — An athlete member who competes, but does not represent a club or team. (abbr. UN). When switching clubs, a swimmer must be unattached for a specified period of time.

Unofficial Time — The time displayed on a read out board or read over the intercom by the announcer immediately after the race. After the time has been checked and confirmed, it will become the official time.

USA Swimming — The national governing body of the sport, headquartered in Colorado Springs.

USA-Swimming ID Number — A 16 part number assigned to a swimmer after they have filled out the proper forms and paid their annual dues. The first 6 parts are numbers of swimmers' birthdates: Day/Month/Year using zeros as place holders. The next three spaces are the first three letters of the athlete's legal first name. The next letter is the middle initial, followed by the first four letters of the swimmers last name. For example: USA-S ID# for swimmer Suzanne Eileen Nelson and born Aug.27, 1976 = 082776SUZENELS.

USA Swimming Membership — All AAC swimmers are required to be members of USA Swimming. The two options for USA Swimming membership are Flex and Premium. The Premium membership provides full benefits for AAC swimmers. The Flex membership is designed for swimmers who want to get a feel for the sport and pre competition (The Flex membership includes the option for two swim meets per year). The flex membership is offered to only select AAC developmental and conditioning swim groups. Please contact USA Swimming for more detail regarding the benefits of these memberships at 719-866-4578.

Yardage - The distance a swimmer races or swims in practice. Total yardage can be calculated for each practice session.

Zones - The country is divided up into 4 major zones: Eastern, Southern, Central and Western

Basic Rules

The technical rules of swimming are designed to provide fair and equitable conditions of competition and to promote uniformity in the sport. Each swimming stroke has specific rules designed to ensure that no swimmer gets an unfair competitive advantage over another swimmer.

Trained officials observe the swimmers during each event to ensure compliance with these technical rules. If a swimmer commits an infraction of the rules, a disqualification (DQ) will result. This means that the swimmer will not receive an official time and will not be eligible for an award in that event. A disqualification may result from actions such as not getting to the starting blocks on time, false starting, performing strokes in an illegal manner, or unsportsmanlike conduct. DQs are also a result of technical rules violations.

DQ's include but are not limited to:

- **Freestyle:** Walking on the bottom, pulling on the lane rope, not touching the wall on a turn, or not completing the distance.
- **Backstroke:** Pulling or kicking into the wall once a swimmer has turned passed the vertical onto the breast. Turning onto the breast before touching the wall with the hand at the finish of the race; not having a part of the body outside of the water while touching the wall.
- **Breaststroke:** An illegal kick such as flutter (freestyle), dolphin (butterfly), or scissors (side stroke); shoulders not level; alternating movements of the arms; taking two arm strokes or two leg kicks while the head is under water; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.
- **Butterfly:** Alternating movements of the arms or legs; pushing the arms forward under instead of over the water surface (underwater recovery); a breaststroke style of kick; touching with only one hand at the turns or finish.

For specific language on any technical rules consult the USA Swimming Rules and Regulations book. Violations of the rules are reported to the Referee. The rules require that every reasonable effort be made to notify the swimmer or their coach of the reason for the disqualification. If your child is disqualified in an event, be supportive rather than critical. For beginning swimmers, a disqualification should be treated as a learning experience, not as a punishment. A disqualification alerts the swimmer and coach to what portions of the swimmer's stroke need to be corrected. They should be considered in the same light as an incorrect answer in schoolwork—they point out areas that need further practice. Disqualifications are necessary to keep the competition fair and equitable for all competitors. A supportive attitude on the part of the official, coach, and parent can make a positive situation out of the disqualification.

AAC Club Officials

Officials are present at all competitions to enforce the technical rules of swimming so the competition is fair and equitable. Officials attend clinics, pass a written test and work meets before being certified. All parents are encouraged to get involved with some form of officiating.

Officiating Roles

- **Clerk of the Course (Administration):** Arranges the swimmers in their proper heats and lanes prior to the race.
- **Referee:** Has overall authority and control of the competition, ensuring that all the rules are followed; assigns and instructs all officials, and decides all questions relating to the conduct of the meet.

- **Relay Takeoff Judges:** Stand beside the starting blocks to observe the relay exchange, ensuring that the feet of the departing swimmer have not lost contact with the block before the incoming swimmer touches the end of the pool.
- **Timers:** Operate timing devices (watches or semi-automatic timing systems) and record the time for the swimmer in their lane. Two or three timers are needed for each lane. This volunteer position offers an ideal opportunity for parents to work in a swim meet.
- **Turn Judges:** Observe the swimmers from each end of the pool and ensure that turns and finishes comply with the rules applicable to each stroke.
- **Starter:** Assumes control of the swimmers from the Referee, directs them to “Take your mark”, and sees to it that no swimmer is in motion prior to giving the start signal.
- **Stroke Judges:** Observe the swimmers from both sides of the pool, walking abreast of the swimmers to ensure that the rules relating to each stroke are being followed. The positions of the Stroke Judge and Turn Judge may be combined into one position called the Stroke and Turn Judge.

Swimming is unusual among youth sports in that parent volunteers and paid referees perform all the officiating. Our Local Swimming Committee (LSC) certifies AAC’s officials and requires, it and all other clubs, to help staff meets. Any AAC parent interested in learning the sport along with their swimmer regardless of experience is encouraged to join the AAC officiating team. But beyond this obligation, swim meets are much more fun when you join the action on the deck. Even better, you’ll get a small refund on your AAC dues each season in which you work a minimum number of sessions.

Becoming an Official with AAC

Our LSC, Potomac Valley Swimming (PVS), certifies all of our officials on behalf of USA Swimming as described at pvsweb.org/official/certification.html. The entry level deck position is Stroke and Turn Judge. Both of the sit-down table jobs, Timing System and Results Computer (Hy-Tek) operator, are also entry level. Certification for each position requires attending one of the PVS clinics held in the September-November and January timeframes and then working several sessions as a supervised trainee. We encourage completing these sessions as soon as possible at any meet you can attend, including the Gator Mini Meets hosted by AAC for which we assign the officials. The sooner you get certified, the sooner you can help fulfill AAC’s obligation to staff meets.

If you attended any of your league’s Stroke and Turn clinics last summer, you can likely waive the PVS Stroke and Turn clinic and proceed with working your trainee sessions. Contact the AAC officials coordinator to learn how you can take advantage of this option.

Being an Official Is Fun and Saves You Money

In addition to a reimbursement and helping AAC fulfill its obligation to help staff meets, you’ll also make new friends among the officials from AAC and the other PVS swim clubs who’ll work with you to ensure a fair and legal competition for all PVS swimmers. You’ll also enjoy learning and growing into the sport of swimming along with your swimmer.

For Further Information

Contact AAC Officials Coordinator additional information or assistance with the certification process. Or, ask any of our existing AAC officials about becoming an official through AAC.

The Role of Swimmers

AAC Swimmer Code of Conduct

AAC has a Code of Conduct for our swimmers in order to foster a positive competitive environment for all its members. All AAC Swimmers agree to the following standards of conduct outlined below in conjunction with the Swimmer's Code of Conduct as a member of USA Swimming.

- As members of AAC, swimmers always represent the club. As Such, every AAC swimmer is expected to behave in an exemplary manner. The reputation of AAC, as well as the other athletes with you, is dependent on your behavior.
- Any inappropriate use of cell phones, social media, or other devices is prohibited, especially in private areas such as the locker room or hotel room. Cell phones cannot be out in the locker room at any time.
- Swimmers will not taunt, "boo", or show any unsportsmanlike conduct towards other teams, parents, swimmers, or officials at any time.
- Any bullying or allegations of bullying of any athlete shall be investigated and disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the coaching staff. Swimmers are expected to learn and understand all AAC policies set forth by the team and shall comply to the standards set forth by the team.
- Any act of fraud, deception or dishonesty in connection with any swimmer will be investigated by the team and appropriate actions taken.
- Any non-consensual physical contact, obscene language or gesture, or other threatening language will not be tolerated.
- First impressions are very important to the swimmer's personal image, to AAC, to PVS, and to the sport of swimming. If the team attends special functions, travels by air, etc., appropriate attire is required. Check with the coach if unsure what to wear. During competitions swimmers will wear appropriate AAC attire. AAC swimmers are required to wear caps which display the AAC logo and may not wear apparel that represents any other teams (including swim caps).
- AAC swimmers are expected at all times to follow the directions of the coaching staff. At no time will disrespectful attitudes be tolerated from any swimmer.
- No thievery or misuse of other swimmer's property will be tolerated.
- The consumption of alcohol, the use of tobacco, or use of any non-prescribed drugs or illegal substance of any kind will not be tolerated. In addition, any team member found or suspected to be in the presence of others (regardless of team affiliation) partaking in any of the above activities will be subject to the same punishments and probable expulsion from AAC.
- The AAC coaching staff holds the final word on any rules, regulations, or disciplinary actions.
- As most practice groups rent the use of space, all rules set forth by the facility must be followed at all times.

Failure to comply with AAC's Code of Conduct may result in, but not limited to, any or all of the following actions: Swimmer will not be allowed to participate in team activities, swimmer may not be allowed to participate in upcoming team trips, or possible suspension or expulsion from AAC.

AAC Swimmer Practice Behavior

Swimmers are encouraged to support their teammates at practices and during competition. Working together is an important part of the “AAC Spirit.” Swimmers are expected to follow the directions of the coaching staff, be respectful at all times, and may only leave practice with the coach’s permission. Each coach or practice group will have its own procedures and practice etiquette that teammates will be expected to follow.

Abusive language, lying, stealing, or vandalism will not be tolerated.

AAC Swimmer Commitment to Team Service

Coming soon. To be filled out when policy, procedures or system are determined.

What Is Bullying?

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in section 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has any effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member’s property
- placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property
- creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity
- infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity
- materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC)

Social Media & Communication Policy

AAC recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media in today’s world. Given that our athletes use social media as their primary source of communication, AAC has established a policy for acceptable use of social media and electronic communication by our athletes. This policy is essential for AAC to provide a safe and positive environment for all its athletes, officials, parents, and coaches.

Acceptable Use Policy

Each AAC athlete must exhibit ethical and responsible conduct in all online communications and activities and respect the rights and privacy of all other AAC, PVS, and USA Swimming athletes, coaches, officials, and parents. AAC prohibits cyberbullying or cyberstalking of any athlete, coach, or official by any means

or method, including but not limited to the use of Instagram, SnapChat, Facebook, Text Messaging, Instant Messaging, Twitter, E-Mail. Cyberbullying and Cyberstalking are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using electronic technology of any kind. Cyberbullying involves the use of electronic information and communication technologies to support deliberate or repeated harassment, intimidation and/or hostile behavior by an individual or group through personal attacks or other means that harms others, whether intentional or not. Examples of cyberbullying includes mean text messages, emails, tweets, or posts including rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

Cyberstalking

Cyberstalking involves the use of electronic information and communication technologies to communicate words, images, or language directed at or about a specific person, causing substantial emotional distress to that person. Harassing, intimidating, hostile, mean electronic communication that is perceived as being motivated either by any actual or perceived characteristic including race, color, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability or disability or any other characteristic related to athletic performance that a reasonable person should know under the any of these circumstances:

- Will have the effect of harming another athlete or has the effect of substantially interfering with another athlete's performance or opportunities.
- Has the effect of having a negative impact on another athlete's emotional or psychological well-being.
- Has the effect of insulting or demeaning another athlete to cause disruption in or substantial interference with practice, any swim meet, or any other AAC related activity.
- Has the effect of creating a hostile environment for any athlete at any USA Swimming activity or swim meet.
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any AAC practice, workout, or other events or swim meets of any other club or high school.

Acceptable Communication Policy

All communications between a coach or other adult, and an athlete must be professional in nature and for the purpose of communicating information about team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection. For example, as with any communication with an athlete, electronic communication should not contain or relate to any of the following:

- drugs or alcohol use
- sexually oriented conversation, sexually explicit language, or sexual activity
- the adult's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues, or personal problems
- inappropriate or sexually explicit pictures

The Role of Swimmers

Important: Any communication concerning an athlete's personal life, social activities, relationship or family issues or personal problems must be transparent, accessible and professional.

Whether one is an athlete, coach, or parent, the guiding principle to always use in communication is to ask: "Is this communication something that someone else would find appropriate or acceptable in a face-to-face meeting?" or "Is this something you would be comfortable saying out loud to the intended recipient of your communication in front of the intended recipient's parents, the coaching staff, or other athletes?"

- **Transparent:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be transparent. Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo and expectations.
- **Accessible:** All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the AAC's records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so that there is no question regarding accessibility.
- **Professional:** All electronic communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the Club. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

If your communication meets all three of the T.A.P. criteria (Transparent, Accessible, Professional), then it is likely your method of communication with athletes will be appropriate.

Social Media and Similar Apps and Websites

Coaches may have personal Facebook (or other social media site) pages, but they are not permitted to have any athlete member of the Club join their personal page as a "friend." A coach should not accept any "friend" request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. AAC has an official Facebook page that athletes and their parents can "friend" for information and updates on team-related matters. Coaches are encouraged to set their pages to "private" to prevent athletes from accessing the coach's personal information.

Twitter

Coaches and athletes may follow each other on Twitter. Coaches cannot retweet an athlete message post. Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "direct message" each other through Twitter.

Texting and Email

Subject to the general guidelines mentioned above, texting and emailing is allowed between coaches and athletes. This communication shall be used for the purpose of communicating information directly related to team activities.

Request to Discontinue All Electronic Communications

The parents or guardians of an athlete may request in writing that their child not be contacted by coaches through any form of electronic communication.

AAC Action Plan to Address Bullying

Purpose

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at the Arlington Aquatic Club and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. AAC is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or athlete/mentor.

Objectives of AAC's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that AAC will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that the Arlington Aquatic Club takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

Reporting Procedure

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied, cyber-bullied or cyber stalked is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents;
- Talk to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to the AAC Coach, AAC Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

How We Handle Bullying

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

If bullying is occurring at AAC or it is reported to be occurring at AAC, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. **First, we get the facts.**
 - a. Keep all the involved children separate.
 - b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
 - c. Listen without blaming.
 - d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
 - e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.
2. **Then, we determine if it's bullying.** There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.
 - a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
 - b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
 - i. What is the history between the kids involved?
 - ii. Have there been past conflicts?
 - iii. Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - iv. Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
 - c. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
 - d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED

3. **Support the kids who are being bullied**
 - a. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
 - b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
 - i. Ask the child being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
 - ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
 - c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied child.

4. Address bullying behavior

- a. Make sure the child knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
 - i. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
 - ii. Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
- d. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
 - i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
 - ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.
 - iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
- e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
 - i. Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" strategies don't work. Suspending or removing from the team swimmers who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
 - ii. Conflict resolution and peer mediation don't work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
- f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

5. Support bystanders who witness bullying. Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening:

- a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
- b. Tell a trusted adult — your parent, coach, or club board member;
- c. Help the kid being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. "Let's go, practice is about to start."
- d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
- e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

The Role of Parents

AAC Family Code of Conduct

“When coaches, swimmers and swimming parents work together as partners in performance — 100% committed and focused on helping the swimmer to realize their full potential — amazing, incredible things are not only possible but inevitable.”

— Wayne Goldsmith, *Swimming World*

Competitive swimming programs provide many benefits to young athletes. They develop self-discipline, good sportsmanship and time management skills. Competition allows the swimmer to experience success and to learn how to deal with defeat, while becoming healthy and physically fit. As parent, your major responsibility is to provide a stable, loving and supportive environment. This positive environment will encourage your child to continue swimming. Show your interest by ensuring your child’s attendance at practice and by coming to meets. Parents serve as positive role models, and their attributes are often emulated by their children. Be aware of this, and strive to be positive models. Most importantly, show good sportsmanship at all times toward coaches, officials, opponents and teammates.

AAC has put together a Code of Conduct for our families. This is to help facilitate a nurturing environment for our swimmers and supportive environment for our coaching staff. As parents, it is absolutely essential to give our coaching staff the respect and authority they deserve to run their group. By working together in a partnership with them, our club can successfully help your swimmer achieve their full potential.

Parents Code of Conduct

Every family member of AAC always represents the club. Therefore, it is important that we set the right example for our children by showing respect and common courtesies at all times to the team members, coaches, competitors, officials, parents, and for all facilities and other property used during practice or competition.

Respect the integrity of swim officials by assuming decisions are based on honest, objective evaluations of performance. Only coaches may approach meet officials for clarification of rulings.

Understand that opposing teams, including their swimmers, coaches, and fans, want the same positive experiences for their swimmers as we do. Help AAC achieve our goals by avoiding criticism either verbally or by gesture. Look for opportunities to build rapport with teams that we compete and work with.

Demonstrate behaviors that model good sportsmanship during all practices, competitions and team activities. Promote good sportsmanship by setting an example and by helping others to do likewise.

The Role of Parents

Realize that swimmers become easily confused when coached by parents, and benefit most from positive reinforcement of the professional coaching staff's instructions and advice. Your unconditional love and support before and after races will help them best.

Recognize that AAC coaches are professionals and allow them to coach your child without interference during workouts and meets, including not being present on deck during practice or competitions unless you are working at the meet.

Support your professional coaches as they strive to do what is best for each AAC swimmer.

Communicate concerns you may have with your swimmer's coach or AAC Head Coach in private. Also, parents are prohibited from contacting a meet director or entering a meet without the Coach's consent.

Maintain open and honest communication among all members of the AAC family. We reach our common goals by working together.

Insist that your child refrain from using alcohol, tobacco, drugs, other prohibited substances, violence, abusive or foul language, inappropriate sexual conduct, or any other behavior deemed dishonest, discourteous, offensive or disrespectful of others. This is a violation of the USA Swimming Code of Conduct and can lead to dismissal for the Club and USA/swimming.

Basic Responsibilities: How to Help Your Swimmer Reach Their Potential

Practice teamwork with all parents, swimmers, and coaches by supporting the values of Discipline, Loyalty, Commitment, and Hard Work. Represent AAC with excellence, respect, team spirit, good sportsmanship, and politeness. Maintain self-control at all times. Refrain from inappropriate behavior that detracts from a positive image of the team or is detrimental to our performance objectives.

Assist the coaches in conducting effective practices by ensuring swimmers arrive on time. Strive to build confidence in your swimmer. Support our philosophy of creating independent swimmers in order to develop athletes who possess a strong sense of confidence, self-belief, resilience and self-reliance. Encourage swimmers to carry their equipment, pack their bags, and take responsibility of their sport.

Arrive at meets in time for volunteer or swimmer check in, stretching and warm-ups.

Share the burden among parents by volunteering to help at meets.

Know your role. Swimmers swim. Coaches coach. Officials officiate. Parents parent. Do not coach your child at practice, during meets, or outside the pool. Help your children learn values and positive character traits that will sustain them throughout their lives. When it comes to loving and supporting your child — particularly in public — winning and losing make no difference.

Assist the coaches by not talking with or motioning to swimmers during practices.

Positive Parenting Tips for the Swim Parent

To be a positive parent, consider the following tips:

- Your child needs your emotional, physical and financial support. Be liberal in providing this support.
- Support, do not push your child.

The Role of Parents

- Be realistic in terms of expectations; factor in age and skill level; be aware of your child's perception of your expectations.
- Emphasize performance and effort, not just outcome. The athlete only has control over their performance. Define and measure success as giving maximal effort and as personal improvement.
- Keep winning in perspective.
- Do not bribe.
- Give plenty of encouraging and rewarding statements. Criticize sparingly.
- View swimming as an arena in which to teach your child about commitment, hard work and coping with adversity.
- Work to form an effective Coach-Athlete-Parent Triangle.

AAC Guidelines for Watching Practice

Here are some important guidelines when observing practice.

First, young swimmers want parental approval more than anything in the world. For swimmers to learn as much as possible during practice, it is important that coaches have each swimmer's undivided attention. Communicating with your swimmer in any manner during practice will distract your swimmer as well as their teammates when being provided feedback or instructions from their coach. Second, we ask you to communicate with a coach once the coach ends their practice and all swimmers are out of the pool safely. If you need to communicate with a coach on a subject matter that needs more than a simple answer please schedule an appointment with the coach so it can be answered in the most appropriate way. Third, our coaches spend a considerable amount of time planning weekly training sessions for each of their practice groups. Every training set or instructional drill has a purpose. One practice and/or practice set often builds on another during each week. Remember what you may be seeing is a snapshot of the bigger progression, you may not understand the purpose of what the swimmers are doing on any given day. Take your child's lead and having good/positive conversation on the ride home may help you better understand and may also provide a stronger relationship that can encourage your swimmer to continue to grow in the sport.

Please do not coach or advise your swimmer based on what you see (or think you don't see) them do during practice. Many times when teaching stroke skills, coaches ask their swimmers to do things that may not look correct, or actually might be illegal during competition. However, the drills have an important purpose in teaching skills. Swimming a one-arm butterfly stroke or using a flutter kick with breaststroke are examples of drills with a specific purpose.

To comply with USA Swimming Insurance coverage anyone on the pool deck must be a USA Swimming member coach or a USA Swimming athlete member. USA Swimming's Insurance is void if the rules are not followed. Therefore parents should watch practice from the stands.

Note: Please make sure siblings are safe, courteous, and well-behaved at all facilities. Also, please make sure the area is clean before leaving.

AAC Parents Relationship with the Coaches

Let the coach coach!

The best way to help your child achieve goals and reduce the normal fear of failure is through positive reinforcement. No one likes to make a mistake. If your child does make one remember that this is a learning experience. You and your child should learn to treat success and failure as a learning experience and not life changing situation. Encourage your child's efforts and point out the positive things. The coach is the one you have assigned to judge a swimmer's performance and technique. Your role is to provide love and support regardless of outcome.

Ten Commandments for Swimming Parents

1. Thou shalt not impose thy ambitions on thy child. Remember that swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing. The nice thing about swimming is every person can strive to do their personal best and benefit from the process of competitive swimming.
2. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what... There is one question to ask your child after a practice or competition: "Did you have fun?" If meets and practices are not fun, your child should not be forced to participate.
3. Thou shalt not coach thy child. You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offer professional coaching, do not undermine the professional coach by trying to coach your child. Your job is to provide love and support and a safe place to return at the end of the day. Love and hug your child no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job. You should not offer advice on technique or race strategy or any other area that is not yours. And above all, never pay your child for a performance. This will only serve to confuse your child concerning the reasons to strive for excellence and weaken the swimmer coach bond.
4. Thou shalt have positive things to say at a swimming meet. If you are going to show up at a swimming meet you should be encouraging. Never criticize your child or coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made. Remember, "yelling at" is not the same thing as "cheering for".
5. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears. A first swimming meet, 500 free, or 200 fly can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready to compete in it. Remember, your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience.
6. Thou shalt not criticize the officials. If you do not care to devote the time or do not have the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.
7. Honor thy child's coach. The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child; it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.
8. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team. It is not wise for parents to take their swimmers and jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions. Children who switch from team to team are often ostracized for a long, time by the teammates they leave behind are slowly received by the new teammates. Often times, swimmers who do switch teams never do better than they did before they sought the bluer water.

The Role of Parents

9. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning. Most successful swimmers are those who have learned to focus on the progress and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of the outcome is much more important than winning. One Olympian said, "My goal was to set a world record. Well I did that, but someone else did too, just a little faster than I did. I achieved my goal and lost. Does this make me a failure? No, in fact I am very proud of that swim." What a tremendous outlook to carry through life.
10. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian. There are more than 400,000 athletes in USA Swimming and it keeps a record of the Top 100 all-time swimming performance by age group. Only 2% of the swimmers listed in the all-time Top 100 10&Under make it to the Top 100 in the 17-18 age group and of those, only a small percentage will become elite level, world class athletes. There are only 52 spots available for the Olympic Team every four years. Your child's chance of becoming an Olympian are about .0002%

The Ideal Swimming Parent

By Brent Rwisom, head age group coach, Greater Toledo Aquatic Club

Some of you may not realize it, but you play a large part in the success of your child's swimming career. I don't care if your child is in it for recreation, or wants to become one of the best swimmers in the world. You are a very important part in setting his or her personal goals in this sport. "How is that?" you may ask. Well, I'm going to give you some examples and tips on how to be the ideal swimming parent.

Looking back on when I was a young, talented (yeah, right!), age-group swimmer, I remember being overjoyed when I had to go to the 111th Street YMCA in Chicago for swim practice. It was usually the high light of my day after breakfast. One of the reasons I liked going to practice was the many friends that I had through swimming. We would fool around, sometimes get into trouble and work very hard when we were there. We weren't the best swimmers in the state of Illinois, but I bet we had the most fun.

Another reason I enjoyed going to practice was that it gave me a break from my loving parents (or was it that they got a break from their loving son...?). My parents would drop me off and let the swim coaches deal with their holy terror of a son. There was a trust factor there between my parents and my coach. My parents trusted and believed in my coaches, so it made the coaches' job a lot easier. Even though I was young, I noticed that strong relationship. This made me a happier, better Swimmer.

Swimming was such an enjoyable experience for my friends and me that we always looked forward to doing it. If we did something wrong at home or at school our punishment would be no swim practice, and for me, not going to swim practice was like getting a needle from the doctor in the rear end — terrible! My parent wanted me to always do my best and have fun in swimming, but they made sure I had my priorities right. My parents believed that respect, discipline and education were the keys to making me a good person - NOT swimming; They believed if I had those three virtues instilled in my life, I would be a better person, and also, by the way, a better swimmer.

Those three things are all I learned from my parents about swimming. They never told me how I should swim a race. They never talked to me about my stroke technique. They NEVER tried to coach me through any part of swimming. Do you know why? It is because my parents are part of a group known as "dumb swimming parents." This is one of the main ingredients in being an ideal swimming parent. Though my mom knew how to swim, she always acted like she knew nothing about the sport. And my dad actually did know nothing about the sport. He was a boxer when he

was younger and all he ever told me to do was "Attack!" They never put that sort of pressure on me. All they did was support me, no matter how I performed. My dad would give me a kiss on the head and say, "Good job, peanut head." The unconditional love and positive support from my parents put me ahead of my competition. Though my competitors may have beaten me sometimes, I always knew I had my parents there to help me feel good about what I had tried to achieve, and I wouldn't give up.

We have a very good group of energetic children who want to learn how to become better competitive swimmers. As teachers, it is our job and our duty" to help them to achieve their goals as only swim coaches can. Please let us do that job. By standing back and allowing us to do our job, you show your child that we are worthy of their trust and that they should be comfortable to form a solid coach/swimmer relationship with us. Only you can be the parent, giving that unconditional love and teaching them the virtues they need to be successful adults. If you focus on that, and that alone, the swimming will come along too.

Are You a Pressure Parent?

The following survey has been taken from the Amateur Swimming Association of Great Britain. If you answer yes to one or more of these questions, you may be in danger of pressuring your child. It is important to remember that the parent's role is critical and should be supportive at all time to ensure a positive experience for your child.

- Is winning more important to you than it is to your child?
- When your child has a poor swim, is your disappointment, such as through body language or vocal tones, obvious?
- Do you feel that you are the one to have to "Psych" your child up before competition?
- Do you feel that winning is the only way your child can enjoy the sport?
- Do you conduct "post mortems" immediately after competition or practice?
- Do you find yourself wanting to interfere with coaching and instructions during practice or competition thinking that you could do better?
- Do you find yourself disliking your child's opponents?
- Are your child's goals more important to you than they are to your child?
- Do you provide material rewards for performance?

Parents Role in AAC

Parental involvement is crucial to AAC. We need parents to play key support roles. The AAC Booster Club needs parents for leadership roles as board members and committee members. In addition, AAC and the AAC Booster Club is looking for volunteers to work as liaisons with other parents (in a formal role), help with swim meets, coordinate social events, and organize and support fund raising activities. Volunteering to help AAC is a great way to get involved, meet other parents and be a positive role model for your child. To find out how you can get involved and support your team, contact your coach or an involved parent to find out how you can be a positive force in AAC.

Getting involved with your club is a great way to meet people, have fun and teach your child about commitment and service. Many swim parents develop long-term friendships and enjoy the family-like

atmosphere that develops when working with other parents. Working at a meet can be a lot more fun than sitting in the hot stands! Additionally, when your child sees you devoting time and energy to help the team, he or she understands that team loyalty and service are important and worthwhile.

Helping Out at an AAC Meet

If you have already attended a meet, you have probably been approached to be a timer. This is a great way to begin to help at meets. In fact, this is how many officials get started. Officials are a necessary part of every type of competition. Here is a list of the officiating positions:

- Stroke and Turn Judges
- Clerk of Course
- Computer Operator
- Starter
- Referee
- Safety Marshal

If any of these jobs interest you, check with your coach or the Head of Officials.

Volunteering and AAC Service Hours Requirement Policy

Parent volunteers are needed throughout the year. All families are required to volunteer during the swim season. Starting with the 2018–19 season, you will be able to see your volunteer points on the Team Unify site.

Once you have worked at an event, please email your volunteer points to the Service Hours Coordinator with the event name, your role and the points associated with your work so that we can have a record of your participation. Please remember to include the name of your swimmer and family name.

Parents are requested to work both home and away meets if their swimmer is participating. There are several other ways to volunteer within the program. The options for volunteering and the AAC policy is on service hours is as follows:

Arlington Aquatic Club Service Points Policy

Arlington Aquatic Club *families* that have swimmers registered in a competitive program are *required* to make a commitment to support the Club through completing service points. Receipt of this policy, as delivered by the AAC Booster Club through email and publication on the AAC website, is an agreement of the AAC Service Points Policy by the families of those swimmers in the competitive groups of AAC.

SERVICE POINTS MUST BE MET BY EACH FAMILY AND ARE REQUIRED AS PART OF YOUR ENROLLMENT WITH ARLINGTON AQUATIC CLUB.

The AAC Service Hours Policy will be strictly enforced in the 2018–2019 season to help us administer a successful youth swim club. AAC requires parents/guardians and family members to be dedicated volunteers throughout the entire year.

EACH FAMILY IS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE 10 SERVICE POINTS.

There is an early buy out prior to the first competitive meet. Families can choose the early buy out option by sending the service coordinator their intention as well as a one-time \$100 payment payable to AAC Booster Club.

IMPORTANT: If service hours are unfulfilled by May 15, 2019, a penalty fee of \$150 will be assessed. If your family leaves prior to May 15, it is your responsibility to ensure you have completed the service point requirement to avoid the fee.

Signing up for, Receiving, and Tracking Your Service Points

Service Point opportunities will be available for sign up through a signup genius link, other sign up links, or on the team website. For all jobs worked, you must sign-in at the event or report to our Service Hour Coordinator. Service points earned for jobs worked at events and meets are tracked on the Team Unify account website. It is your responsibility to ensure your points are accurately credited and recorded.

Volunteering and AAC Service Hours Requirement Policy

View your volunteer points balance on the AAC website. After logging in, choose: My Account › My Invoice Payment › Service Hours Tab

IMPORTANT: Our policy runs on a POINT system — not by hours worked. Therefore, each job you sign up for, regardless of the duration of time assigned for each individual role (i.e. 1 hour, 2 hours, etc.) will earn your family points as detailed below. Any questions, please contact: cwducar@gmail.com

How to Earn Volunteer Points

Job (Points)	Description
Social Events (2 pts.)	You can earn points by helping out at social events. This may include table worker, clean-up crew, etc.
Concession Donations (0.5–2)	A variety of food and drink donations are needed for each of our swim meets. Point values vary.
Concessions Coordinator for Home Meets (10)	Concessions Coordinator is responsible for overseeing supplies and donations are set up prior to meet warm up. Oversees concessions workers and clean-up crew.
Concessions Worker (3)	Shift begins 15 minutes before meet warm-up. There are typically two 2-hr shifts. First shift helps with set-up and second shift helps with clean up. Two people work together so that you can take turns to step away when your child is up for his or her event. Concession workers are responsible for selling snacks and drinks and monitoring hospitality area where food and drink is kept for coaches.
Runner (3)	Shift begins 15 minutes before Meet start-time. No running involved, but runners are responsible for posting results, delivering relay and DQ slips, etc. Runners need to be comfortable with being on their feet during much of the meet and climbing stairs.
Chaperone (10)	Chaperones are responsible to drive AAC swimmers to travel meets. Chaperones are also responsible for coordinating with the AAC Booster Club Travel Coordinator to ensure all meals are arranged as well as forms and fees from swimmer collected. Chaperones may also be required to time as necessary.
Marshalls (3)	Shift begins at the start of warm-ups. Your job is to enforce safety and order. Remind kids to WALK not run on deck and periodically check on locker rooms to make sure kids are safe during the meet.
Swim Group Parent Liaison (5)	This is a full year commitment. The AAC Board Parent Liaison will work with AAC parents to communicate board/team information. They will be the go to person for the group. Parents will contact group liaisons to address any team issues. Liaisons will then pass on concerns to the coach or board representative.

Volunteering and AAC Service Hours Requirement Policy

Head Timer (3)	Shift begins 45 minutes before meet. Head Timer is responsible for locating all timers and checking them in on Timer Attendance Sheet. Coordinate timers, dispense stopwatches, clipboards and pencils at meeting (available in computer room), monitor timers on pool deck, oversee shift changes and assist timing as needed. Benefit of this job is that you are on the pool deck and close to your swimmer.
Team Apparel Assistant (5)	Team Apparel Assistant works with AAC Booster Club to help with sorting, packing, and delivering team orders and meet t-shirts.
Timer (3)	Shift begins at Timer Meeting, 20 minutes before start-time. Two timers per lane are needed as a backup to the timing system. Timers have a manual stopwatch. One Timer is given a plunger to use upon completion of the race, and the other Timer records the manual watch times on a clipboard provided at the Timer Meeting. Return stopwatches to Head Timer at end of shift. This is a great position for those who like to be in the action and interact with the kids.
Social Event Planning Committee (2-5)	Committee members will work with AAC Board or Liaisons to coordinate events.
Event Photographer (3)	Event photographers are needed at events as well as meets. Photos are used on the team website and the end of year banquet.

USA Swim Officials: Potomac Valley Swimming and USA Swimming require trained and certified officials to run and oversee all USA Swimming sanctioned meets. To become an official you must attend a clinic then complete your training by working several sessions with certified officials on deck. Officials must meet annual certification requirements.

Active swim officials are EXEMPT from Volunteer Point and Timing requirements. For more information about becoming a USA Swim Official for our team, please contact the AAC Officials Coordinator.

Other Opportunities

If you have any other talent or business that you feel would be beneficial to the team, please contact the service hours coordinator.

Training for Age Groups — Frequently Asked Questions

Many parents have lots of questions about swim practice, especially when their children are new to the sport. It is difficult to know what to expect of your child. Your child may talk about swim practice, but you may not even understand the new “swimming vocabulary” your child is using. Many children improve rapidly during the developmental stages due to growth and improved technique. It is difficult to resist the tendency to push young athletes at this state! However, the emphasis should be placed on technique and not intense training. The training schedule for developmental swimmers should be flexible enough to provide them with enough time to participate in other activities. Since swimmers’ careers can extend well into adulthood, swimming at the youngest levels need to be fun, pressure free and filled with learning experiences. This will ensure that swimming remains fun throughout their lives.

As your child becomes a teenager, lots of things change, including their training and focus. Just when you had age group swimming all figured out, the coach started calling your child’s group the “Senior Group”! What does this mean for your child as a swimmer and for you as a parent? Training focus and expectations may shift and new issues may surface.

The mental side of athletic competition is just as challenging as the physical side. Parents want to help their children set appropriate goals and handle nervousness before competition. Coaches work with athletes on the “mental side” as part of their training, but there are things parents can do also.

You should certainly ask questions of other parents or schedule an appointment with your child’s coach to clarify things. However, there are many common questions that might be answered below. Read through these FAQs and see if you have found yourself asking the same questions!

FAQs

What will happen to my child’s meet results if they only make half of the offered workouts because they are participating in other sports?

Children involved in other activities can benefit in the areas of coordination and balance, as well as improved social and intellectual development. Specialized training in one activity does not necessarily need to take place at this stage of development. Will your child’s teammate who makes all practices have better results? This is probably the case because their teammate is working solely in developing their swimming skills. It is up to you to explain to your child that making the choice to participate in other activities can have its consequences. Tell your child that they should not compare their results to those of their teammates. But rather, they should focus on the fact that they are benefitting from and enjoying both sports.

Shouldn’t my child be swimming more laps instead of doing those drills?

Your child needs to develop a solid foundation in stroke mechanics: drills and drill sets serve the specific purpose of teaching skills and fundamentals. Drills develop motor coordination, motor

skills, balance and muscle memory. In fact, your child's coach may prescribe a particular drill just for your child in order to improve part of their stroke. In addition, your child may be experiencing a "training" benefit from drills. Drills require concentration and aerobic energy to do them correctly.

My child seems to be bouncing off the wall during "taper" — what is that?

Tapering is a gradual reduction in training workloads in preparation for major competition. Some Age Groupers do not need to taper at all: a little rest and they are ready to go. As training increases, swimmers need more rest and the process of tapering is introduced. Swimmers taper only a couple of times a year, for major competitions. Taper is not something that occurs every meet! "Taper time" is an exciting time for a young swimmer and there are two reasons for this:

- Psychologically your child is expending less energy because the workload has been reduced.
- Psychologically there is less mental fatigue as they are doing less physical work. Additionally, the anticipation and nervousness associated with the upcoming completion may contribute to your child bouncing off the wall. Do not worry. It will soon be over.

My child just moved up to the senior group. Her coach wants them to start coming to morning workouts twice a week. Is this really necessary?

Your child has established proper stroke technique and swimming fundamentals by progressing through the levels of the team. It is appropriate at this stage of your son's or daughter's career development to increase the training loads. This includes adding the two mornings per week. Although morning practices come extra early, this level of commitment is necessary for your swimmer to reach the next level of her swimming career.

Training for competitive swimming is demanding on young athletes. As swimmers develop in the sport, they need to understand the upcoming time demands. One specific principle of training that applies is the progressive overload principle. A person must be stressed slightly more each day over time to continue to improve. In order to do that, the coach must plan additional time. The addition of morning workouts often becomes necessary for the coach to develop young athletes to their maximum potential.

What type of commitment is needed for this level of swimming?

While a swimmer's performance is influenced by numerous factors, there are three that exert the greatest influence: physical, technical and mental. As athletes progress, a greater commitment, of both time and energy, is needed to enable an athlete to address all of these factors.

Additionally, the athlete is asked to take more responsibility for, and ownership of, their practice and competition performance. One way of doing this is by accepting responsibility for leading a lifestyle conducive with swimming well (i.e. proper nutrition, adequate sleep, time management, managing extra-curricular activities).

I think my child is sacrificing too much to train. Is this okay?

What you may consider a sacrifice (i.e. missing a school dance, football game, or simply going out with friends) your child may not consider a sacrifice at all! Instead, your child has chosen to commit to swimming. By doing so, they realize that a certain level of training is necessary for them to achieve greater goals and they do not look at these activities as missed opportunities. Keep

in mind that your child realizes missing a workout is like missing sleep, it cannot be made up. If however, your child is expressing sentiments that they are missing these chances, then it is time to re-evaluate the balance of their activities.

My child was a successful age group swimmer. How can I help them reach the next level (i.e. Sectionals, Juniors, Nationals or the National Team)?

When your child is making the transition, they need to recall that they are participating at a higher level. Improvements are often in tenths and hundredths, rather than seconds, due to biological and physiological factors.

Throughout their career, you have been supportive. This support is still needed but it may have to be a little different than in the past. It is a good time to discuss with your child what they need from you. Do not be afraid to ask them, "How can I support you in your swimming?" While you are an important part of their support network, realize that, at this level, your child should be taking on more ownership of her swimming career.

My child is complaining that their shoulder is hurting after practice?

Swimming is relatively safe for children when performed within reasonable guidelines. Children often seek to push their limits, which can result in injury. The moments in swimming are repetitive and can result in injuries of the soft tissues in the shoulder, knee and hip. Proper strengthening, stretching routines and stroke technique can reduce the risk of injury to the joints especially the shoulder. If pain occurs, it is important to: (a) open the line of communication with the coach; (b) ice the area regularly to reduce inflammation and trauma, and (c) interact with a family physician and ask for a referral to a sports medicine physician. The coach should know what the problem is and when the training aggregates a painful joint. To aid the healing process and to decrease inflammation it is recommended that swimmers ice the area for twenty minutes following each practice. Finally, the swimmer should consult with the appropriate physician to evaluate the problem and develop a treatment plan for addressing the injury.

What are process goals?

There are two types of goals that swimmer can set:

- Outcome Goals: These goals focus on the end result of performance (i.e. win, make finals)
- Process Goals: These goals relate to the process performance (i.e. breath every third stroke, streamline, etc.)

Swimmers have much more control over process goals. Outcome goals are uncontrollable since they also involve the performance of other competitors. Swimmers and coaches especially at the Age Group level, should concentrate on process goals.

Should my child begin setting goals?

Of course! Everyone should set goals. In fact, most kids have already set goals. As adults, however, we must remember that kids are not simply little versions of us and are not going to set the same types of goals as adults. One developmental difference is that children lack the cognitive ability to distinguish time and are also very concrete thinkers. Therefore, setting long-term goals often doesn't provide the motivation for kids that it does for adults. Kids want results today. With

younger swimmers, it is appropriate to talk about short-term goals — what they need to work on today. Most coaches will emphasize goals that reinforce skill development and the process of swim performance. Additionally, based on cognitive development research, we know that around the age of six or seven, kids enter the stage of social comparison. In this stage, they begin to evaluate their own performance by comparing it to others. So as the parent, reinforce what the coach has emphasized and help them focus on individual improvement. Encourage your child's goals to be "SMART":

- Specific: Goals should clearly define what the swimmer is going to do
- Measureable: Goals should provide the swimmer with tangible evidence that the goal has been accomplished
- Achievable: Goals should stretch swimmers slightly so that they feel challenged, but defined well enough that they can be attained
- Results Focused: Trackable: Goals should focus on a particular outcome or process
- Time-bound: Goals should be linked to a timeframe

All my swimmer talks about is being an Olympic swimmer. Should I discourage this since it may not be realistic?

Most kids will have long-term or "dream" goals of making the Olympic team or winning Nationals. Dream goals can be beneficial by helping motivate your athlete to go to practice and to train hard. While it is okay to have dream goals, there are several problems with athletes only having dream goals. These problems include not knowing if they are making progress towards their goal, not experiencing little "successes" along the way, and losing motivation when the goal seems so distant. To combat this, it is important to talk with your child about setting short-term or daily goals. Ask him or her what they are working on in practice this week (just as you ask them what is going on in school). Get them to identify skills they need to improve on and follow-up with them to help them recognize successes along the way. Be sure to ask your son to speak to their coach if they need help setting priorities or short-term goals.

My child gets so nervous before a competition. Is this natural? What can I do to help my child to reduce this competitive pressure/stress?

To a degree, nervousness is part of the competitive experience and can be used as an opportunity to teach young athletes specific strategies or skills to help manage their nervousness. A simple skill that young athletes can learn to help manage the "butterflies" in their stomachs is belly breathing. The athlete is taught to breath slowly, take deep breaths into their belly, hold it briefly, and then exhale slowly. Words can be included to help the athlete focus their thoughts on something besides worry. This is a quick strategy that helps calm the body and the mind, and it only takes a few seconds to do. Another skill to help the athlete deal with muscular tightness brought on by nervousness is progressive muscle relaxation. In this procedure, the athlete goes through the major muscles in their body and first tenses and then relaxes each muscle. This teaches athletes to learn the difference between a tense and a relaxed muscle; to learn where different muscles are located; and to eventually be able to relax different muscles as necessary. Remember that these skills must be taught and practiced before the athlete will be able to use them effectively.

We also know that excessive anxiety can be damaging to both performance and to the athlete's desire to enter such situations in the future. Two factors which have found to play a role in the level of anxiety experience are the importance of the event and the uncertainty of the outcome. Greater

importance and greater uncertainty lead to increased anxiety. Parents, this suggests that you can play an active role in reducing competition anxiety by de-valuing the outcome of the event and by focusing on the individual performance over which the swimmers have control.

Symptoms of anxiety include:

- Increase heart rate
- Sweating negativity
- Jitteriness
- Frequent bathroom breaks
- Excessive worry
- Doubts
- Talk of failure
- Low confidence

Strategies to Manage anxiety include:

- Deep belly breathing
- Positive self-talk
- Relaxation exercises
- Mentally visioning success
- Recalling past successes
- Stretching
- Listening to music
- Focusing on goals
- Light massage
- Distractions (talking with friends, family, etc.)

When is my child ready for competition?

That is a difficult question, as research on athlete development provides no clear-cut answer. In an article by Passer (1988) addressing this question, he reviewed several areas of development in attempting to provide guidelines on determining readiness for competition:

- Motivational readiness: Because competition is a social comparison process, the young athlete is motivated to compete when he or she possesses a social comparison orientation. Research suggests that around the age of five to seven, kids have the desire for, and ability to, use social comparison information.
- Cognitive Readiness: Competition requires numerous cognitive and reasoning skills (i.e. perspective taking, differentiating between effort and ability) that take some time to develop in youngsters. Researchers suggest that kids do not develop the cognitive abilities to have an understanding of the competitive process until approximately age 12.
- Physical growth, psychological capacity, and development: These factors must also be considered when trying to decide readiness for competition.

What should I tell my child when he or she says it's not fair that I have to swim against someone who is much bigger than they are?

Look at a classroom full of school children. The diversity in size and shape is remarkable. Even though these children are similar in chronological age, they may be very different in biological age (physical maturity). It is important to remember that “early bloomers” — children who move through physical maturation more rapidly than their peers — do sometimes have an early advantage in the swimming pool. However, “late bloomers” catch-up and often will become even more proficient at the sport. Regardless of the maturation pace of your child, the best strategy is to have them focus on their own personal improvements over time.

Training Tips from the Coaches

Having successful practice sessions depends largely on how each swimmer chooses to view the meaning and purpose of the activity. The word “training” refers to the conditioning process that takes place during the course of a swim season which helps to prepare the swimmer for the BIG MEET or goal. (Much like studying for a big test). To help you STUDY for the big meet, the AAC has assembled a list of practice tips that may help aid in maintaining your focus during the long swim season. These tips are as follows:

- Understand that your training consists of several equally important parts; “In water” practice, Dryland training, Stretching, Nutrition, Rest, and Visualization (mental training)
- Strive for consistency rather than one great practice per week or one great swim per set.
- Focus on stroke technique as much as possible especially during the first several weeks of taper.
- Stay hydrated during each practice. Bring water bottle with favorite sports drink or water.
- Understand each set thoroughly and its purpose.
- Focus on practicing good starts and turns in every practice session. Don't miss opportunities to practice the details.
- Always get your times on every repeat during practice. This is the only way you have of judging your performance.
- Challenge yourself and/or your teammates in practice in order to improve your performance. Find ways to make practice fun.
- Focus on each set and its purpose and not on how long practice will last.
- Establish “SUPER SETS” where you commit to performing beyond your perceived limits.
- Do not be distracted by other swimmers in your lane.
- Invent mental games to help you focus on each particular set. (Imagine you're in the Olympics, being chased by a shark, body surfing a tidal wave, etc.)
- Set practice goals every night and make every attempt to reach them.
- Swim at the front of your lane if possible. Don't settle for swimming behind someone who you are faster than.

PRACTICE THE WAY YOU WANT TO SWIM IN MEETS

- Always push off the wall when beginning sets in order to practice streamlining.
- Always swim hard to wall at end of each repeat to practice finishes.
- Always perform the correct turns in practice.
- Do not use turns for resting areas in practices.
- Do not stand on bottom of pool at any time in the middle of repeats.
- Kick hard off all turns.
- Practice breathing patterns and race strategies

Practice does not make perfect. Perfect practice makes perfect

— Vince Lombardi Jr.

Health and Nutrition

AAC provides this section to help guide parents. However, please seek professional advice from a physician or nutritionist where appropriate.

Preventing Swimmer's Ear

Article reprinted with permission from American Swimming Magazine, published by the ASCA

You don't have to be a swimmer to get swimmer's ear. Athletes who frequently get water or perspiration in their ears are susceptible to the condition. Staying in a pool too long can reduce the acid level of the ear wax, which is there to help resist infections.

Swimmer's ear (otitis externa) is actually one of several names that refer to an infection of the outer ear. It can be caused by a fungus, but is more commonly associated with a bacterium that is brought into the ear by water. If the water then runs out, the ear and the bacteria dry up. But when some of the water remains trapped in the ear canal and the skin gets soggy, the bacteria are in a perfect environment to grow into a problem.

Symptoms

The first symptoms are a feeling that the ear is blocked, muffled hearing, and an itch. Later, the canal can become swollen and painful, and a watery discharge accumulates in the area. If the ear gets to the point of being tender to the touch, it's time to get to a doctor.

Prevention

There are several ways to prevent swimmer's ear from ever occurring. Here is a summary of preventive methods:

- Don't swim in dirty water
- After a swim, tilt and shake your head to allow the water to drain.
- Dry your ears with a clean cloth after showering and with a hair dryer set at low speed, held about 12" from your ear.
- Use one dropper of commercial eardrops, isopropyl alcohol, or white vinegar in your ear after swimming or showering. Wiggle your ear to let the solution get to the bottom, then let the fluid drain out. Drops should not be used by people with tubes in their ears or perforations in their eardrums.
- Some experts suggest that you use a dropper of mineral oil, baby oil or lanolin to create a protective coating before you exercise. Get advice from a physician or trainer before using this method.
- If you wear a hearing aid, remove it frequently to allow your ear to dry.
- Avoid excessive cleaning that removes all of the protective wax naturally present in the ear canal.

Food Pyramids: What Should You Really Eat?

As an alternative to the USDA's food pyramid, the Harvard School of Public Health built the Healthy Eating Pyramid. It resembles the USDA's in shape only. The Healthy Eating Pyramid takes into consideration, and puts into perspective, the wealth of research conducted during the last twenty years that has reshaped the definition of healthy eating.

The Healthy Eating Pyramid sits on a foundation of daily exercise and weight control. Why? These two related elements strongly influence your chances of staying healthy. They also affect what and how you eat and how your food affects you. The other bricks of the Healthy Eating Pyramid include:

- **Whole Grain Foods (at most meals)** — The body needs carbohydrates, mainly for energy. The best sources of carbohydrates are whole grains such as oatmeal, whole-wheat bread, and brown rice. They deliver the outer (bran) and inner (germ) layers along with energy-rich starch. The body can't digest whole grains as quickly as it can highly processed carbohydrates such as white flour. This keeps blood sugar and insulin levels from rising, then falling, too quickly. Better control of blood sugar and insulin can keep hunger at bay and may prevent the development of type 2 diabetes.
- **Plant Oils** — Surprised that the Healthy Eating Pyramid puts some fats near the base, indicating that they are okay to eat? Although this recommendation seems to go against conventional wisdom, it's exactly in line with the evidence and with common eating habits. The average American gets one third or more of his or her daily calories from fats, so placing them near the foundation of the pyramid makes sense. Note, though, that it specifically mentions plant oils, not all types of fat. Good sources of healthy unsaturated fats include olive, canola, soy, corn, sunflower, peanut, and other vegetable oils, as well as fatty fish such as salmon. These healthy fats not only improve cholesterol levels (when eaten in place of highly processed carbohydrates) but can also protect the heart from sudden and potentially deadly rhythm problems.
- **Vegetables (in abundance) and fruits (2 to 3 times)** — A diet rich in fruits and vegetables can decrease the chances of having a heart attack or stroke, protect against a variety of cancers, lower blood pressure, help you avoid the painful intestinal ailment diverticulitis, guard against cataract and macular degeneration, and add variety to your diet.
- **Fish, Poultry, and Eggs (0 to 2 times)** — These are important sources of protein. A wealth of research suggests that eating fish can reduce the risk of heart disease. Chicken and turkey are also good sources of protein and can be low in saturated fat. Eggs, which have long been demonized because they contain fairly high levels of cholesterol, aren't as bad as they're cracked up to be. In fact, an egg is a much better breakfast than a doughnut cooked in an oil rich in trans fats or a bagel made from refined flour.
- **Nuts and Legumes (1 to 3 times)** — Nuts and legumes are excellent sources of protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Legumes include black beans, navy beans, garbanzos, and other beans that are usually sold dried. Many kinds of nuts contain healthy fats, and packages of some varieties (almonds, walnuts, pecans, peanuts, hazelnuts, and pistachios) can now even carry a label saying they're good for your heart.
- **Dairy or Calcium Supplement (1 to 2 times)** — Building bones and keeping them strong takes calcium, vitamin D, exercise, and a whole lot more. Dairy products have traditionally been American's main source of calcium. But there are other healthy ways to get calcium than from milk and cheese, which can contain a lot of saturated fat. Three glasses of whole milk, for example, contains as much saturated fat as 13 strips of cooked bacon. If you enjoy dairy foods, try to stick with no-fat or low-fat products. If you don't like dairy products, calcium supplements offer an easy and inexpensive way to get your daily calcium.

- **Red Meat and Butter (use sparingly)** — These sit at the top of the Healthy Eating Pyramid because they contain lots of saturated fat. If you eat red meat every day, switching to fish or chicken and substituting olive oil for butter can improve cholesterol levels.
- **White Rice, White Bread, Potatoes, Pasta and Sweets (use sparingly)** — These all-American staples are at the top, rather than the bottom of the Healthy Eating Pyramid, because they can cause fast and furious increases in blood sugar, which could lead to weight gain, diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic disorders. Whole-grain carbohydrates cause slower, steadier increases in blood sugar that don't overwhelm the body's ability to handle this much needed but potentially dangerous nutrient.
- **Multivitamins** — A daily multivitamin, multi-mineral supplement can offer a nutritional backup. While it does not replace healthy eating, it can fill in the nutrient holes that may sometimes affect even the most careful eaters. You don't need an expensive name-brand vitamin — a standard, store-brand, RDA-level one is fine. Look for one that meets the requirements of the USP, an organization that sets standards for drugs and supplements.

Fluids & Hydration

Training in a hot, humid environment can lead to dehydration. Swimmers are vulnerable to dehydration, especially during the hot summer months. Performance can suffer when a swimmer loses as little as 2% of body weight as sweat. To prevent dehydration, swimmers must drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after a workout or competition. Thirst is not an accurate indicator of how much fluid a swimmer needs. One of the major concerns is the belief of young adolescent swimmers is that thirst is an adequate measure of hydration status. However, this is a misconception. To maintain hydration levels, swimmers need to keep a fluid bottle by the side of the pool when working out and drink as often as possible. To minimize poor performance due to dehydration, swimmers should:

- Drink 2 cups of fluid for each pound lost in workouts/competition
- Drink 1–2 cups of fluid prior to working out or competing
- Drink 4–10 Ounces of fluid every 15–20 minutes during training

Swimmers should also keep in mind that:

- Dark urine indicates dehydration and the need to replenish fluids
- Sports drinks formulated with 6–7% carbohydrate and sodium replace fluids faster than water, improve performance, and help with optimal hydration

Fluids: Water vs. Sports Drink

There are two reasons to drink fluids: (1) to stay hydrated, and (2) to provide the body with fuel.

During Workout — Regardless of age or length of workout, all swimmers need fluids during practice to stay hydrated. This is easily accomplished with a couple of sips from the water bottle every 15–20 minutes. As swimmers progress, workouts get longer and tougher. It's well established that exercise beyond 90 minutes benefits from a supplemental fuel source. The sports drink can provide it. But we have hydration to think about. Drinks that are too strong, or "Concentrated" can provide fuel but also inhibit fluid absorption and often lead to cramping.

Years of research tells us that drinks that are 6–8% carbohydrate by weight provide the perfect balance. Enough carbohydrate to provide a fuel source during long exercise, but not so much that will inhibit fluid absorption. A couple of sips every 15–20 minutes keeps the body fueled, helps prevent unnecessary

tissue breakdown, and maintains hydration. Today, Gatorade and Powerade meet the 6–8% criteria. Most other drinks are too strong to be effective during workouts.

After Workouts — Water is an excellent choice to replenish fluids after practice. It's always wise to drink at least one cup. But after a tough workout replenishing fuel stores is equally important. Competitive swimmers need a little over 1 gram of carbohydrate for every kilogram they weigh (lbs. ÷ 2.2) each hour after a workout. Also they need it within the first hour.

Often a sports drink that is easily digested and quickly absorbed, such as Gatorade or PowerAde, can provide a convenient way to get some of this fuel within the first 20 minutes. Beware of high protein drinks, as they often forgo the carbohydrate, and carbohydrate is what you are trying to replenish with that first hour after workout. A little protein won't hurt, in fact a little bit of protein may actually help by supporting tissue repair and re-building processes. But too much protein, especially when it comes in place of carbohydrates, may actually be detrimental to the post-workout process.

Remember the following:

- Carbohydrate is the primary fuel source during tough workouts. Protein is used as a fuel source during exercise only when carbohydrate and fat are not present in sufficient quantities. This can happen during long/tough workouts when the body uses much of its stored carbohydrates, and it must find an additional source. If an additional carbohydrate source (Gatorade, Powerade) is not supplied, the body taps into stored protein, a.k.a. your muscles. This is why we drink carbohydrate-electrolyte solutions during workout...to spare muscle protein. This is also why it is important to replace carbohydrate stores lost during a workout...so you start the next work out with a full tank of gas!
- Following exercise, the body is very sensitive to the hormone insulin. Insulin is that hormone that rises every time blood sugar rises. In other words, every time a swimmer eats carbohydrates, which causes blood sugar to rise, insulin goes up. Well, its insulins job to remove sugar from the bloodstream, and it does so by facilitating its storage in glycogen. Glycogen's, the storage form for carbohydrate, is what the body taps into for fuel when exercise is very intense. This can happen quite a bit during a tough workout, which is why it's important to see that glycogen is replenished before the next practice.
- Staying hydrated during the day is just as critical as hydrating during and after workouts. Most swimmers can do this by incorporating a variety of fluids into their daily diet. Water, fruit juice, milk, soups, etc. Water is always an excellent choice, but other drinks, including sports drinks (defined as 6–8% carbohydrate by weight) are okay too. Just remember that variety is the key to a healthy diet. If you use a sports drink during and after practice, it may be better to drink water and juice during the day to stay hydrated. Juices are often healthier than sports drinks in that their sugars are natural. Always keep in mind that juices and sports drinks contribute to total caloric intake.

Nutrition for Training & Competition

Nutrition During Workouts

During training sessions lasting longer than one hour, research has shown that consuming carbohydrates can improve performance. While it is inconvenient and impossible to eat during swim practice, it is beneficial to consume a carbohydrate/electrolyte beverage such as Gatorade which provides fluids and energy. Consuming carbohydrates during practice or swim competition can delay fatigue and allow swimmers to train harder and longer.

Pre-Event Nutrition

The type of food swimmers eat prior to competition influences how well they perform in the water. The best pre-event meal should contain primarily carbohydrates. Carbohydrate rich foods like pasta, low sugar cereals, bagel, and fruits and vegetables are easily digested and absorbed. The general rule of thumb is for swimmers to consume 0.50 grams of carbohydrates per pound of body weight one-to-four hours prior to exercise.

Fatty foods such as potato chips, donuts, french fries, and pastries take longer to digest and provide little energy during racing. Protein foods that are likely to contain high amounts of fat (peanut butter, cheese, and high-fat meats like ribs and bacon) are also more slowly digested. Eating foods high in fat and protein and low in carbohydrates can actually diminish swimming performance. For this reason, it is recommended that swimmers eat high carbohydrate foods like pasta, low-sugar cereals, bagels and fruits and vegetables.

Guidelines for Eating at All Day Events

Swimming meets can last all day, and competition may continue for several days. For this reason, the following recommendations have been included to help swimmers prepare for these all-day events.

When there is less than one hour between events, swimmers should consume high-carbohydrate foods like fruit juices, bananas, crackers, plain toast, or Gatorade, and limit the amount of food eaten.

When there are 2–4 hours between events, swimmers should add more high-carbohydrate foods like bagels, hot cereal (such as oatmeal), or English muffins, along with some type of fruit juice or Gatorade.

When there are 4 hours or more in between events, athletes can add small amounts of protein with the carbohydrate foods. For example, low-fat yogurt or a light spread of peanut butter on a bagel with fruit juice, or a turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread with low-fat milk, fruit juice, or Gatorade are all appropriate.

Post-Competition Nutrition

It is also important to eat carbohydrates after practice and competition. The sooner swimmers consume carbohydrate, the more quickly muscle glycogen levels will be restored. Many swim meets last more than one day, so it is important that swimmers rebuild their glycogen stores as quickly as possible in preparation for the next day's events. Swimmers should consume at least 70 grams of carbohydrate within 30 minutes after exercise, followed by an additional 75–100 grams every 2–4 hours thereafter.

Practice Equipment

The AAC yearly Team Fee includes an AAC Team Outfitting Package for each registered swimmer. This package includes two AAC team T-shirts and one team swim cap, which are provided at the beginning of each swim year (fall).

As an Arena contracted team, we recommend that all of our swimmers wear Arena suits, caps, apparel, bags and equipment. This includes all open meets, travel meets and championship meets.

If a swimmer wears a cap, they must wear an AAC team cap, not a summer team cap, high school team cap or generic cap. Having a spare cap or two is recommended in case one rips. Swimmers are supplied one AAC cap at the beginning of the swim season. Additional swim caps can be purchased at Sport Fair.

AAC T-shirts should be worn at USA swim meets. High school, summer team and generic shirts should not be worn to meets.

Please help us in this team wide effort to help our team look like a well-organized and coached unit by supporting the AAC outfitting recommendations and procedures. **Look like a team, act like a team, perform like a team and succeed like a team!**

Practice Facilities

AAC is fortunate to have access to several pools run by Arlington County Public Schools. In addition, AAC rents space at other pools to enable its swimmers to practice in long course pools during portions of the long course swim season. Swimmers must follow the rules and regulations in place at each facility. Please be respectful at all times and help us maintain positive relationships with these important partners.

Addresses for each location are as follows:

- **Wakefield High School Pool**
1325 S. Dinwiddie Street, Arlington, VA 22206
703-228-2395
- **Washington-Lee High School Pool**
1301 N. Quincy Street, Arlington, VA 22201
703-228-6262
- **Yorktown High School Pool**
5200 Yorktown Boulevard, Arlington, VA 22207
703-228-8754
- **Fort Myer Officers Club Pool (at Patton Hall)**
214 Jackson Avenue, Fort Myer, VA 22211
- **Army Navy Country Club**
1700 Army Navy Drive, Arlington, VA 22202

Meets

AAC's Competition Philosophy

In preparing for your swimmer's meets, the following are some basic fundamentals of competition that AAC coaches stress:

- Each swimmer should compete with him or herself. It is more beneficial to improve one's time and/or technique than to win a ribbon or medal.
- In addition to earning best times, the coaches praise swimmers for working on technique and/or racing strategies. Swimmers may not improve their time when trying something new (i.e. flip turns, underwater dolphin kicks, etc.), but if a swimmer continues the skill or technique, the time will improve more in the long run.
- Swimmers are taught to set realistic goals, and as they get older, they are taught to relate performance in practice to their goal times.
- The coaching staff encourages age-group swimmers to compete in every event they are eligible for. This helps to promote versatility since swimmers are continuously switching best events as they grow, mature, and change body shapes and sizes.
- Sportsmanship is a MUST at AAC. We expect all swimmers, parents, and coaches to respect the officials, competitors, and the facilities we use. We also want swimmers to encourage and support their teammates.
- SUCCESS = Improving one's own, best self.

Competition Schedule

The competition schedule for each season is available on the AAC website at aacswims.org under the meets and events tab. AAC will send emails to the families in each practice group that will include notifications, updates, and/or changes. If you have questions about which meets your child should attend, please contact your coach.

Entering AAC Meets

AAC Swimmers can register for swim meets on the AAC website. Eligibility for swim meets is determined and communicated by the coaches for each group. It is important that swimmers indicate whether or not they will be attending each meet before the registration deadline.

To register, the process is simple. Click the link below. Once you have signed in, you will be brought to a webpage on our team website that will allow you to **commit** or **not commit** your child to the meet. If you have more than one child swimming you will see them listed on this page: teamunify.com/EvSignup.jsp?event_id=970091&team=pvsaac

Here are the steps if you ARE NOT GOING :

- Click on the Member Names [they default to Not Committed]
- Then click on the Signup Record pull-down and select **No**

Meets

- If No, just click on the “Save Changes” button to save the changes
- If you have more than one child, repeat the same task as listed above

Here are the steps if you ARE GOING:

- Click on the Signup Record pull-down and select **Yes**
- Once yes is selected, you will see the events your child *may* be eligible to swim
- You will also see the best times inserted into the Entry Time field and highlighted in yellow
- Check the Checkbox to the left of the name for those events you would like to swim
- Please take careful notice of the time standards that must be met in the right-side columns
- Once you have finished, click on the Save Changes Button in the lower right
- Repeat the process for additional swimmers
- You will notice that Coach Approval column will indicate Pending after you submit.

Please pay careful attention to:

- Maximum Event Entry Limitations IF PRESENT. Click on the >View if present.
- Add any notes that you want the Coach or Administrator to see

Your coach or team administrator will review your declaration and APPROVE or REJECT your request and once they submit the final choices you will be able to review by signing in and clicking on the Attend This Event button for any events listed on our team website. Look at the Coach Approval column for the events that you have been confirmed to swim.

USA Swimming Registration Procedures

USA Swimming requires that every swimmer must be registered with USA Swimming. AAC takes care of the USA Swimming Registration. If a swimmer is transferring from another team, the swimmer must fill out a transfer form found on the PVS website. USA swimming registers every swimmer so that they can stay in contact with the swimmer (if need be). In addition, this registration will allow each swimmers times from meets to be included in the national database kept by USA Swimming.

Rules and Procedures for Swim Meets

All swimmers and their family are responsible for checking the meet sheet for each meet which is posted on the website. This meet sheet can be found on the AAC Website at teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=pvsaac. Once on the site, select the “Meets” tab on the main bar. Then click on the particular meet and then on the appropriate link or form to get a copy of the meet sheet. Meet sheets can also be found on the PVS website under meets and then schedules. Please pay special attention to information concerning events the swimmer has actually entered.

All swimmers are responsible for their own transportation to and from swim meets. Each swimmer should arrive at the facility fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled warm-up. Each swimmer should double check to make sure their name appears in the correct events (on the AAC Website). If there are any discrepancies, report these to the AAC coaching staff, as soon as possible, before the meet.

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All swimmers must report to the AAC team area immediately upon arrival and check in with your coach. This is particularly important when relays are to be swum at the start of the meet. Any swimmer selected for a relay must participate in the relay. Always check with your coach to find out if you have been selected for a relay before you leave any meet.

Any swimmer who would like to leave the team area and talk to their parents or friends must inform a coach. NO PARENTS are allowed on deck or in the team area unless they are timing or officiating.

Before each event is to be swum, the swimmer must report to the coaching staff for last minute instructions and then proceed to the proper lane. REMEMBER, it is the swimmers responsibility to report to the correct lane in time for each event. Upon completion of each event, the swimmer may politely ask their time from the timer. The swimmer should then report to their coach to process the race and discuss stroke mechanics, and race tactics.

No unsportsmanlike conduct of any type will be tolerated. This includes booing, vulgarity, or nastiness of any kind. Disciplinary action will be taken if such behavior occurs.

Before you leave the facility, make sure you have:

- Cleaned up your area
- Collected all of your belongings
- Informed your coach you are leaving

IMPORTANT: If a swimmer is unable to attend a meet because of illness or an emergency situation, please notify your coach.

Technical Racing Suits

Technical racing suits (Tech suits) are technologically advanced racing swim suits that are made of water repelling fabric and designed with no seams and compression benefits. In a nutshell, these suits will help swimmers swim faster than when a regular training suit. There are several factors that make a tech suit faster than a training suit, including materials, fabric, technology and fit.

Tech suits can provide both psychological and physiological benefits. The psychological effects are the result of feeling faster. Tech suits often make swimmers feel fast. They can provide swimmers with a feeling of confidence that they are ready to swim, and swim fast. However, it is important to note, although tech suits may help one swim faster, they are no substitute for missed training or shoddy technique.

From a physiological perspective swim suits provide benefits because they reduce drag (through compression and a lack of seams) and improve oxygen economy (less effort is necessary to get through the water). Studies have shown that tech suits have performance-enhancing characteristics and that wearing tech suits resulted in faster times as compared to swimming with a regular suit.

The working definition of a tech suit is a suit with:

- Bonded or taped seams regardless of its fabric or silhouette
- Woven fabric extending to the knee or mid-thigh regardless of the type of seams

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In 2018 USA Swimming passed a national ban on technical racing suits for 12&Under Swimmers. Beginning in 2020 tech racing suits are banned for all 12&Under swimmers except for top-tier regional and national championship meets, including Junior Nationals, US Open, National Championships and the Olympic Trials. However, the ban will be in effect for Sectionals, Futures, the Pro Swim Series, and YMCA nationals meets.

How to Care for a Tech Suit

- Don't wear it unless you have to
- Save the suit for big meets
- Make sure you are completely dry when you put the suit on
- Consider wearing shorts or sweats over your suit between races to avoid snags and rips
- Be careful when you take the suit off and remove it slowly
- After use, rinse it out with cold water — Avoid soap
- Put it in a towel and roll it up
- Do not wring it out
- Do not hang it up to dry — The weight of the fabric, will cause the suit to stretch
- Never put your suit in a dryer
- Cycle your suits — Use older tech suits for prelims and less important races

What to Bring to Meets

Swim meets start early and last all day so it is smart to have everything ready in advance. It is best to pack your swim bag the night before the meet so that you are not rushed and forget something. You not only need your swim essentials but you need food and some things to keep you busy when you are waiting for an event. The following are a list of the swimming essentials:

- Swim Bag
- Warm-up swim suit(s)
- Racing swim suit(s)
- AAC cap (2)
- Goggles (2)
- Towels (1-2)
- Swim parka or something to stay warm
- Deck shoes or flip flops
- Dry clothes
- Healthy snacks
- Water bottle (1-2 depending on the length of the meet)
- Things to keep you occupied — phones, games, cards, homework, a book

Swim Meet Etiquette

Swim etiquette is something all swimmers should be aware of. Etiquette rules for swimming, apply both in practice and at meets. Following these simple guidelines will help you (and your teammates) get the most out of the upcoming championship season.

- **Arrive on time** — Get to a meet early enough to settle down into a 'spot' with your team and be ready with your cap and goggles on when the warm-up session starts. Meet warm-ups are often short and crowded, so it's important to be on time.
- **Be prepared** — It is best to know what events you are swimming BEFORE warm-up. This way, you can practice the appropriate starts, turns and sprints in the warm-up. Also, make sure that you have everything you need — towels, swimsuit, water bottle, cap and goggles.
- **Stay in your team area and sit with your teammates and cheer** — Swim meets are the best time to get to know your teammates and build team spirit. It is also easier for your coach and teammates (relay members) to find you if they need you.
- **Realize that relays are just as important as your individual events (if not more so)** — Give it your all and help pump up your teammates (no matter which relay you're on). Swim in the relay order your coach gave you, and HAVE FUN! Also, stay and cheer on your team until your last teammate is out of the water.
- **Shake hands and congratulate other swimmers after you swim** — Stay in the water until all swimmers have finished the race. Shake hands with swimmers in the lanes next to you and tell them "good race" to show good sportsmanship.
- **Talk to your coach and cool down after every event** — Make sure that you see your coach after each event to get input on your race. And if you have time, cool down between events until your heart rate is below 100. Cooling down will make a huge difference in your body's ability to recover for future races.
- **Respect the meet officials** — Meet officials are all volunteers who want to see you get the most out of swimming. Be courteous and respectful to all meet officials and coaches.
- **Stay positive** — If you have a bad swim, or you don't want to swim the events you're entered in, get over it and just do your best. In her "Road to Athens Journal", recently published on USA Swimming's web site, Mary DeScenza writes, "Sometimes your coach puts you in an event you do not like. You just have to do your best and not complain."
- **Bring plenty of drinks and snacks** — Know how much water you will need (about 8 ounces per event) and be prepared. Bring light snacks to munch on, such as fruit, goldfish or string cheese. You don't want to be buying Skittles from the concession stand.
- **Clean up ALL of your messes** — It is important to leave your area just as you found it. Throw away your empty bottles and wrappers. If your teammates left a mess, go ahead and pick it up. That's what teammates are for.

Following these basic rules of etiquette will ensure that you and your teammates enjoy each other and every meet.

Travel Meets

Background

Team Travel is a privilege for AAC swimmers. It allows them to participate in team activities, bonding, and reinforces what it means to be part of a team. It gives swimmers a chance to swim on a different platform and against different teams than they do in PVS. It also serves to prime them for more challenging meets in the future-either at a national or collegiate level, and teaches them to manage their sleep, diet and rooming with teammates.

AAC has a travel coordinator. There is a lot of planning that goes into Team Travel to provide a safe, positive environment where swimmers can excel alongside their teammates. Team Travel, by definition, is exactly as it states: swimmers travel with other swimmers, their coaches, and chaperones. Parents are welcome to come and participate, at their own expense, but the swimmers themselves stay together, and swim and interact as a team. The coaches should be setting goals with each swimmer for the year, which may include qualifying for a travel meet. The coach will partner with parents in making meet decisions. As a general rule for age group swimmers, being a JOs qualifier could be an indicator that a travel meet might be in your swimmer's future. The minimum age for Team Travel is 11.

Anticipated Travel Meets for 2018–2019

Please note that not all time cuts are posted all the time. They come out during the course of the swim year and that information is subject to change by Meet Managers (not AAC).

Senior Circuit #2, Manassas, VA, November 16–18

- **Who:** Open to Senior Group, only as a travel trip
- **Qualifying Times:** None; Meet info will be sent via TeamUnify

AT&T Winter Nationals Open, Greensboro, NC, November 28–December 1

- **Who:** Open to meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards
- **PVS:** This is a PVS stipend meet where the swimmer is eligible for a post-meet stipend to reimburse some of the expenses of travel. PVS sets the amount each year. The Head Coach is responsible for stipend submission.
- **Other:** Individual swimmers will Parent Travel, but this may be assessed based on the number of qualifiers.

Speedo Junior Nationals East, Greensboro, NC, December 5–8

- **Who:** Open to meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards
- **PVS:** This is a PVS stipend meet where the swimmer is eligible for a post-meet stipend to reimburse some of the expenses of travel. PVS sets the amount each year. The Head Coach is responsible for submission.

Travel Meets

- **Other:** Individual swimmers will Parent Travel, but this may be assessed based on the number of qualifiers.

NCSA Juniors, Orlando, FL, March 19–23

- **Who:** Open to meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** teamunify.com/EventShow.jsp?id=871415&team=recndncsa

NCSA Age Group, Orlando, FL, March 27–30

- **Who:** Open to 14&U meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** [teamunify.com/EventShow.jsp?returnPage=%2FEventsCurrent.jsp%3Fteam%3Drecndncsa &id=871416&team=recndncsa](https://teamunify.com/EventShow.jsp?returnPage=%2FEventsCurrent.jsp%3Fteam%3Drecndncsa&id=871416&team=recndncsa)

Eastern Zone Speedo Sectionals Region 2, Christiansburg, VA, March 28–31

- **Who:** Open to meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** easternzoneswimming.org/meets.html

Eastern Zone Short Course Age Group Championship, Webster, NY, April 3–6

- **Who:** Open to meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** easternzoneswimming.org/meets.html

Phillips 66 Championships, Palo Alto, CA, Jul 31–August 24

- **Who:** Open to meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards
- **PVS:** This is a PVS stipend meet where the swimmer is eligible for a post-meet stipend to reimburse some of the expenses of travel. PVS sets the amount each year. The Head Coach is responsible for submission.
- **Other:** Individual swimmers will Parent Travel, but this may be assessed based on the number of qualifiers.

NCSA Summer Championships, Indianapolis, IN, August 6–10

- **Who:** Open to meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=recndncsa

Speedo Junior Nationals, Greensboro, NC, August 6–10

- **Who:** Open to meet qualifiers
- **Qualifying Times:** usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards
- **PVS:** This is a PVS stipend meet where the swimmer is eligible for a post-meet stipend to reimburse some of the expenses of travel. PVS sets the amount each year. The Head Coach is responsible for submission.
- **Other:** Individual swimmers will Parent Travel, but this may be assessed based on the number of qualifiers.

Meet Costs

It is impossible to know the exact costs of the different meets early in the season. Variances such as location, tourist season, number of swimmers, third-party vendors and other factors can affect the final cost of a meet. The best rule-of-thumb estimate is to take the number of days, add one day, and multiply by \$120. For example, a three-day meet (with the additional day added) = \$480. Please note, that this figure does not include airfare (if required).

Team Travel cannot be prorated if a swimmer shortens a stay or arrives late. Estimated travel costs are based on slots for the whole travel period. Again, the formula above is an estimate to prepare families for costs that they will incur if their swimmers travel.

If a swimmer Parent Travels, the family will be responsible for booking hotel rooms, all ground transportation, breakfasts and lunches. TRAVEL will put together a team gear and team dinner package for the swimmer. This cost will be announced closer to the meet.

Deposits for Travel

Hotels and vehicles have been booked, and slots will be filled on a first-come-first-served basis, taking into consideration qualifying date and deposit date. TRAVEL will do its best to accommodate all qualifiers, but cannot guarantee spots as the meet dates approach. If swimmers qualify and there are no team slots left, swimmers are welcome to Parent Travel.

If a swimmer qualifies for a higher level meet than indicated on the deposit form, TRAVEL must be notified immediately. TRAVEL will move them to the appropriate list, based on their qualifying date. Starting October 1st, TRAVEL will accept a \$120 non-refundable deposit to guarantee a swimmer's spot for all qualifying Team Travel meets. This deposit will be applied to the final cost of the meet for that swimmer.

If an extenuating circumstance arises, a family may contact TRAVEL for a refund on a case-by-case basis. TRAVEL will be requesting two more payment as meet date draws near. All payments are due in full prior to traveling.

Please send travel checks (made out AAC) to Megan McMorrow (see contact info in front of Handbook).

Chaperone Requirements

Chaperones...

- serve in a supervisory role for the travel swimmers.
- are responsible for the swimmers' welfare from the beginning of travel until the swimmers return home.
- uphold and enforce rules and requirements set forth by the county and AAC.
- are required to be able to help swimmers with any medical issues including seeking medical care, or arranging travel home if the swimmer is too ill to participate in the meet and will not be able to continue to Team Travel.
- are responsible for ordering and picking up planned team meals, transporting swimmers between pool and hotel, taking swimmers to lunch after sessions, grocery trips and odds-and-ends errands.

Travel Meets

- must be able to drive swimmers, most often in a 14-passenger van.
- are chosen per coach guidance, number of swimmers traveling, and based on the needs of traveling swimmers.
- must pass a County background check (good for 3 years) prior to chaperoning.

If you are interested in being a chaperone for any of our travel meets, please email the AAC Booster Board's Travel Coordinator. TRAVEL will consider volunteers on a first-come first-served basis.

Transportation

Generally speaking, the team travels by van to Senior Circuit, Sectionals and Zones. AAC flies to NCSA meets. A team flight, with team chaperone, will be designated, and families will be responsible for booking that flight if their child is Team Traveling. The same goes for the return flight. Travel days will generally be the day prior to the start of the meet, and the day after the meet concludes (in some instances, this can vary). Due to the very limited number of qualifiers for Winter Nationals and Winter Junior Nationals, the swimmers Parent Travel. Families will need to book their own transportation, whether it be by air or ground, and rides between the hotel and pool (in addition to hotel and meal costs). If your child is Parent Traveling, you are responsible for all transportation (to and from meet location, and to and from hotel and pool) each day (in addition to meals).

Swim Gear for Travel

AAC has a swim gear contract with Arena for Sectional level and above qualifiers who attend travel meets. For NCSA Age Group and Zone Teams participants, AAC will build a gear package into the cost of the meet.

NOTE: The swimmer has to participate in the meet to qualify for the gear package; qualifying alone does not count.

Release Forms Required for Travel

- Travel Meet Code of Conduct Form
- Travel Meet Parental Authorization Form
- Travel Meet Luggage Search Authorization Form
- Travel Meet Medical Release Form
- Travel Meet Emergency Contact Information Form

Goal Setting and Motivation

Time Standards

USA Swimming establishes motivational time standards for each age group every four years. The current standards will be in place until August 31, 2020 and are available on USA Swimming's website here: usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards

Time standards and age determine the type of meet in which a swimmer may participate. Age group standards progress from (slowest to fastest) B, BB, A, AA, AAA, and AAAA. In addition, there are specific time standards for various championship meets that will be provided as appropriate for your swimmer.

Unless a swimmer has previously competed in a USA Swimming meet, they are considered a B/C swimmer and will be entered with NT (No Time) in the event. If the swimmer has competed in a USA Swimming meet with another team, please turn in their best times to one of the AAC coaches so the times can be entered in our database.

Top 10 Hardest Things to Do in Swimming

1. **That First Big Event** — Whether it's the 400 IM, the 200 fly or the mile, there's always that event that has swimmers shaking in their boots, when they do it for the first time. Once they pull it off, though, they realize it was easier than they thought.
2. **Diving in for a Morning Workout** — The first brisk plunge is all you need to wake yourself up at 5 a.m.
3. **Keeping Your Goggles on While Diving In** — At any given meet, you'll see countless Age Group swimmers swimming the 50 Free with goggles around their necks. Heck, even experienced swimmers have this problem occasionally.
4. **The Flip Turn** — Think about the first time you tried a flip turn. You were probably either too close to the wall, or too far, and it took weeks of practice to do it right every time. Even today, you probably still miss walls and get water up your nose from time to time.
5. **The Breaststroke** — This stroke has about a million little rules to remember and requires a great deal of timing and coordination.
6. **Pacing** — Whether it's the 200 or 1,600 free, pacing is the key to the race. Unfortunately, it sometimes takes people their entire careers to finally get it exactly where they want it.
7. **Making the U.S. Olympic Team** — Of the more than 400,000 athletes registered with USA Swimming each year, only a maximum of 52 (26 women and 26 men) are chosen every four years.
8. **Winning an Olympic Gold Medal** — Of the millions of swimmers in the world, you have to be the best swimmer in the world in your event on that given day.
9. **Breaking a World Record** — Not only must you be the best swimmer in the world in your event on a given day, but also, you must be the best swimmer who ever swam your event on any day.
10. **Make a National Cut in Every Event** — Only a handful of American swimmers in the history of the sport have been able to do this.

AAC Top 10 Personal Goals for Swimming

1. Have fun!
2. Make friends
3. Learn to balance life including family, school and swimming
4. Eat healthy foods and stay hydrated
5. Achieve goal times
6. Earn a Gator patch
7. Improve time standards in all events
8. Represent AAC and yourself by displaying good sportsmanship
9. Have exceptional practice skills
10. Learn all four competitive strokes, focusing on perfect technique

AAC Meet Progression

- Compete in local PVS Meets
- Mini Championships
- PVS 14 and Under Age Group Championships/Junior Olympics
- Eastern Zone Championships
- PVS Junior Championships
- PVS Senior Championships
- Futures Championships
- Sectionals
- NCSA Championships
- Junior Nationals
- Senior Nationals/Olympic Trials
- Olympics

Time Standards and Qualifying Times

Time Standards

USA Swimming Time Standards for swimmers age 10–18 (Boys and girls) can be found by clicking the left side tab on the webpage found at the following link on the USA Swimming Webpage:

usaswimming.org/Home/times/time-standards

Qualifying Times

Qualifying times for PVS Championship Meets (Junior Olympics, Age Group Champs, Junior Champs, Senior Champs), Sectional Meets, Eastern Zone Meets, USA Swimming Championship Meets (Futures, Junior Nationals, Senior Nationals) and the Olympic Trials can be found at the following link on the PVS Webpage:

pvswim.org/qualifyingtimes.html

Qualifying times for NCSA (National Club Swimming Association) [Age Group Champs, Junior Champs, Summer Champs] can be found by clicking on the meet under the “Upcoming Events”, and then clicking on “Meet Information Packet” for a particular meet on following NCSA webpage:

teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=recndncsa

AAC Swimmer Recognition

Golden Gator Team Patch

The AAC Gator Team is designed to develop well-rounded swimmers. The team’s Gator Patch is designed to give every swimmer an opportunity to develop their all-around swimming. The Gator Patch provides every swimmer, whether a B or AAAA swimmer, the opportunity to accomplish an important milestone in their swimming by completing a series of events based on their age.

To earn a Gator Patch, each swimmer must swim every event (legally) in their age group at least once during the swimming season. In addition, all events must be swum in the swimmer’s age group. A swimmer may not carry over events into a new age group. A swimmer must begin all their events again.

The event requirements to earn the Gator Patch are as follows:

Age 8 & Under	Ages 9-10	Ages 11-12	Ages 13 & Over
25 Free	50 Free	50 Free	50 Free
50 Free	100 Free	100 Free	100 Free
100 Free	200 Free	200 Free	200 Free
25 Back	50 Back	500 Free	500 Free
50 Back	100 Back	50 Back	800 Free
25 Breast	50 Breast	100 Back	1650 Free
50 Breast	100 Breast	50 Breast	100 Back
25 Fly	50 Fly	100 Breast	200 Back
50 Fly	100 Fly	50 Fly	100 Breast
100 IM	100 IM	100 Fly	200 Breast
	200 IM	100 IM	100 Fly
		200 IM	200 Fly
			200 IM
			400 IM
10 Events	11 Events	12 Events	14 Events

Records

A listing of AAC records can be found on AAC's Team Unify Web Page at the following link:

teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=pvsaac or aacswims.org

Please Note, to see the records on the website, you must first log-in to the site. Find the records by clicking the "Records" tab on the main navigation bar.

Annual AAC Awards

The listing of most recent annual award winners can be found on AAC's Web page:

teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=pvsaac or aacswims.org

Please Note, to see the annual award winners on the website, you must first log-in to the site. Find the awards by clicking the "Annual Awards" tab on the main navigation bar.

Additional Information

College Recruitment and Board Policy content coming soon.

Appendix: Useful Links

Governance & Meets

AAC (Arlington Aquatic Club) — teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=pvsaac or aacswims.org

PVS (Potomac Valley Swimming) — pvswim.org

USA Swimming — usaswimming.org

NCSA (National Club Swimming Association) — teamunify.com/Home.jsp?team=recndnca

Team USA (U.S. Olympic Committee) — teamusa.org

FINA (Fédération Internationale De Natation) — fina.org

Swimming News

SwimSwam — swimswam.com

Swimming World — swimmingworld.azureedge.net

Reach for the Wall — reachforthewall.org

Swimming Equipment

Sport Fair, The Swimmers Outfitter — sportfairusa.com

Arena - Water Instinct (Official Sponsor and Outfitter of AAC) — arenawaterinstinct.com

Swimming Time Converters

SwimSwam (Classic Converter) — swimswam.com/swimming-times-conversion-tool/

SwimSwam (Real-Time Converter) — swimswam.com/swimming-times-conversion-tool/?type=swimulator

Swimming World — swimmingworldmagazine.com/time-conversion