

# 2015-2016 Stingrays Swim Team Parent Handbook



Lakota YMCA Stingrays Swim Team  
6703 Yankee Road, Liberty Township, Ohio 45044  
513-779-3917

[www.lakotastingrays.com](http://www.lakotastingrays.com)

updated January 7, 2016



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®**  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

## Table of Contents

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Page#</u>
<b>Welcome</b>	4
<b>2015-2016 Coaching Staff</b>	4
<b>Placement for All Swimmers</b>	4
<b>Registration</b>	4
<b>Group Descriptions, Requirements, and Suggestions</b>	5-6
<b>Practice Times</b>	7
<b>Stingrays Practice Procedure and Policies</b>	7-8
Use of Facility	
Attendance/Promptness	
During Practice	
Snow Days	
<b>Signing Up for Swim Meets</b>	9-12
Swim Meet Information	
Event Selection	
2015-2016 Winter Meet Schedule (tentative)	
Pre-Meet Preparation and During the Meet	
Meet Line Ups	
Team Area	
Reporting to Coaches	
Hotel and Travel Arrangements	
<b>Finances</b>	13-14
Swim Team Fees	
Meet Fees	
Fundraising	
Sibling Discount	
<b>Other Swimming Related Topics</b>	15-17
Away from the Pool - Team Functions	
Important Dates	
Team Suits/Spirit Wear	
Parents and Family Participation	

Dear Parents and Swimmers,

We welcome all new families to the Lakota Stingrays Swim Team and look forward to an enjoyable season with you! We also welcome back all of the returning swimmers and parents and appreciate your dedication to the Lakota Stingrays.

***What to do...***

In the beginning of the season, there's a lot of information and we've tried to answer all of your questions in this handbook. But, we know you'll still have questions so we're planning to hold a parent meeting shortly after the season starts. As a new Stingray family, you're strongly encouraged to attend. During the parent meeting, you'll learn more about us but we'll also explain what the Stingrays parents *and* swimmers are expected to do throughout the season for success. It's important that if you have any questions you bring them to our attention as soon as possible.

*Meeting Date and Time*

***Thursday, October 8***

(tentative 6:00 PM)

Stay tuned to email for additional information.

***Ongoing Communication...***

The way we communicate team information to all Stingrays is mainly through mailboxes and email. Our system of communication will be mainly through mailboxes and e-mail. The mailboxes are located on the pool deck immediately outside of the Aquatics office. We send emails on a regular basis to keep you informed of what's going on. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the Head Coach, Assistant Coaches, or the Aquatics Director. However, it's important that you address any issues with a coach before or after practice. During practice, our coaches give all of their attention to the swimmers so it's a detriment if coaches are pulled away from practice time to talk to parents. The coach-swimmer relationship is incredibly valuable and don't want to jeopardize their practice time together.

Have a great winter season as a Lakota YMCA Stingray and wish you much swimming success!

Sincerely,

Lakota Family YMCA Stingrays Coaches and Aquatics Director

**2015-2016 Coaching Staff**

Head Coach	Shaun Harlan, shaun.harlan@lakotaymca.com
Age Group Lead Coach	Miriam Hollan, miriam_hollan@yahoo.com
Age Group Lead Coach	Josh Murray, murrja28@yahoo.com
Aquatics Director	Sara Matchison, sara.matchison@lakotaymca.com

The Winter swim team is a member of the Southwest Cluster YMCA Swim League. League documents, information about member teams, details about Championships, and other information can be found on the league website at [www.swyswim.org](http://www.swyswim.org).

**Placement***New Swimmers...*

The Stingrays are holding two placement practices for new, interested swimmers. Choose one of the following dates below that works best with your schedule. Once you select your date, you'll need to register by calling the Lakota Family YMCA (513-779-3917) or logging on to the YMCA portal ([lakotaymca.com](http://lakotaymca.com)) and click on the Online Portal tab located on the right side of the home page and submitting your registration.

<b>Sunday, August 2</b>	<b>OR</b>	<b>Sunday, August 23</b>
3:00 – 4:00 PM		new 10 & under swimmers
4:00 – 5:00 PM		new 11 & over swimmers

Swimmers who have never participated with the Lakota Stingrays or who have been away from the team for more than one year must attend one of the placement practices to be evaluated by the coaches.

*All Swimmers...*

The coaches determine which training group is best for you. Swimmers are placed in groups based on ability and not always age. It's possible that swimmers may move up and down in groups based on performance. If this happens, you'll be billed accordingly.

**Registration**

Open registration period **August 2 - October 1, 2015**

After October 1, approval of the head coach and Aquatic Director are needed to register.

\* Swimmers must be 6 years to 18 years of age to be eligible to swim on the team.

When you register for the season, you're required to pay swim team fees, complete all required forms (registration, medical, code of conduct), and select a t-shirt size for each swimmer.

You're team fees include a Stingrays Swim Team cap and a team t-shirt for each swimmer. Swim caps are handed out before the first meet and t-shirts are distributed as soon as we receive them. Keep checking your mailbox regularly! All of the forms you need to complete for registration plus the complete list of team fees are located in your registration packet in the YMCA online portal.

## **Group Descriptions, Requirements, and Suggestions**

As previously mentioned, the coaches determine which training group is best for you. Swimmers are placed in groups based on ability and not always age. It's possible that swimmers may move up and down in groups based on performance. Below are the requirements for each group.

### **Blue Group** (average age: 13-18)

This program is for those athletes 13 and older who want to train with their group, but have the option to swim high school as well. They have the ability and interest to train with a high level of commitment and intensity at all AA, Zone, and National levels. Year-round training is based on both short-term and long-term goals. The emphasis of training in this group is to promote high levels of endurance and strength; combined with speed conditioning on dry land. They have drylands 3 to 4 times a week for 30 minutes combined with weight training for strength and power in the water.

#### Practice Requirements

- Dedication.
- Quality work habits.
- Ability to manage and train all requirements alongside other personal responsibilities.
- *Attend practice a minimum of 5 times a week out of the 6 offered.*
- Equipment: Swimmers provide his/her own goggles, practice swim cap, and competitive swimsuit. It's strongly recommended that each swimmer also has his/her own equipment bag consisting of a water bottle, fins, hand paddles (see coach for suggestions), and snorkel (see coach for suggestions). Pull buoy is optional.
- Drylands: All swimmers wear work out shorts, t-shirts, and running shoes.

### **White Group** (average age: 12-15)

This program is for advanced swimmers with ability of AA and Zone Championship levels. There is a strong emphasis on refining technique, higher level of drill work, stroke work, starts, and turns. There will be an increase in aerobic training, speed/interval training, and advanced training sets. On the deck exercises will consist of stretching and advanced dryland sessions that increase both speed and power in the water.

#### Practice Requirements

- Dedication
- Ability to swim all four strokes proficiently.
- *Attend practice a minimum of 5 times a week out of the 6 offered.*
- Equipment: Swimmers provide his/her own goggles, practice swim cap, and competitive swimsuit. It's suggested each swimmer also has his/her own equipment bag consisting of a water bottle, fins, pull buoy, hand paddles (see coach for suggestions), and snorkel (see coach for suggestions).
- Drylands: All swimmers wear work out shorts, t-shirts, and running shoes.

### **Black Group** (average age: 9-13)

This program is for the advanced younger swimmers at the cusp of AA times standards with the ability to achieve Zone Championship levels, as well as an intermediate to advanced ability for the older ages. Similar to the White Group, There's a strong emphasis on refining technique, higher level of drill and stroke work and starts and turns with an increase in aerobic training, speed/interval training, and advanced training sets. On the deck exercises consist of stretching and an introduction to dryland training.

(Black Group continued)

Practice Requirements

- Dedication
- Ability to swim all four strokes proficiently.
- *Attend practice a minimum of 4 times a week out of the 6 offered.*
- Equipment: Swimmers provide his/her own goggles, practice swim cap, and competitive swimsuit. It's suggested each swimmer also has his/her own equipment bag consisting of a water bottle, fins, and hand paddles (see coach for suggestions). Pull buoy and snorkel are optional.
- Drylands: All swimmers wear work out shorts, t-shirts, and running shoes.

**Gray Group** (average age: 8-10)

This program is for those who know all four strokes and are striving for their AA time cuts. This group focuses heavily on proper stroke technique in Freestyle, Breaststroke, Butterfly, and Backstroke, as well as establishing good practicing habits. Advanced workouts, drills, and interval training are introduced at this level.

Practice Requirements

- Ability to legally swim 25 yards Freestyle, Backstroke, Butterfly, and Breaststroke.
- *Attend practice a minimum of 2 times a week out of the 3 offered.*
- Swimmers provide their own goggles, practice swim caps, water bottles, and competitive swimsuit. Optional equipment consists of fins, pull buoy, and hand paddles.

**Silver Group** (average age: 6-9)

This is an introductory program for swimmers who know all four strokes but require more emphasis on developing the fundamentals of technique through drills and fun activities. The coaches actively participate with the younger swimmers to encourage proper technique and have fun at the same time. Swimmers in this group also learn the basics of competitive swimming including starts, turns, and rules.

Practice Requirements:

- Ability to swim 25 yards Freestyle and Backstroke legally.
- Knowledge of Butterfly and Breaststroke.
- *Attend practice a minimum of 1 time per week out of the 3 offered.*

*Silver Group Bonus for 2015-2016*

Similar to the YMCA's Little Rays program, we're offering more than one session during the season. You choose which sessions you participate in, Session 1, Session 2, or both! To get the most for your swimmer, we encourage you to participate in both sessions since it benefits the athlete.

- Silver Group members may pre-register for both sessions. If you pre-register for Session 2 prior to 11/1/2015, you'll pay a discounted rate of \$600.
- Silver Group swimmers will be invited by coaches to participate in 2 swim meets per session as a "introduction" but please note that Championships is a separate event. Yes, you're invited to participate in A Championships but, like all other swimmers, Stingrays must compete in a minimum of 3 Southwest Ohio YMCA League swim meets to be eligible.

***PRACTICE PERFORMANCE DICTATES MEET PERFORMANCE!***

## Practice Times

The following schedule is through November 5. Times are subject to change, especially beginning November 6 – check email as the date approaches.

<b>Group</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Saturday</b>
<b>Blue</b> begins Aug. 31	3:00-4:30p in water & 4:30-5:30p dryland	3:00-5:00p in water	3:00-4:30p in water & 4:30-5:30p dryland	3:00-5:00p in water	3:00-5:00p in water	3:00-5:00p in water
<b>White</b> begins Sept. 14	4:30-6:00p in water & 6:00-6:45p dryland	4:30-6:00p in water	4:30-6:00p in water & 6:00-6:45p dryland	4:30-6:00p in water	4:30-6:00p in water	4:30-6:00p in water
<b>Black</b> begins Sept. 14	6:30-7:00p dryland & 7:00-8:00p in water	7:00-8:30p in water	6:30-7:00p dryland & 7:00-8:00p in water	7:00-8:30p in water	7:00-8:30p in water	4:30-6:00p in water
<b>Gray</b> begins Sept. 14		6:00-7:15p in water		6:00-7:15p in water	6:00-7:15p in water	
<b>Silver*</b> begins Oct. 5	From 10/1- 11/5, 6:00-7:00p in water  Starting 11/6, 6:15-7:15p		From 10/1- 11/5, 6:00-7:00p in water  Starting 11/6, 6:15-7:15p		From 10/1- 11/5, 6:00-7:00p in water  Starting 11/6, 6:15-7:15p	

\* There are two sessions for the Silver Group. Swimmers can choose to participate in Session 1 or Session 2 but we encourage you to participate in both as it benefits your athlete.

Session 1: October 1 – December 18, 2015 (no practice the week of Thanksgiving)

Session 2: January 4 – March 4, 2016 (includes A Championships; practice times for Session 2 subject to change)

## Stingrays Practice Procedure and Policies

### Use of Facility

- The YMCA property is completely SMOKE & ALCOHOL FREE!
- All swimmers and families must check in at the front desk upon arrival and show their member ID card. (All children under 10 must be accompanied by someone over the age of 16.)
- Swimmers use the appropriate locker rooms and either put their bags in a locker and lock it or take to the bleachers on the pool deck. The Lakota Family YMCA is not responsible for lost or stolen items.
- Spectators during practice are asked to remain seated on the bleachers. Refrain from speaking with the coaches or swimmers during practice times because it disrupts and distracts your swimmer, the coaches, and other team members. Any non-swimming children MUST be chaperoned at all times.

## **Attendance**

Regular practice is the basic building block for optimal systematic development in a condition sport. Our practices are planned in a sequence where we build on the previous practices instruction and work. The practices are sequenced into the training rhythm in which continual advanced adaptations are made by the swimmers cardiovascular, respiratory, and neuromuscular systems to increase training stress. To miss practice is failing to build the strength and endurance needed to perform well in the sport.

Simply, the more you attend practice, the more progress you'll see throughout the season and especially at Championships. If your child(ren) cannot make it to practice, we ask that you e-mail the group coach to let them know. Also, if your child(ren) has to leave early, please make sure you send a note with them or e-mail the coach prior to practice. Due to safety reasons, if a note or e-mail is not provided, the coaches will not let them out of the water.

## **Promptness**

All swimmers are expected to arrive at the pool 15 minutes before his/her practice - be on the deck suited and ready to go. Again, if your child(ren) needs to leave practice early, please let the coaches know ahead of time. Your child(ren) are expected to have their swimsuit, goggles, and other equipment, if required, ready and in good working condition. Pool time is at a premium and we expect all swimmers to be on time to maximize their workout. Should dryland exercises be scheduled prior to or after their "in the water" time, swimmers should wear the appropriate dryland workout clothing.

## **During Practice**

Swimmers are expected to give their complete attention to the coaches and refrain from excessive talking so teammates, too, are able to hear them. As in school, proper behavior is expected and unruly conduct is not tolerated.

Parents, keep in mind that practice is for the swimmers and is not a time for parents to resolve issues with the coaches. As mentioned above, please refrain from trying to get your child's attention during practice, as this is disruptive to both the coaches and other swimmers.

## **Snow Days**

By 2:00p, a decision will be made and posted on the Stingrays website ([lakotastingingrays.com](http://lakotastingingrays.com)), social media page(s), and on the Lakota Family YMCA ([lakotaymca.com](http://lakotaymca.com)) website. We'll also send an email to the address on record in our database.

## **Swim Meet Information**

During the winter season, our swim meets are away with most being an invitational-style within the Southwest Ohio YMCA Swim League. Invitational Meets are a combination of numerous teams at one event. If you're new to swimming and you're attending your first swim meet this season, we're happy to pair you with a seasoned family so they help you navigate through the "controlled chaos" of a meet. If you're interested, let the Head Coach or Aquatics Director know and they'll match you up! Don't forget about the new family meeting scheduled for **October 6** – specific details will be posted online and send to you via email.

## **Signing Up for Swim Meets**

Approximately 7 days prior to your swim meet sign up deadline, the head coach sends an email via Team Unify reminding you to commit/sign-up for all meets through our Lakota Stingrays website. The exception to the 7-day rule is for Championships in March-April because entries by the coaches may be due much earlier. Can you sign up and "commit" to swim meets in advance of the email notification? Absolutely! Just remember to put the dates on your calendar so you don't forget to attend!

Most swim meets run multiple days (Friday is typically for 11 & overs only; Saturday and Sunday are all ages). If swimmers can only attend one day, you're asked to note it in the comments section prior to clicking the "commit" button. No notes are needed if swimmers are planning to attend all eligible sessions. Swimmers aren't required to participate both days but it would be nice to do so because he/she gets exposure to a variety of events that aren't always available.

You'll receive reminder emails to commit so you don't miss any dates. But keep in mind, if you don't commit to attend prior to the commitment deadline for all swim meets, swimmers won't not be entered. It's up to you to pay close attention to this date!

Let's say you forgot to commit/sign up by the deadline and you show up at the swim meet, your swimmer(s) is now considered to be a "deck entry" and will only be entered if there's an empty lane in the his/her events. If allowed to swim, you're then responsible for paying the onsite "deck entry" fee. The host team determines the fee and it's typically higher per event than pre-registering. "Deck entries" are accepted if space is available at most invitationals but are not allowed for any championship competitions.

What if the opposite happens? What if you register (or accidentally register) for a swim meet and forgot to remove your swimmer(s) prior to the entries being turned in? You're account is charged the individual entry fees for that meet. The same policy applies to swimmers who don't attend due to illness.

## **Event Selection**

Coaches decide and select each swimmer's individual and relay events. Not everyone may have a relay because it's based on the number of swimmers in attendance per age group. Once entries are sent to the meet organizer, you can no longer scratch/remove your swimmer(s) from the meet without being charged the standard meet entry fee.

Swim meets have both individual event entry fees and relay entry fees. All billing occurs through the Lakota YMCA Online Portal ([lakotaymca.com](http://lakotaymca.com)) where expenses are typically incurred after the conclusion of swim meets. Relay fees are equally divided among the participating swimmers.

## **2015-2016 Winter Meet Schedule (tentative)**

At this time, we don't have the entire meet schedule available. It's posted on the team website at [lakotastingrays.com](http://lakotastingrays.com) under the EVENTS section as the meet schedule is finalized! Some of the meets listed below may be removed while others may be added based on the final league schedule when it's available in September.

(Swim Meet Schedule continued – tentative)

We average 1-2 meets each month. In order to be eligible for Championships, each swimmer is required to attend 3 league meets during the winter season (September-February).

<b>DATE</b>	<b>WHERE</b>	<b>MEET NAME</b>
October 16-18	West Carrollton YMCA/KEY	KEY Fall Invitational
October 23-25	Coffman Family YMCA	CFY Halloween Invitational
October or November	RC Durr YMCA or Lakota YMCA	RC Durr vs. LAKY Dual Meet
November 7 or 8	West Carrollton YMCA/KEY	LAKY vs. KEY Dual Meet
November or December	TBD	TBD
December 4-6	Countryside YMCA	CY Winter Polar Bear Invitational
January	Miami University, Oxford	PCY Invitational
January 22-24	Middletown YMCA	GMVY Lisa French Memorial Invitational
February	Blue ASH YMCA	BASH Teddy Bear (12 & under only)
February 14	West Carrollton YMCA/KEY	KEY Valentine Invitational
February 21	Coffman YMCA	Coffman Artic Blast
February 28	Middletown YMCA	GMVY Last Chance Meet
March 4-6	Countryside YMCA	A Championships
March 11-13	Miami University, Oxford	AA Championships*
March 18-20	Canton McKinley High School, Canton, OH	Great Lakes Zone Championships*
April 4-8	Greensboro, NC	YMCA Nationals*

\*Note: Time standards must be reached in order to qualify and swim individual and relay events for AA, Zone and National Championships. Swimmers who have 5 or less AA time standards are eligible to compete in A Championships in events not qualified for AAs. National swimmers must be 12 years of age by April 1, 2016 in order to be eligible.

For Championships (A, AA, Zone, Nationals), our goal is to have the entire team participate where each swimmers is eligible to do so. The Stingrays are on a mission to place high in the standings in every event. In order to be a contender, you need to attend as many practices and meets as possible because it gives your coaches an idea of how to taper each athlete(s) appropriately for Championships.

## Pre-Meet Preparation and During the Meet

Swimmers should prepare for positive meet performance by:

- Getting a full 8-9 hours of sleep.
- Eating a nutritious breakfast an hour or so before warm ups and bringing healthy snacks to keep energy levels up.
- Arrive at the meet location approximately 20 minutes prior to the team's assigned warm up time.
- Report to the pool deck 5-10 minutes prior to the scheduled warm up time. *Swimmers who arrive late to the pool, meaning after warm ups begin, may be removed from the relay(s) scheduled for the day.*
- Junk food and carbonated beverages are not appropriate prior to competition because they hinder performance.
- Rest in the team area between races.
- Don't forget, great practice habits show up in competition!

Be sure to pack not only your team competition swimsuit, but also multiple pairs of goggles, team swim cap, 2+ towels, nutritious snacks and water to stay hydrated, cash for the heat sheet and concession stand food and beverages. Since it's a long day, bring items to keep everyone occupied such as books, iPads, games, pillow, etc.

## Meet Line Ups

Events for each swimmers are available via your account on the Team Unify team website after meet entries are due. The final decision of what a child swims in a meet is up to the coaches, is based on overall team effort, and in the best development of the swimmer. If you have any questions or suggestions, please speak with the coaches but the final decision is up to them.

Parents will want to purchase a meet heat sheet so you know what heat and lane your swimmer(s) are in. We ask you to write the event, heat, and lane on your swimmer(s) hand or arm in the following format. Use a Sharpie marker because it stays on longer in water.

Event #	Heat	Lane	Stroke
100	1	1	50 Free
110	3	5	50 Fly

10 & under swimmers may have to report to the clerk of course prior to going behind the starting blocks per individual event. Coaches check with the host team and, if this is a requirement, will make an announcement during the team meeting on the pool deck immediately after warm ups.

Relays - If you're a relay swimmer, regardless of age, report behind the blocks on the first call of the event so you're early. Don't wait until the last call to show up for a relay because you may be replaced if you show up late! If relays are scheduled at the end of a swim meet, coaches expect you to stay and swim. If a swimmer leaves, the entire relay team may be scratched and 3 other swimmers miss another opportunity to swim. In addition, the swimmer who leaves will incur the entire cost of the relay entry fee. Don't leave until you speak with your coach!

## **Team Area**

Swimmers are required to sit with the team at all times during the meet so bring chairs and blankets. Swimmers must keep the area clean and abide by all facility rules. Everyone enjoys seeing team spirit so bring your "voice" to the pool deck and cheer for your fellow teammates regardless of age.

## **Reporting to Coaches**

After each race, all swimmers are to report to their practice coach immediately. This allows the swimmers to receive feedback of their race and apply adjustments, if necessary, to their next event.

## **Hotel and Travel Arrangements**

When necessary for out-of-town meets, it's each family's responsibility to reserve a room at the team's designated hotel. Hotel rooms are blocked by the team at a discounted rate, which will be announced via email. Additional travel expenses are the responsibility of the families of swimmers, which includes attending Nationals. Specific locations are communicated as soon as it's available on the team website and via email. At overnight meets, it's YMCA policy that coaches do not chaperone swimmers.

## Finances

As cash seems to grow legs sometimes, we ask that you access all fees through the online portal at lakotaymca.com and pay via credit card. If needed, you may pay by check or money order at the front desk but please arrange it with the Aquatics Director so it is tracked appropriately in your account. We'll let you know via email when meet fees are posted.

### Swim Team Fees

In order to swim on the 2015-2016 swim team, all financial obligations to the YMCA for any programs must be paid in full. *Just because your registered online doesn't mean the process is complete. Online registration holds your spot on the team.* Each swimmer is required to pay an annual Swim Team fee which includes the winter training season for all groups and summer long course for Blue, White, Black, and Gray Groups. If Silver Group swimmers are interested in participating in long course, please speak with the Head Coach.

Fees also include:

- Team t-shirt & 1 cap per swimmer
- Coaches fees
- Overhead cost for the pool

Fees do not include the costs associated with any meet, Zone, or National Championships. Swimmers attending meets and championships are responsible for team costs.

*Your first payment is due immediately following registration and 24 hours prior to your first scheduled practice. When you register online, you're holding a place on the team. Swimmers cannot participate in practice until the first payment is received and all required registration forms are submitted.* If paying in Monthly Installments you **MUST** provide a credit card for Automatic Withdrawal. Please see the Automatic Withdrawal Registration information in the online portal or ask the front desk staff, Aquatics Director, or Head Coach.

Group	Monthly Amount (9 Payments)	Total
Blue	\$100	\$900
White	\$90	\$810
Black	\$79	\$711
Gray	\$75	\$675
Silver – Session 1*	\$105 (3 months)	\$315*
Silver – Session 2*	\$105 (3 months)	\$315*

\* There are two sessions for the Silver Group. Swimmers can choose to participate in Session 1 or Session 2 but we encourage you to participate in both as it benefits your athlete. *Should you pre-register for the second session of the Silver Group prior to November 1, you're total amount for the season is discounted to \$600.*

Session 1: October 5 – December 18, 2015 (no practice the week of Thanksgiving)

Session 2: January 4 – March 4, 2016 (includes A Championships; practice times for Session 2 subject to change)

The swim team fee is payable as a lump sum or in 9 monthly payments (Silver Group is 3 monthly installments). The first payment is due the day of registration and on the 15th of every month. Swimmers will not be allowed to practice or participate in meets if fees are not paid.

Swim team fees are made payable to the Lakota YMCA. No refunds are available for this program.

**Meet Fees**

Swimmers meet fees for both individual and relay events are posted to your families' account the first Wednesday following the conclusion of the meet. So, you can see it in your Lakota YMCA online portal account (lakotaymca.com). Meet fees must be paid by credit card, check or money order (checks and money orders in a sealed envelope are deposited in the lock box located outside of the Aquatics office). When Championship season comes near, if you have an outstanding meet fee balance, your child(ren) won't be able to participate in any Championship meets if left unpaid.

**Fundraising**

To help offset the cost of the Winter Swim Team program, each family has a mandatory *\$100 fundraising fee*. We'll provide ample opportunities to raise the funds and just a few of the profitable programs are listed below. More are being planned and announcements will be made on the team website and through email.

*Traditional Fundraising*

Our annual City BBQ dinner is back and we're planning other lunch/dinner functions. However, the Kroger Community Funds Program (a.k.a. the Kroger Card) is being used this year as an additional fundraising opportunity. For these traditional fundraising functions, the percentage of sales and/or rebates that our team receives is deposited into the team account and helps to keep your team fees lower.

*Rebate Fundraising*

Poinsettias are being planned again for the holiday season and have been very successful and popular in previous years. Plus, we're bringing back the swim-a-thon where swimmers have bragging rights for the number of laps he/she swims. The specific date and time will be announced shortly after the season starts. The best part - 100% of the rebate fundraising programs' sales and funds are deposited directly into the swimmer's account.

Any surplus of fundraising dollars goes into team account to alleviate future fees and financial commitments.

**Sibling Discount**

Sibling discounts are available for families with multiple children. \$20.00 OFF second child participant and \$40.00 OFF for three or more children participating this season.

## **Other Swimming Related Topics**

### **Away from the Pool - Team Functions**

Fun team functions are being scheduled periodically throughout the season. Pay close attention to the updates and the related information when they are announced.

### **Important Dates**

Follow the calendar on the team website ([lakotastingrays.com](http://lakotastingrays.com)) for all important dates, such as meet dates, team functions, banquet, etc. Information relating to your Lakota YMCA account is available through the online portal at [lakotaymca.com](http://lakotaymca.com).

### **Team Suits/Spirit Wear**

Official Stingrays team swimsuits (to be worn at meets only) and other gear for both swimmers and supporters is currently being finalized. As soon as the items and styles are ready to share, an email will be sent to all registered families.

### **Parents important to the swim team because...**

Parents play essential roles in the organization and support of the swim team family. And that's what we are – we are a family. The positive, committed attitude of parents is crucial in determining the quality of the team. It's important for swimmers to know that their parents are in the crowd and cheering for them. It's equally important for parents to help instill a sense of purpose, respect, discipline, and teamwork in their child(ren).

Getting swimmers to practice and meets on time is only part of the job of parents. Swim meet operations are 100% dependent on family support. Without parents and family members filling positions at every swim meet, it would be impossible to run the meets. To ensure positions are filled, Stingrays parents are requested to work at the meets or team functions when needed. Championships may have additional needs, which is announced later in the season. Besides teaching your child the importance of commitment, in doing your fair share, you'll have fun, meet other parents, and help your team immeasurably.

#### *Just for Parents...*

- Volunteer for assisting our organization. You learn more about the sport, network, and build the team within the swimming community.
- Leave the coaching up to the coaches! Don't pressure or volunteer swimming advice to your swimmer(s). Parental coaching may cause confusion and sometimes harm the swimmer. He/She only needs one source of coaching input.
- Be a supporter and stabilizer through the ups and downs of his/her victories and losses. Encourage disgruntled swimmer(s) to take their swimming related problems to the coach. If he/she can't find a good solution, then all three parties should meet.
- If you have any coaching concerns don't let them grow out of control. Arrange a meeting or phone discussion and work the problem out but do so outside of practice times.
- Help your swimmer(s) develop and maintain healthy lifestyles and habits. This includes food, sleep, and even attitude.
- Be patient with your swimmer's progress. He/She could plateau in time progressions during the season – especially when he/she works hard. Remember, the program goal is for races to come together at Championships and beyond!
- Keep yourself informed! Regularly check the website ([lakotastingrays.com](http://lakotastingrays.com)), mailboxes, and email. Swimmers mailboxes are located on the pool deck outside of the Aquatics office before and after practices.

## **Family Participation**

### *Swim Meet Workers*

Since we do not CURRENTLY host a home swim meet we do not require parents to regularly work meets. **Championships** will be the only meet in which we are required to provide workers. If we do not provide the positions we are assigned, our team will be fined and may no longer be allowed to participate. We do ask that, when needed, parents volunteer at meets to help them run smoothly.

### *Officials*

We're always looking for more Stingrays parents to become certificate to officiate. You not only have a front row seat to watch your Stingray and others, but you're helping the swim league and beyond. Training dates will be announced shortly after the season begins. Speak with the Aquatics Director and Head Coach for more information. You're currently an Official – send an email to the Aquatics Director and Head Coach so we can start a volunteer list to assist the league. Officials must be at least 21 years of age and associated with a YMCA sponsored team.

New this year, the Stingrays is offering to pay for your initial Level I Official certification for the 2015-2016 swim season! You are then responsible for keeping your certification up-to-date. Why sit in the stands when you can be on the deck in the middle of the action?

### *Volunteers for the Season*

As described above, it's essential for parents to be involved with different aspects of the team. Below are some of the various volunteer positions that are needed for the 2015-2016 winter season. Step up and volunteer – it doesn't take much! Everyone interested in helping with one of them please let the Aquatics Director or Head Coach know:

- Fundraising
- Spirit group which includes team functions away from the pool
- Communications
- Banquet planning committee

***GOOD LUCK AND HAVE FUN THIS SEASON!  
GO STINGRAYS!***