

Every year many parents and swimmers become interested in swim camps, where swimmers go for a period of time to stay with other swimmers and learn from more experienced swimmers. These swim camps can provide a variety of beneficial opportunities for some swimmers, and at the same time can interfere with progression of other swimmers. The question then becomes, should you send your swimmer to swim camp?

For many swimmers, swim camps can offer inspiration and education from sources outside of their swim clubs.

- Swimmers may get to hear speeches or stroke advice from collegiate or even Olympic swimmers.
- Some camps offer coaching tips from National Team coaches.
- Most camps offer video analysis of strokes, turns, and starts.
- All camps have the opportunity to enhance swimmer's excitement and build camaraderie.

For swimmers aged 9-12 who are in the appropriate ability level, swim camp can be an experience swimmers remember long after they retire from the sport. This can provide a swimmer a chance to possibly be away from home for the first time, and help them find new and enhanced excitement for the sport of swimming.

For other swimmers, swim camps may inhibit a swimmer's progression or the swimmer's training group season plan. Once your swimmer moves from "stroke development" groups into their first "training" group, their coach(es) has likely formed a season plan relative to the season and meet schedule. Often swim camps will interfere with practice patterns and progression.

Beginning with "training" groups, swimmers may encounter training cycles and performance cycles. Because of these cycles certain weeks and/or months are critical training times for swimmers in these groups. A swim camp cannot account for the multiple training plans of every swimmer or team in attendance, which may increase the likelihood that swim camp will interfere with your swimmers development during a season or training cycle.

If your swimmer will be in a "stroke development" group during a swim camp, it can be a fun and beneficial experience for him/her (as long as it does not interfere with a team competition). However once your swimmer enters a more advanced "training" group, it can be equally as detrimental. If you are unsure of what type of group your swimmer is in, or if there is a week that camp would benefit your swimmer, the best option is to first email your swimmer's coach and ask for their recommendation.