

# VOLTAGE AQUATICS

## Coach's Message

2019 has been a great season! Thank you for being a part of the Voltage family and sharing your swimmers with us daily throughout the year! As we close the year please read the following article from USASWIMMING.ORG about building a positive mindset!

### **Parents -- How to Help Your Swimmer Have a Great Mindset**

*By Will Jonathan*

I was never a swimmer. I grew up playing soccer my entire life. I was fortunate to have played at a high level competitively my entire youth, as well as progress into playing NCAA Division I soccer for four years. However, it was certainly no easy road, and my dad didn't make it any easier. I love my father. He's the hardest-working person I've ever met in my life, and I've never once heard him tell a lie. He has a moral center as hard as steel, and there's no one else in the world I'd rather have as my dad. Having said that, he was a horrible soccer parent, and the way he behaved towards me during my youth soccer years had a terrible effect on our relationship, not only growing up, but for years afterwards into adulthood.

As a swim parent, whether you realize it or not, you play an enormous role in helping shape your child's overall mindset, not only towards the sport of swimming, but towards themselves. With this article today, I want to speak to you, the swim parents out there, to give you some great approaches for helping your child develop a healthy mindset towards swimming and towards themselves so that you can be the best swim parent you can possibly be. Let's take a look.

#### **1) Encourage them to prioritize fun and enjoyment before times and results.**

Outside of swimming, I work with professional athletes from a plethora of different sports –golf, soccer, baseball, mixed martial arts, etc. And, in the 12 years I've been doing this work, I've worked with very accomplished athletes, athletes who have won things and earned a lot of money, yet were still miserable, unhappy and unfulfilled. Why? The reason is quite simple: They started perceiving their sport as a grind. A

carrot-chasing exercise. A job they felt like they were forced to do rather than a game they loved and enjoyed doing intrinsically. Times are important. Results are important. External success is something your child should be encouraged to strive for and work for. However, like the professional athletes I mentioned previously, those things won't matter in any meaningful way if your child achieves them by feeling like swimming is some kind of miserable grind. You need to make sure your child understands that their love for swimming, the fun they have doing it, and the joy they get from participating in it is, and always will be, more important than any time, result, or medal. Not only is loving swimming, having fun, and enjoying the process important for preventing burnout, it will help them perform better and, consequently, help them achieve the external success both you and they would like to achieve.

#### **2) Let them know that failure is perfectly acceptable – under certain conditions.**

It's so silly how people tend to demonize failure when it is both necessary for improvement and completely unavoidable. The fact is, failure is an important and inevitable part of, not just swimming, but life as a whole. How can your child learn and improve unless they are able to fail and see where and how they need to get better? How can your child develop the mental strength and emotional resilience needed for a healthy mind if they're not allowed to fail, experience the feelings that come with that, and learn how to work their way through them?

There's a very big difference between not wanting to fail and being afraid to fail. No one WANTS to fail. I don't want to fail. You don't want to fail. Your child doesn't want to fail. However, that doesn't mean you, your child or I need to be afraid of it. You need to make sure your child understands failure is not some boogie-man they need to be frightened of. They should be encouraged to see failure for what it actually is – a growth opportunity, a chance for them to improve themselves both physically and mentally to make them into a better swimmer and a stronger human being.

Most importantly, they need to understand failure is only acceptable when it happens under certain conditions. They need to understand there's a right way to fail, and a wrong way to fail. If they go out there, attempt to coast through their swims, aren't fully committed, have a bad attitude, and fail that way, that's the wrong way to fail. They need to know that's not acceptable in any way. However, if they go out there, give it their absolute all, are fully committed, have the

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right attitude, and still fail, they need to know that's perfectly acceptable. That's the right way to fail.

### 3) Balance criticism with praise.

Both coaches and parents play an enormous role in shaping the development of a swimmer. It's the coach's job to critique your child's swimming, to point out their shortcomings and the areas where they need to improve the most. And, that's certainly a job you should leave up to your child's coach. But, having said that, you have a job that is equally as important, and that's to provide the necessary balance to the criticism they'll receive from their coaches by providing them with the praise they need to thrive.

Criticism is important, because your child needs to understand what their weaknesses and faults are so that they can continuously learn and grow as swimmers. Their coaches will provide them with that. However, they also need praise and acknowledgment of their strengths and the things they do well. That's your role. It's extremely vital that you act as the source of positive reinforcement and support for your child, because in the end, a large part of their motivation to swim is to impress you. They want to make you proud. When they do well, acknowledge their effort and commend them for having a great attitude. When you do, you'll keep them in a positive frame of mind, build their enthusiasm for swimming, and help them sustain the motivation need to keep pushing forward.

~Coach Phoebe



## Birthdays

Chase Miller: Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>  
 Anderson Balsmeier: Dec 5<sup>th</sup>  
 Sadie Smith: Dec 12<sup>th</sup>  
 Bailey Oram: Dec 18<sup>th</sup>  
 Emma Butikofer: Dec 21<sup>st</sup>  
 Freya Gunderson: Dec 31<sup>st</sup>

## New Team Records

Blue Burns  
 (11 – 12 Boys)  
 50 free 26.82  
 50 Breaststroke 34.91

Gavin Dustin  
 (13 – 14 Boys)  
 200 Freestyle 1:48.79

Ethan Grimes  
 (13 – 14 Boys)  
 100 Backstroke 58.94

## Important Dates

December 7: *Holiday Classic Meet*, Idaho Falls  
 December 20: *Hot Chocolate Party*, Idaho Falls  
 December 24: Holiday practice schedule TBA  
 December 25: NO practice – Merry Christmas!  
 December 26-28: *Holiday Open*, Kearns, UT  
 December 31: NO PM practice – New Year's Eve!  
 January 1: NO practice – Happy New Year!  
 December 30-January 4: *Survivor Week*, Idaho Falls  
 January 11 or 25: *Igloo Invite*, Twin Falls  
 January 16-19: *Washington Open*, Federal Way, WA  
 February 14-16: *Snake River Winter Championships*, Nampa