**A guide to your first swim meet**

**What to bring**

Please make sure that your child has a swimsuit, STORM swim cap, and goggles. Also, please bring **several towels** and a sweatshirt or light jacket.  One towel is not enough as kids will be getting in and out of the water.  You will also want to bring **water or other drinks and some light snacks**—meets usually last 2 to 2.5 hours. Please note that snacks will also be for sale at the meet.

Parents can bring foldable (camp) chairs. There is some bleacher seating, but not enough to accommodate all the spectators. Wear light clothing as it will get warm during the meet.

**What to do when you arrive at the meet**

When you get to the pool, please have your child find a coach who will check him/her in.  Each swimming race (event) has a number.  Your child will know which events they are swimming, and you can find the event numbers in the heat sheet (which you purchase at the meet for a few dollars). Normally, parents write the event numbers that each child will be swimming on the child’s arm with a sharpie marker.  That way your child can keep track of which events s/he is swimming.  Next, swimmers will get in the water to warm up a bit before the meet starts.  After warm-ups, we ask that the kids sit in a designated area with their teammates so that we can find them before their races.  Generally younger kids (8 and under or 10 and under) are “staged” in an area called the Clerk of Course. The Clerk of Course sets up the younger kids and gets them to the blocks. When it is time for a younger (or new) swimmers’s event, a coach will direct the child to where s/he needs to go.  Older and more experienced swimmers will get to the blocks themselves. The most important thing is that the kids are in a place where we can find them and that they are paying attention!

If you haven’t swum competitively before, you may be struck by how chaotic the meet appears.  That’s the nature of swim meets! We will do all we can to make the meet a fun experience.  That said, some kids will be nervous about swimming in the meet.  The best thing to tell them is that the coaches put them in their event(s) because they know they can do it.  Also you can remind your child that swimming is really about doing their own personal best—for some kids this means simply finishing the race, for others it means getting a best time.  It doesn’t matter whether they win, come in second, or come in last.  Even very accomplished swimmers got beat when they began.   If your child is very nervous about the meet, please bring them to talk to a coach—we might be able to help.

Thanks and we look forward to a fabulous season!  Go STORM!!