

Benefits of Competitive Swimming

By

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Benefits of Swimming

- The benefits of swim team go far beyond summer fun. Swimming shares many of the positive attributes of land-based exercise, as well as several other physical, mental and emotional benefits for kids.



Cardiovascular Conditioning

- Swimming is an aerobic sport, like cycling or running, which strengthens the heart and lungs. On average, swimmers stay in the water exercising longer than other sports, improving endurance.



Full Body Strength, Muscular Endurance and Flexibility

- Swimmers pull against the water to move, so every stroke is a strengthening exercise.
- Different strokes, turns and starts work different muscle groups and also require core stability.
- Long strokes combined with power moves, like pushing off the wall or a starting block, provide a full body workout.
- Swimming has also been shown to improve flexibility and balance on land.



Emotional Regulation

- Swimming can help kids feel calm, confident and less stressed.
- A study from the University of Florida found that exercising and socializing leads to better mental health, which is a key element to swim team as children have plenty of downtime during meets.
- Many people also find swimming to be relaxing. The rhythmic motions of the strokes and regular breathing patterns of swimming mimic meditation.



Individual Goal Setting, Meets & Team Sport

- In swimming, the focus is on continued improvement.
- Individually, your child will be aiming for a personal best in his or her events
- If your kid loves team sports, relays act as team builder.: swimmers work harder because they want the relay to do well and support each other in a race.
- Championship Meets are scored, with points given for each event, but with points distributed all over the events and age groups, the pressure to win is different from a sport like baseball or soccer.



Swimmers May be Smarter

- As a former child swimmer, I can personally attest to how much swimming improves math skills swimmers can convert meters to yards, yards to miles, miles into pool lengths, pool lengths into time and back again, all in their heads.
- They practice and compete in a world of splits and stroke counts, of tenths and hundredths of seconds, all in elementary school.
- Researchers have also found that young children who learn to swim reached developmental milestones sooner than kids who do not swim even after controlling for other factors.



Swimming Teaches Resilience

- If your child decides to join swim team, odds are that he will get disqualified during at least one race.
- Stroke and turn judges are trained to watch the events and make sure that all competitors are performing strokes properly. If these strokes aren't done "legally" the swimmer is DQ'ed and his/her time doesn't count.
- While that can be hard in the moment, it teaches kids to keep trying, and that a mistake in one race does not equal failure.
- They also see teammates go through the same experience, encouraging empathy.



More Unique Health Benefits

- If your child has asthma, swim team may be a great choice air in an indoor pool is warm and humidified which can be more comfortable for someone with asthma.
- As an adult, your child could use their swimming skills to lap swim laps recreationally, join US masters swimming, or compete in open water events or triathlons.
- Because swimming is a low impact sport, people can participate for life, even after they are forced to abandon sports with higher injury rates.

