



YOTA
SWIM TEAM

Introduction

Congratulations on becoming a part of the YMCA of the Triangle Area (YOTA) family. We are excited to have you on board! This handbook will serve as a reference for you as a new member of the team. In this handbook you will find our philosophy, structure and policies.

Information such as current schedules, rosters, time standards and other updates will be communicated via email and/or through our website: yotaswimteam.com.

While this handbook contains a large amount of information, there will inevitably be questions not answered within its pages. Please contact your site director if you have a question concerning the program.

Table of Contents

Message from the Senior Director	
The YMCA	3
YOTA Team History	3
Team Philosophy	5
Vision / Mission / Culture	5
Team Structure	6
Financial	6
Site Directors	7
Groups	8
Swimmer, Coach, Parent	11
Communication	11
Practices	12
Swim Meets	14
Parent Roles	18
Group Descriptions - (Appendix A)	21
Safe Sport Policy (MAAPP) – (Appendix B)	24
Swimmer Code of Conduct - (Appendix C)	28

The YMCA

The YMCA is a national organization founded in 1844, and is known as the site of America's first group swim instruction. The YMCA has long valued the importance of fitness activities and the development of young people. All YMCA programs incorporate values, education and character development through the promotion of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Commitment to the YMCA's principles and the promotion of our four key character development traits make the YMCA and the YOTA Swim Team unique from other competitive swimming programs. We develop swimmers that possess strong moral character, not just strong bodies.

The YMCA Mission

To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

YOTA HISTORY

The YMCA of the Triangle Area Swim Team began in the late 1960s.

Eric Schwall served as head coach from the fall of 1971 until the spring of 1982 when Brooks Teal took the reins. Known then as the Raleigh YMCA Swim Team, or simply Raleigh Y, the men's team won the Short Course YMCA Nationals in 1988, and placed fourth overall with men and women combined team race. Raleigh Y sent three swimmers (David Fox, William Keever and Courtney Searcy) to Olympic Trials in 1988. These three swimmers also went on to NCAA, international and Olympic success, including an NCAA individual champion, and world record and Olympic Gold Medal relay honors.

Bruce Griffin took over the program in 1990 when the program changed its name to the Capital Area YMCA Swim Team (CY). Bruce led CY to continued success at the national level. His men's teams won back-to-back Long Course YMCA National titles in 1993 and 1994. In addition, Coach Griffin led the CY women to the 1997 Women's Long Course YMCA National Championship. Bruce served as the head coach of CY until 1999.

Meredith Griffin led the CY program to continued success from 1999 through 2003. Under her guidance, CY continued to expand and produce excellent swimmers and role models for younger swimmers to follow. Meredith continues to be active at the YMCA of the USA level, working with the National YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving Committee and in other areas of teen youth program development. During the 2003-04 the team did another name change, to what we are called today- YOTA.

Ron Turner took the reins of the YOTA Swim Team in 2004 and led the team to its first ever Combined Team YMCA National Championship in April of 2006. In addition, YOTA won the Men's team title that same year and finished second in the Women's race. In three short year's, Ron developed 10 US National qualifiers, 3 Olympic Trial qualifiers, and numerous YMCA Individual National Champions and All-Americans.

Mark Toburen took over in 2007 after Ron, then Mark took a job as an assistant coach at Georgia Tech after the 2008-2009 season.

In 2009, Chad Onken was promoted from Assistant Director to the Head Coach/Director of Competitive

Swimming. He came to the program having coached some of the top athletes in the world as a collegiate coach at N.C. State University and Auburn University. YOTA more than doubled in size during Onken's tenure and yielded YMCA National Championships for the Men in 2010-2012 as well as the Women in 2014. Chad also developed several YMCA National Champions and Olympic Trial Qualifiers.

In 2019, Jerry Foley was hired to take over the program as the Director of Competitive Swimming. Jerry came to YOTA with over thirty-four years of coaching experience from both the club and collegiate level. His last post was at the Greater Susquehanna Valley YMCA where he coached 6 individual event national champions and 3 Olympic Trials swimmers. During the same time he was the head coach of Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania where he led his women's team to nine conference championships in ten years.

YOTA has also experienced success at the international level. William Keever was ranked 18th in the world in 100 m Fly, member of USA Team that competed in Moscow in the 1994 Goodwill Games. David Fox was 50 yd Free NCAA Champion, Olympic Gold medalist and member of world record 400 m Free Relay team in 1996. In 2012, Charlie Houchin represented the USA in the London Olympic Games as a member of the US National Team winning a GOLD medal in the 4x100 Freestyle Relay. YOTA had another US National Youth Team member in 2009 when Dominick Glavich qualified to swim in the World Cup events in Berlin, Germany and Stockholm, Sweden as well as the Mare Nostrum series in Barcelona, Spain in 2010. Of note, Dennis Meehan was an NCAA All American and held the University of Virginia school records in the 50, 100 and 200 Free for nearly 10 years.

YOTA also had several disabled athletes represent them on the international scene. Para athlete, Lucas McCrory represented the USA on the Pan American Team earning 14 international medals during his time on YOTA. He was also the 2nd fastest 200 breaststroker in American Paralympic history. Hannah Aspden was a USA Paralympic National Team member and represented the USA in the Paralympic Games in Rio where she won two bronze medals, one in the 100m backstroke breaking an American record (she was the youngest medalist in either games). While on YOTA, Hannah won 24 international medals and owned 11 Paralympic American Records. Collin Davis represented the USA at the Deaf World Championships in 2016 in Rio where he swam in 6 finals and achieved an American Record in the 800m free.

Continuing this long tradition of excellence, YOTA continues to be successful at the state, regional and national levels. We have led the GYSSA league and USY region throughout the decade. We consistently place in the top five at the North Carolina Swimming Age Group Championships, Age Group Sectionals and YMCA National Championships.

The team is equally proud of its swimmers' activities and accomplishments away from the pool. YOTA members are active in their churches, excel in the classroom, and participate in community activities. The YOTA Swim Team has raised over \$500,000 for the YMCA's "We Build People" program throughout its multi-site community since 2010. With over more than \$200,000 of that being raised by the athletes themselves. The "We Build People" program provides scholarships to YOTA families with financial need.

Y-NATIONAL COMBINED TEAM CHAMPIONS 2006

Y-NATIONAL MEN'S TEAM CHAMPIONS 1988 | 1993 | 1994 | 2006 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012

Y-NATIONAL WOMEN'S TEAM CHAMPIONS 1997 | 2014

Team Philosophy

YOTA provides young people an opportunity to develop character through the pursuit of excellence in competitive swimming.

- We embrace the YMCA core values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.
- We are committed to developing swimmers in three domains: physical, mental, and emotional.
- We expect that individuals will develop academically and athletically to reach their potential and at their own rate of growth.
- We will support and encourage our athletes' academic achievement.
- We encourage each athlete to become the best swimmer they can be and participate in the highest level meet for which they qualify. We know that all individuals develop at their own rate, both mentally and physically.

Team Vision

Developing character one lap at a time

Team Mission

The YOTA swim team instills character development while preparing our athletes to compete at the highest levels within USA and YMCA swimming. We are a family that supports each individual in pursuit of excellence in the sport of swimming to the best of their ability. We build upon our long tradition of success in and out of the pool.

We support Safe Sport policies and have expectations of complete compliance. This is directly in line with our values and cultural norms. We provide a safe and supportive environment through a positive team culture; one that promotes Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, and Caring for all.

Our team's combined success is dependent on each individual's (Coaches Swimmers) commitment and determination to execute their best effort(s), and focus on the process of long-term development while embracing our team's standards.

Team Cultural Norms

Nurturing – We support all swimmers and teammate’s development through encouragement and good sportsmanship.

Genuine – We intentionally build positive relationships amongst coaches, swimmers, parents, and teammates.

Hopeful – We expect that our swimmers and teammates will grow, learn, and develop to reach their desired potential.

Determined – We devote our efforts and energy to serve the team and our community.

Welcoming – We accept people eagerly, warmly, hospitably, and value each individual.

Team Objectives

- Teach YMCA mission and values: Respect, Honesty, Caring, & Responsibility.
- Deliver a robust and developmental experience for all.
- Provide coaching that teaches leadership and promotes character development.
- Place swimmers in proper groups to allow for individual and team growth.
- Recruit, retain, and develop a coaching staff for long-term team stability.
- Provide a Safe Sport environment based on the guidelines of the YMCA and USA swimming. (See the YOTA Swim Team Safe Sport Policy located on our web site)
- Safe Sport is designed to foster a fun, healthy, and safe environment. Creating a safe place for athletes to compete and train. Safe Sport’s goal is to prevent and respond to abuse and misconduct.

Team Operations

- Communication is vital to the success operation of our team and everyone participates in a respectful and timely manner
- Multi-site program spread throughout the Triangle Area of NC.
- Currently there are age group sites (15 and under) and four additional training sites for select and senior athletes.
- Age groups practice at their respective home YMCA branch locations and have the opportunity to practice within a group that is based relative to their age and ability.
- Additional training sites host “select” groups or senior level swimming where additional commitment is required and may require extended travel to practice.
- All YOTA groups are registered for NCS, USA and YMCA Swimming in this provides the opportunity to compete at both USA swimming meets as well as YMCA local, regional, and national competitions.
- Program fees are based on the participant skill level and group placement. Program fees may be divided into 9 monthly drafts automatically withdrawn on the 1st of each month (September – June/ May) from the credit card provided through the online registration process.
- Program fees are all-inclusive as is covers cost of operation such as coaches salary, pool rentals and meet entry fees.
- **Registration fee of \$250 is non-refundable and is due at the time of the first practice.** (Note: in the summer we ask for a \$50 deposit to secure the athlete’s spot for the upcoming season. The \$50 deposit will be applied to the registration fee.) The registration fee covers each athlete’s NC Swimming and USA Swimming membership, YMCA of the USA league dues, Team Unify account, plus swim team cap, 3 team T-Shirts, and Arena team suit and all processing for initial set-up of your membership.

- Swim team registration fees cover: NCS USA and YMCA Swimming membership fees/benefits,
- (Except YOTA & Jr. Prep)
- **CANCELLATION POLICY:** In order to cancel YOTA Swim Team membership, the YOTA coaching staff must receive written notice by the 1st of the month (30 days) in order to stop the following month's draft. Written notice received after the 1st of the month will be processed the following month, with all monthly charges still due. The cancellation notice is required to stop automated monthly payments.

YMCA Membership

All swimmers must be YMCA of the Triangle Area members. Your first monthly membership fee must be paid at the time of YOTA swim team registration and team fee payment. All swimmers in the program must always be a current YMCA member. You child or family must continue to maintain a YMCA membership to be eligible to swim for YOTA in meets

Site Location and Coach

Age Group Branch sites:

A.E. FINLEY YMCA - 9216 Baileywick Road, Raleigh, NC 27615

Head Site Coach: Macy Blake

Email: Macy.Blake@ymcatriangle.org (814) 380-8732

Chapel Hill YMCA - 980 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd, Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Head Site Coach: Tony Carroll

Email: Tony.Carroll@ymcatriangle.org (574) 850-1918

Downtown Durham YMCA - 218 West Morgan St, Durham, NC 27701

Head Site Coach: Mark Franz

Email: Mark.Franz@ymcatriangle.org (919) 632-1583

Kerr Family YMCA - 2500 Wakefield Pines Drive, Raleigh, NC 27614

Head Site Coach: Will Close

Email: Will.Close@ymcatriangle.org (919) 280-5731

Alexander & Kraft Family YMCAs

Head Site Coach: Keaton Williams (Site Coordinator)

Email: Keaton.Williams@ymcatriangle.org (919) 946-1586

Taylor Family YMCA - 101 YMCA Drive, Cary, NC 27513

Head Site Coach: Brooks Teal (Head Age Group Coach)

Email: Brooks.Teal@ymcatriangle.org ; (919) 805-2094

Senior & Select Sites

West Senior 1: Meadowmont YMCA

Head Site Coach: Tom Hazelett

Email: Tom.Hazelett@ymcatriangle.org ; (919) 818-8626

West Senior 2 / Age group Select: Northwest Cary YMCA and Meadowmont

Head Coach: John Newell

Email: John.Newell@ymcatriangel.org ; (704) 221-5352

East Senior 1: Southeast Raleigh YMCA and Oberlin Program Center

Head Coach: Jamie Bloom (Head Senior Coach)

Email: Jamie.Bloom@ymcatriangle.org ; (413) 335-4764

East Senior 2 / Age Group Select; Oberlin Program Center and A.E. Finley YMCA

Head Site Coach: Rachel Muller (and Masters Head Coach)

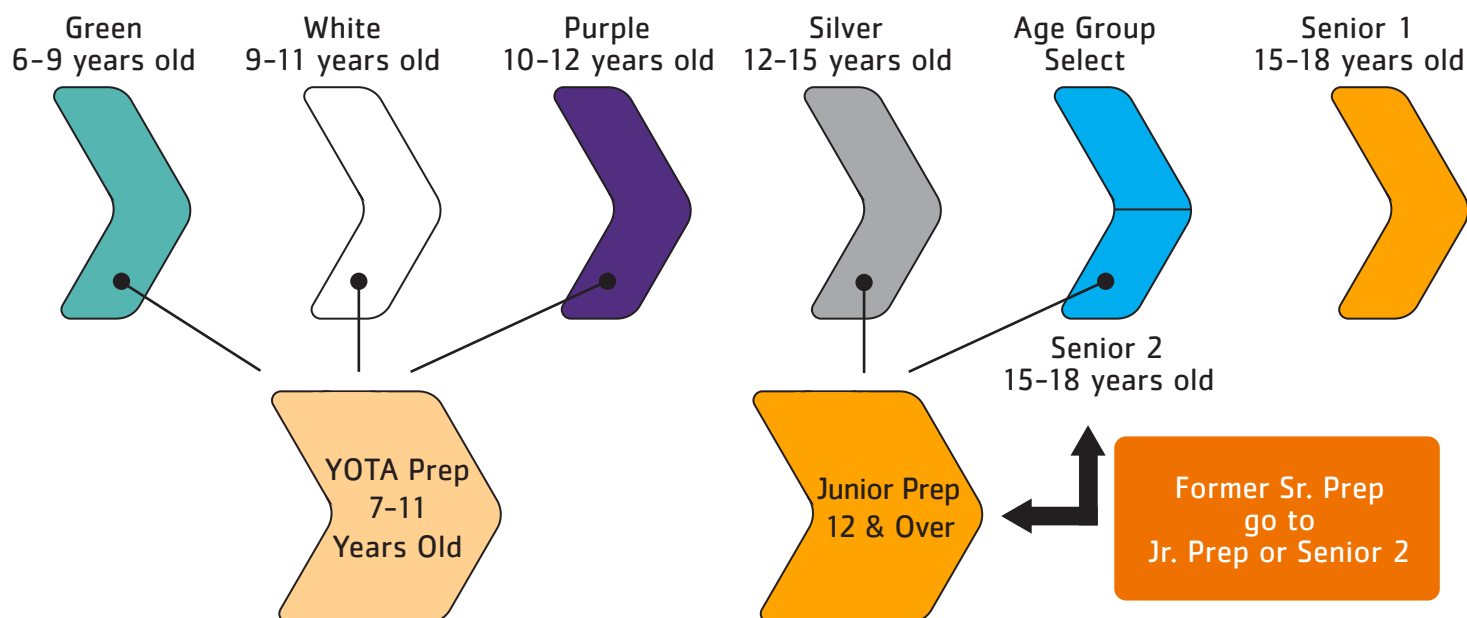
Email: Rachel.Muller@ymcatriangle.org ; 919-719-9696

Practice site location for Senior and AGS

- Meadowmont: 301 Old Barn Lane Chapel Hill, NC 27516
- Oberlin Program Center -1012 Oberlin Road, Raleigh, NC 27605
(Behind Interact around back of building)
- Northwest Cary YMCA: 6903 Carpenter Fire Station Rd, Cary, NC 27519
- A.E. Finley YMCA: 9216 Baileywick Road, Raleigh, NC 27615
- UNC Bowman Gray Pool - 300 South Rd Chapel Hill NC 27599
- North Carolina State University -2611 Cates Avenue, Raleigh, NC 27606 (Carmichael Gym)

TRAINING GROUPS & PRACTICE

Group Structure (age recommendations)



Refer to web site and Appendix A for group descriptions.

Group Standards (Update this based on new groups)

Each age group and senior programs have standards to help us define success.

Age Group: The standards for success at the age group level are:

- Develop each swimmer in the fundamentals of all four strokes, skills, and race strategies
- Learn and live the four core YMCA character values
- Instill a passion for swimming – one that becomes a lifetime habit
- Active family participation within the branch through participation and volunteerism
- Prepare swimmers for long-term growth to experience senior level opportunities
- Foster a culture of appreciation for personal and collective growth and achievement
- Have 75 Swimmers compete at SC North Carolina Age Championships
- Consistently place in the Top 3 at North Carolina Age Championships

Senior: The standards for success in the senior program are:

- Help swimmers reach their potential and pursue their desired level of achievement – including the highest levels within USA and YMCA swimming
- Develop swimmers who own their pursuit of success and utilize their time, opportunities and resources to their fullest
- Refine character values and develop swimmers into leaders
- Instill a sense of team so that each athlete celebrates the success and achievements of the team and as well as the success of their teammates.
- Develop the skills and provide the experiences that enable swimmers to pursue swimming in college
- Have 40 swimmers compete at YMCA Short Course National Championship
- Consistently place in the Top 5 at YMCA National Championship

Group Assignment and Group Progression

Swimmers are assigned to practice groups based on age, ability, and level of development, in order to provide them the best opportunity for personal and athletic growth. Coaches use the same criteria when considering the best time to when to progress a swimmer from one group to the next. Group sizes are also taken into consideration in order to ensure high quality coaching and safety during practices.

Things to remember regarding group assignments and moves:

- Group assignments and moves are decisions made by the coaching staff.
- Each child develops at a different rate.
- A child's group placement is selected because the coaches have determined that is the best place for them to progress and improve based on their current stage of development. It is not a determination of the long-term success of your child.
- Comparing your child to others at your site or another site is not constructive, productive or healthy for you or your child.
- The YOTA staff makes group assignments and group moves based on what is best for the swimmer, what is best for the group and what is best for the team as a whole.

Some factors associated with group movement:

- Paramount in the consideration of a move is the swimmer's age, physical and cognitive maturation to handle the group and the commitment required to be in the group. In addition, it is important to consider the appropriate development of an athlete vs. what they may be capable (it is not about what CAN they handle but where SHOULD they be in order to thrive and develop).
 - Consistency in Attendance, work ethic, attitude, training ability, and performance, as well as: actual age, physical maturation and cognitive capacity.
1. Setting them up for long-term success vs. momentary success. Not being fully prepared for a group can be as detrimental to their future success as being in a group that they are overqualified.
 2. Being placed in a group that may not fully match their age or ability can also be dangerous both physically and mentally.
 3. Once an athlete is placed in a different group, it is with the desire that the decision not need to be reversed.

A change in an athlete's group placement will be made when the coaching staff believes such a move is warranted and athlete is appropriately ready. Regular group changes are made after the first two weeks of the season (giving the staff a chance to evaluate our groups); in April after all Short Course focus meets are complete; After Long Course focus meets are complete in the summer. Sometimes it be necessary to make a change after December after the Mid-Season focus meets or in the middle of the summer to access initial placement for the following season.

Changes in practice groups at all other times during the season will not be made without consultation with the parents. Remember - unless a swimmer is truly ready for the next group, they will not be moved. Workouts that are too demanding will cause both practice and meet performance to decline. This can be very upsetting to the young swimmer and many problems can develop. Although the group changes are a decision made by the coaching staff, coaches communicate with parents prior to initiating the move so that parents can prepare for schedule and fee adjustments, and address any concerns parents may have.

Annual Celebration

Each spring the team has a gathering to celebrate individual and team's achievements during the short course season. Swimmers receive a participation pin and appropriate awards. In addition, graduating seniors receive special recognition as they complete their YOTA swim team careers.

Season and Break

The YOTA Swim Team is an 11 month competitive swimming program that starts in September and continues through the swimmer's last competition in the summer. The swimmer's last short course competition is between the end of March and the beginning of April and the last long course competition between the end of July and middle of August (depending upon how far he or she advances in the championship season).

Rules and Responsibilities - Swimmers

YOTA swimmers strive to be positive team members in and out of the pool.

Swimmers should always remember that they represent the YMCA, the YOTA Swim Team, themselves and their family. Their words and actions reflect not only on themselves but also on their teammates, parents, coaches, and the YMCA.

Swimmer, Coach, and Parent

The relationship between swimmer, coach and parent is an important aspect of swimming. We strive for a mutually supportive partnership, but sometimes it can become strained and, ultimately, harmful to a swimmer's experience in the sport. Regular and open communication is necessary to avoid misunderstandings. Please communicate directly to your individual coach or site director regarding any issues and follow the chain of command.

The swimmer, the coach, and the parent must each understand and respect his or her role so that conflicting or negative signals are not sent. Swimmers, parents, and coaches may not always agree, but respectful and open communication will help maintain a positive relationship. The collective goal of the swimmer-coach-parent triad should be the maintenance of an environment most conducive to the development of the swimmer - both as an athlete and as a person.

Communication

Communication is vital to any organization and it must be done with respect.

Coaches will make every effort to convey information to swimmers and their parents. They will make regular use of the website (yotaswimteam.com), please check this regularly. Likewise, team members and their parents need to communicate with coaches in order to avoid misunderstandings and to inform them of things that may affect a swimmer's training and competition. One can expect timely return of emails (usually within 30 hours, however, sometimes extenuating circumstance prevent this.)

- Website –yotaswimteam.com - The website contains meet information, links to pool directions, practice schedules and the team calendar. Please be sure to check the website at least three times a week, as it is updated regularly.
- Email distribution lists – (Team Unify). This is the primary way information is communicated and distributed. In addition reminders and last-minute information are sent to families via email. Please be sure we have your email address on file.
- It is the Parents responsibility to keep an updated Team Unify account and checking it regularly for changes that may need to be made to phone numbers, emails, addresses, or swimmer information.
- Social media –We have a coach-run, athlete-supported Instagram account; and a parent-run Facebook group.
- For routine communications with coaches, please use their official YMCA of Triangle email address.
- For the older age groups coaches will use "group me" texts, as in efficient to communicate with athletes and coaches.

Coaches will communicate with you regarding any **arising issues or injuries** at practice or meets that may need immediate reconciling or may concern the safety or wellbeing of your child.

Grievances

Many problems are due to simple misunderstandings or miscommunication and can be resolved quickly and easily. If allowed to fester, however, problems grow out of proportion and can be harmful to swimmers, parents, coaches, and the program. This can be prevented by addressing grievances immediately and with the individual whom this involves. If a team member or parent has a grievance concerning any aspect of the program, he or she should go directly to the source.

NOTE: Sometimes it is best to communicate after a waiting period of 24 hours before expressing ones point of view. (This is true for all involved.)

Chain of Command - Who to Contact When

- An issue that is group-specific or swimmer-specific: Site Director
- An issue that is with the group coach or swimmer-specific issue that did not get resolved by the group coach:
 - First level contact – Site Director
 - Second level contact – Brooks Teal (Head Age Group Coach) or Jamie Bloom (Head Senior Coach)
 - Third level contact - Jerry Foley (Director of Competitive Swimming)
- An issue that concerns the overall swim team, financial, or administrative concerns – Jerry Foley (Director of Competitive Swimming)

Practice Philosophy

Swimming is a sport that requires a consistent training commitment in order for the swimmer to experience improvement. The more consistent you are with practice attendance, the better you will get. However, it is equally (if not more important) to practice correctly... remember...

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence is not an act but a habit!” - Aristotle

Our practices follow the guidelines recommended by USA Swimming, our country’s foremost authority on swimming. These guidelines were established so the programs can develop their athletes in a way that will enable each swimmer to reach his or her potential with less risk of “burn-out” or physical injury. Our workouts adhere to these guidelines with regard to length, composition, intensity, and frequency of practice. These are the same basic guidelines used by the most successful swimming programs in USA Swimming.

Practice Conduct

All team members are expected to be on time and to remain until the end of practice. If there is an exception to this we ask that there is communication with the coach before practice. In addition the following are important practice routines to understand:

- Important information and coaching instruction is often given to the swimmers at the beginning of practice. All team members should be on the pool deck or dry-land area ten minutes before practice starts.
- Practices begin with a warm-up period (or dry-land) which helps prevent injury and increase strength and flexibility.

- The swimmers should go to the team area and stretch lightly as directed by the coaches or until structured practice begins.
- Although we desire this sport to harbor meaningful relationships, it is important that the swimmers understand why they are there. Practice is practice, not play time. Please make sure that your swimmer understands that he or she must be attentive and not be disruptive to others.
- Swimmers will be asked to sit on deck if their behavior is a problem. They may not leave the pool area. If this does not eliminate the problem, the parents will be consulted and as additional disciplinary action may be required.
- Swimmers will be asked to adhere to proper lane etiquette and respect their fellow teammates in the lane.

Practice Equipment

- Practice suits – We recommend that swimmers have practice suits and not wear team suits to practice. The chlorine will wear down the suit and extra wear stretches the suits which will reduce the effectiveness of the suit for meets. All swim suits will adhere to the YMCA of Triangle youth competitive sport guidelines (appendix D); when selecting practice swim suit, athletes will model modesty and respect. (see that document located on the web site);
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- Goggles – Make sure goggles are suited to your eyes and are comfortable. Make sure you carry extra straps in your bag for emergencies. Having an extra pair of goggles is a good idea.
- Fins – Every swimmer is required to have a pair of fins. These are a vital part of the training process. Make sure they are soft rubber and are designed for swimmers to practice with. (Specified below.)
- Caps – Female swimmers are required to wear a cap during practice and meets. (Males highly encouraged).
- Water bottle – Every swimmer who swims more than one hour needs to bring a water bottle to practice. (Water is preferred over Gatorade.) In order to prevent the spread of illnesses, there will be NO sharing water bottles.
- Paddles & Buoy – These tools help swimmers develop technique and strength - consult the coaches for recommendations. (Varying groups-specified below.)
- Snorkel—used to improve head positioning.
- Make sure your name is on all equipment.
- See All-American Swim Supply on our website. Click on the Team Store icon on the home page.

Required Practice Equipment (reference web site)

Use a BLACK permanent marker to write your child's name on each and every item you purchase. This will help us return equipment to your child. You will receive 3 YOTA team shirts and a YOTA team cap before the first swim meet.

Parents Watching Swim Practice

At YOTA, parents are discouraged from sitting too close to practice in order to observe swim practices. (If you are inclined to observe practice, please sit in an area that is discrete and will not be distracting to the swimmers and coaches). It is not advised to watch practice every day nor do we expect you to never come to the pool. The reality of carpools and transporting young athletes is that many parents are not present every day; however, you do not necessarily need to watch every minute of practice. If you need to be present at the facility, bring a book, work, or volunteer to help with some aspect of the program or

in the YMCA. Also, remember you are a member of the YMCA as well and we strongly encourage you to use practice time to benefit yourself through healthy habits like working out or taking classes.

Here are some important guidelines to keep in mind when observing a practice:

- Young swimmers want their parents' approval more than anything. If they know you are watching practice, it's only natural for some of their attention to be directed to you. However, for the swimmers to learn as much as possible, it is imperative that the coaches have your child's undivided attention during practice. We ask that you do not communicate with your child during practice and compete with the coach for his/her attention.
- We insist that parents do not interrupt the coaches on deck while they are coaching. If you need to communicate with a coach, please do so before or after practice if they are not coaching another group or via email, phone, or meeting.
- Our coaches spend a considerable amount of time planning weekly training sessions for each of their practice groups. Each training set or instructional drill has a purpose and one practice and/or practice set often builds on another throughout the week. If swimmers have not attended all practice sessions, they may not understand the purpose of what the swimmers are doing on any given day.
- Please do not try to coach your child based on what you see (or think you do not see) him/her do. Many times when teaching stroke skills, the coaches ask our swimmers to do things that might not look correct or might actually be illegal according to the rules, but does have an important purpose in teaching skills (i.e. swimming one-arm fly or breaststroke with a flutter kick.)

Practice Cancellations and Inclement Weather

Practices may be cancelled occasionally for various reasons. Examples include inclement weather, problems at the facility, etc. Many times, we do not know about these cancellations until the last minute. We will communicate these changes by email and text. In the event that something occurs at the facility that forces practice to be cancelled at the last minute and swimmers have already been dropped off for practice, they will be instructed to call their parents to be picked up early. In such cases, a coach or YMCA employee will always remain at the practice site until all swimmers have been picked up.

During the school year, YOTA will follow the decision of their Branch or Senior Director and then communicated via the Site Director. Practice continues when it is raining. If there is thunder and lightning in the area, practice could be suspended, but not necessarily cancelled. (Lifeguards determine when we can and when we can't swim due to weather once practice starts.) If parents are experiencing hazardous conditions (snow, ice, thunderstorm) while their children are at practice, they should come to the pool in case practice ends early. During these times, there may be occasions where YOTA is conducting practice but the parent may not feel safe to bring their swimmer, these instances have full support and understanding from YOTA and you are always encouraged to use your judgement in all matters of safety.

Swim Meets

The YOTA Swim Team is a competitive swim team with the expectation that our athletes will gain the experience of competition. Swim meets are a fun and exciting opportunity for swimmers to measure progress, experience the thrill of competition, and strive for individual and team accomplishments. They provide a break in the practice routine, as well as a "test" of how well you are practicing. Competition brings about several opportunities for personal growth through both success and failure, adversity and

challenges, and responsibility. Meets will emphasize race strategies and the long-term development for all swimmers by the coaches. The swimmers will be prepared to peak in their performance during the championship season. It is important for all to focus on the season-long journey of improvement and the process, not the outcome of any given race.

Part of your dues include the payment of swim meet fees. YOTA must pay for entries in the meet regardless if a swimmer competes in the event or not. Therefore, it is important to understand that if one signs up for a meet it is expected one will compete unless they become sick or injured, or another valid reason is shared.

Age Group Designations

In both USA Swimming and YMCA meets, swimmers compete according to their ages. USA Swimming age groups are divided as follows: 10 & under, 11/12, 13/14, 15/16, 17/18. (Generally 14 and under are considered age group swimmers and 15 and over Senior swimmers). YMCA age groups are the same except the YMCA includes an 8 & under age group. Sometimes, in both USA Swimming and YMCA meets, 13 & Older swimmers are combined into a "senior" age group. In "open" events or meets, swimmers of any age may swim. For USA Swimming meets, the swimmer's age group is determined by the swimmer's age the first day of the meet. It is policy of the YOTA Swim Team that athletes will compete in the "age designation" that matches their actual age. 12 and under athlete will not compete in "open" events unless there are extenuating circumstances (i.e. the event is not offered in their age designation, a relay, etc...)

USA Swimming

USA Membership

USA Swimming (www.usaswimming.org) is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming. USA swimming sets rules for competitions, implements policies, conducts national championship meets, and selects athletes to represent the United States in international competitions. USA Swimming requires coaches and officials to be certified according to its standards. USA Swimming is divided into Local Swimming Committees (LSC), which administer USA Swimming activities in smaller geographical areas.

All YOTA swimmers are registered with USA swimming.

Time Standards

USA Swimming establishes national motivational standards by which its meets are classified (B, BB, A, AA, AAA, AAAA). These standards are based on a national average of performances with the goal of allowing swimmers to be grouped in competition with swimmers of the same general skill level. Many YMCA meets are designated as "open" meaning that all YMCA swimmers may compete, regardless of times. There are separate qualifying times for YMCA Regionals, YMCA Nationals, and other meets throughout the short and long course seasons.

Dual Representation

“Dual Representation” is NOT allowed by YMCA swimming and diving rules.

- An athlete has dual representation when representing more than one organization (team) during the current season.
- Exceptions to this rule: High school swimmers are permitted to swim for their high school teams during the high school season.

Swim Meet – General Information

Meet schedules are posted on the YOTA swim team website and are subject to change. The coaching staff selects several swim meets each season to attend as a team or divide our team regionally in order to participate. In addition there are meets that are age and ability restrictive.

- Information for interested swimmers will be posted online. Deadlines for meet commitments and any additional payments will be adhered to. Payments for travel trips will be paid for prior to meet.
- Be early! Every swimmer should arrive at a meet at least 15 minutes before the scheduled warm-up time and must say goodbye to their coach prior to leaving a meet. (To ensure swimmers don't accidentally leave before an event or relay).
- Be sure to write down the warm-up times, start times, directions and the events so that you arrive at the meet on time and properly prepared.
- Relays will be determined by the coaching staff. All participating swimmers are expected to swim relays when needed. Relays are extremely important to the YOTA culture and are a privilege for the swimmers. Relays become very important to the athletes throughout their career with YOTA. Anyone not available to swim relays should indicate this in the “optional comments” section when you sign-up.
- The coaches have final say in which events a swimmer will swim in meets. They may have communication with the parents or swimmers on competition events but, much like practice, the coach's goal is the development of the whole swimmer. If you have questions or concerns about an event we encourage you to communicate with your site director.
- It is the policy of our program to only enter meets selected by the coaching staff. If a swimmer wants to attend any other meet, he/she must discuss it with their coach. If all parties are in agreement, the swimmer may swim at the unscheduled meet with the understanding that a coach may not be present.

Swim Meet - Registration

- Log onto our TeamUnify website: yotaswimteam.com
- Sign in
- Go to the Events icon on the home page
- Click on the meet name you want to register for
- Once you are to the meet page, click on the **Attend/Decline** button
- Scroll to the bottom of the page and **click on your swimmer's name**
- Next, pick your declaration:
 - Yes, sign me up or
 - No, thanks

Once selected, click **save changes** at the bottom of the page.

You can go in and update by repeating the process anytime up until the last day to register.

Swim Meet – Best Practices

All swimmers are responsible for their own transportation to and from meets. There are parents willing to drive those who need a ride.

- When attending a meet where a heat sheet is printed, make sure your name, events and entry times are listed correctly. Report any errors you may find to the coach immediately.
- Items to bring: two or more towels, team suit, team cap, warm-ups or sweats, extra shirt, shoes (i.e. Crocs or sneakers) and goggles. Swimmers may also bring playing cards, books, or small games to longer meets.
- Swimmers are strongly encouraged to use their cell phone ONLY to listen to music during a meet.
- Nutritional snacks are encouraged. To prevent dehydration, fluids need to be consumed during the meet. Water or Gatorade (diluted) is best – we ask that the swimmers avoid candy and sodas.
- Swimmers should always see their coach before and after races. Upon completion of each event, the swimmer should politely ask the timer their time, thank the timer, and report immediately to the coaching staff. After speaking with their coach, the swimmer can warm down if water is available.
- Remember, it is each swimmer's responsibility to pay attention to which events are being called to the ready bench/blocks and to report on time. Sometimes a missed event will cause disqualification from further events, so pay attention and stay with the team. In the case of missed events the swimmer/coach can report to the officials to have a chance to get in a later heat.

Before you leave any swim meet, make sure you:

- Are not in another event or relay.
- Have cleaned up your area.
- Have all your belongings.
- Say goodbye to your coach.

Swim Meet – Team Area

- Swimmers are expected to sit on the pool deck with the team. It is a swimmers' responsibility to be on deck or in the team area so that they are present on time in the seeding area for their events. This promotes team support and unity, which in turn contributes to swimming success and fun.
- Due to insurance and liability reasons with USA Swimming, parents must sit in the stands (if they are not volunteering for the meet), not with their children.
- Swimmers are asked to keep the team area clean and clean up after themselves upon leaving.

Swim Meet – Team Apparel

All apparel will meet the YMCA of the Triangle Fundamental Principles of Youth Sports. (This can be found in Appendix D) In regard to the principles and guidelines the YOTA swim team will support these recommendations in following manner:

- The YOTA swim team staff will select the team competition swimsuit.
- All team members will wear the selected team suit in meets, expect for when technical racing suits are approved for use.
- All swimmers must be sized and fitted for their team swim suit.
- When selecting practice swim suit, athletes will model modesty and respect.

- As a minimum, every swimmer on the team will have a team swim cap and 3 team t-shirts. At swim meets when you are representing YOTA, you are expected to wear YOTA shirts, a YOTA swim cap, and the team suit. The exceptions to this is damaged or outgrown suits or tech suits (when appropriate... designated by coaches).

- Wearing team apparel promotes team pride and unity. It also helps coaches, parents and other swimmers locate YOTA team members.

- You should ONLY wear technical suits at select invitational meets and championships meets. Please consult the coaches about when it is appropriate to wear these suits in order to enhance performance. USA Swimming prohibits any swimmer 12 & under to wear a tech suit at ANY meet.

Team Suits

All team apparel and gear should be sized and purchased through All-American Swim Supply. Main store is at: **1231 NW Maynard Rd, Cary, NC 27513** to size your suit and ensure that you receive the size that you need. The advantages to you are:

- A discount
- The suit fits you correctly
- YOTA Swim Team receives benefits, and a percent of all Arena purchases
- This is the only way we can guarantee the product in the event of return needs
- If you choose to place a suit order without sizing through All American, your suit cannot be exchanged if you order the wrong size.

Parent Council

The YOTA Parent Council plays a vital role in the success of the YOTA Swim Team. The Council is comprised of two representatives from each YOTA site (appointed by the head coach at each site) and two at large representatives (appointed by the Sr. Director of Competitive Swimming). Every parent with a child on YOTA has input to the council. This input is both encouraged and welcomed.

The Senior Director of Competitive Swimming will oversee and work closely with the Parent Council. The Parent Council representatives work together by serving on one of four committees. The committees are Service, Mentoring, Development and Communication. **(Please see web site for more information)**

Parent Volunteer Opportunities – Swim Meets

YOTA Swim Team hosts several swim meets throughout the year. 2-3 regular competitions and 1 championship swim meet. The YOTA Swim Team has a reputation for the quality of hosted meets and that is because of our volunteers that make it all happen. We need all hands on deck for the continued success of these meets and it is our desire to maintain the amazing culture of volunteerism that YOTA is well known for.

- **Timers** – Time each heat in a specific lane using stopwatches that are provided by the host team. This job is very easy and keeps you right next to the action. No prior experience is necessary.
- **Officials*** – These include the starter, referee, and stroke and turn judges. They conduct the meet and address rule infractions. Training is necessary (through USA and/or YMCA, depending on the meet). There is always a demand for these volunteers. Training is technical but not lengthy or difficult. YOTA offers at least one training per year and will pay for you to get your certification and maintain your registration each year. It is desirable that we have at least two certified administrative officials (A.O.) to run the operations of YOTA swim meet.

***Parents are needed to become certified officials. If you are interested in becoming a certified official, please contact Jerry Foley.**

- **Runners** – After each heat, this person takes cards from timers to the computer operator. No prior experience necessary.
- **Set-Up and Clean-Up** – Before a meet can begin and after a meet ends, these volunteers help set up the pool/deck for the meet and return the pool/deck to its normal condition after the meet.
- **Heat Sheet and Concession Sales**– At every hosted swim meet, we will be selling concessions and heat sheets. This is an easy volunteer area for any parent.
- **Concession Donation** - The parents will operate a concession stand at our hosted swim meets. We will be asking for food donations at all of our hosted meets. Donations email will be sent asking for food and drink donations to be sold at the concession stand or provided in hospitality. While we ALWAYS appreciate concession donations, please know that we need your time DURING the swim meets. It is expected that all families share the load of volunteerism.
- **Hospitality**- At every hosted swim meet, we provide food for coaches, volunteers, and officials. Volunteers will help by maintaining the room and setting up the food as well as distribute the food and drink on deck throughout the meet.

The Annual We Build People Campaign

Through educational support programs, health and well-being initiatives and the carefree fun of YMCA Summer Day Camp, swim lessons, and life changing programs like the YOTA Swim Team itself, the YMCA meets urgent community needs. Your donation and involvement for the Annual Campaign, makes it possible for us to support children, teens and adults - regardless of their ability to pay.

At the beginning of the new season, parents will have the opportunity to learn about the Annual Campaign and set the tone for giving to the community. There is no obligation to give, but we hope that our passion for the campaign will inspire everyone to make a meaningful donation!

YOTA Swim Challenge

The YOTA Swim Challenge is vital to the success of the Annual Campaign and teaches the importance of philanthropy to our athletes. It also is a fun way to involve the swimmers in the campaign.

All YOTA athletes will recruit friends and family to sponsor them for each length they swim. Green group athletes will be swimming and are welcome, but not expected, to get pledges while all other groups will be motivated for the cause to get donations.

During practice, swimmers will swim 45 minutes straight with the goal of doing as many lengths as possible. All are welcome to attend, cheer and/or help count lengths. After the event, the swimmers share their accomplishments with their pledges and collect the donations to turn in for the campaign.

Parent Socials

Where Do Donations Go?

Any donation given stays your community. This includes scholarships for YOTA swimmers at your site as well as any direct needs of your community. With 100% of the gifts going towards those who need it (with no overhead) we hope you are able to see the "WeBuildPeople" (charity for you to participate in. Our goal is 100% participation from our YOTA family.

100% of Annual We Build People Campaign funds will be utilized to meet the greatest needs of our community and our YMCA.

YOTA Practice Groups (Appendix A) Branch Programs

Five levels offered within the Branch Age Group Program, emphasis on stroke technique and excellent foundational habits. The goal is to place each swimmer in the group that is the best fit for their age, inclination and ability within that of available opportunities and needs of the YOTA swim team. The word "age" as used in the following descriptions, is defined as the swimmer's age as of September 1st to align them with their academic peers. However, each swimmer's age and level of development are considered in group placements, in order to give them the best opportunity for long term success.

Green: Beginner Competitive

Practice at: Chapel Hill, Durham, Finley, Kerr and Taylor YMCAs and the Oberlin Program Center

This is an entry-level developmental group for ages 6-9. The minimum standards and expectations for entry into this group are 25 yards of freestyle and backstroke while demonstrating proper technique and streamlines. Understanding of breaststroke and butterfly is highly desirable.

White: Moderately Competitive

Practice at: Chapel Hill, Durham, Finley, Kerr and Taylor YMCAs and the Oberlin Program Center

This group is for ages 9 - 11 and is designed to build upon technical skills in all four competitive strokes, while also developing a strong aerobic foundation and learning about training disciplines. Skills will be taught with an emphasis on fun and teamwork to ensure that all athletes develop a long-term love for the sport.

Purple: Competitive

Practice at: Chapel Hill, Durham, Finley, Kerr and Taylor YMCAs and the Oberlin Program Center

This is a competitive training group designed for ages 10 - 12 to prepare swimmers for state and regional levels of competition. The emphasis of the Purple group is on mastering the following skills necessary to be successful competitive swimmers: training etiquette, advanced stroke mechanics, race strategies, goal setting, proper nutrition, mental preparation, and the ability to handle increasing training workloads. Developing consistent and committed training habits is a priority in this group.

Silver: Highly Competitive

Practice at: Chapel Hill, Durham, Finley, Kerr and Taylor YMCAs and the Oberlin Program Center

This is the highest competitive training group at the branch age group sites. This group is designed for swimmers ages 12-15 to train them for YMCA and USA Swimming state, regional and national levels of competition. The emphasis of the group will be on developing aerobic capacity through increased swimming volume, intensity, and kicking. Development of progressive stroke technique, race strategies, creating proper nutrition habits, individual goal setting and understanding of the importance of proper mental preparation. Training will also include a specifically designed dry land conditioning program. Commitment to the sport is introduced in Silver to benefit the athletes' development and progression, and with that in mind we encourage a minimum of 70% attendance.

Senior Levels

There are three groups in the senior level swimming those swimmers ages 13 & Over. The goal is specific training for our senior athletes geared towards challenging each individual and developing them to reach their full potential and prepare them to transition into collegiate swimming if one chooses to do so. Emphasis continues on all four strokes and aerobic development, with new elements of training introduced, such as race simulation, power, and mental preparation.

Age Group Select (AGS)

The Age Group Select group consists of those senior swimmers ages 13-15 years of age who exhibit a top level based upon USA Swimming age group time standards, coaches' evaluation, and commitment to a national level training program. These athletes are expected to move into Senior 1 or stay in Senior 2 as they age up.

The Select athlete is willing to make the commitment to perform at the highest level that YOTA offers at the age group level, and will practice away from their home branch site. As such high level qualifying meets are provided for these athletes. Expected attendance is 80% or better

Senior 2

This is a committed group of 15 and over swimmers focused on achieving Upper Southeast Regional YMCA cut times (Short Course Championship Meet) and beyond. Swimmers who qualify for Y nationals are expected to swim at Y nationals. At this point swimming is becoming one of your main activities thereby meet and practice attendance is becoming more important to include the summer months. Vacations and other activities are encouraged to be taken in balance with the swimming practice and meet schedule. This training group should begin to take a higher priority in instances of conflict with outside activities. However, individual flexibility in order to balance a variety of activities will be a consideration. 80% or better attendance is encouraged.

Senior 1

The Senior I Group is for 15 and over swimmers focused on achieving the YMCA National swimming standards. This is a maximum commitment, high achieving training group where swimming is a mainstay in their life.

Admittance AND continuation in the group is by invitation only, based on coach considerations/decisions and will be based on, but not limited to, proven commitment, attendance, ability and work ethic, time management, high character standards, and willingness to adapt/adjust. A practice attendance of at least 90% is required to remain in this group.

Prep programs

YOTA Prep: Developmental

Practice at: Chapel Hill, Durham, Finley, Kerr and Taylor YMCAs and the Oberlin Program Center

The YOTA prep program provides a great bridge between swim lessons and swim team for 11 & under swimmers. It's the ideal opportunity for swimmers who want to continue their swimming development. Our goal is to help build self-confidence and a love for swimming. In addition, our goal is to have individuals qualify for one of the competitive age groups (Green, White, or Purple) at the YOTA Swim Team Site Director's discretion. There are No Meets offered to this group, which allows for non-members to participate.

Junior Prep: Growth Opportunity

Practice at: Kerr, Taylor and Downtown Durham YMCAs

The Junior prep group is for 12 & Over swimmers that want to continue their progression in swimming, can be relatively new to the sport, or are not ready to commit to the competitive YOTA groups, or don't possess the ability yet to swim in a competitive group.

The goal is to provide them the opportunity to continue to develop at their pace while possibly balancing a myriad of other activities and commitments in their life. Athletes are encouraged to attend all practices and meets available to them, however, there is no required commitment expectation. Junior Prep swimmers are only allowed to compete in YMCA meets.

YOTA Swim Team Safe Sport Policy (Appendix B)

The YMCA of the Triangle Area (YOTA) Swim Team experience is designed to create life-changing experiences through a safe, fun and competitive environment, where we build honest, meaningful, and transparent relationships.

We have a zero-tolerance policy for abuse. The YMCA of the Triangle and the YOTA Swim Team abide by the USA Swimming Safe Sport requirements as well as the Safe Sport Act, which was passed in 2018. Both Safe Sport and the Safe Sport Act protect our athletes and create an environment where each athlete feels safe and protected. YOTA policies and procedures and Safe Sport requirements ensure this environment stays in place and our athletes are protected.

In April 2019, the U.S. Center for Safe Sport created the Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) to set a baseline for acceptable safety standards that limit one-on-one interactions between adults and minor athletes. All USA-Swimming participants, coaches, and clubs are required to implement MAAPP in their programs.

YOTA Swim Team coaches are held to high selection and screening standards before ever working with athletes. Coaches must pass national, state and local background checks, the DOJ Sex Offenders Registry, participate in Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Trainings and additional education with the United States Olympic Committee Safe Sport Center and YMCA of the USA. Safety and abuse prevention are top priorities for YOTA staff.

However, creating a safe environment is a collaborative effort between staff, parents and athletes. We need your help to reinforce the YOTA culture and to ensure the safety, inclusion, and transparency outlined. Here's what we need from you:

1. **KNOW:** Understand what is appropriate, what to look for and how to protect our athletes
2. **SEE:** Be engaged in your athletes' activities, communications and interactions
3. **RESPOND:** Stop inappropriate behaviors and report immediately to the YMCA Confidential Hotline (919-719-9690), your site coach or their supervisor.

Working together we will ensure a safe culture and promote positive behaviors.

The following practices apply to all YOTA Swim Team and USA Swimming members as well as all YOTA Swim Team events.

Should there be a violation of these policies during a swim meet, athletes will be sent home at the parent's expense and risk missing their meet. No refunds will be issued in these instances.

YOTA TEAM ACTIVITIES

- All interactions should be observable and interruptible.
- Coaches will communicate to parents if bullying incidents occur.
- Parents are prohibited from direct communication with another athlete unless they have consent from the other child's parent/guardian.
- Coaches encourage parents to communicate frequently and often for any concerns, questions or feedback.
- Horseplay of any form is not allowed in the locker rooms.
- Videos and pictures will not be taken at practices or meets without prior permission by the YOTA Swim Team.
- Coaches will never massage (with hands or object) an athlete for any purpose.
- Coaches will never touch an athlete in an area covered by the bathing suit.
- When a coach touches an athlete as part of instruction, the coach should do so in open view of others and inform the athlete of what he/she is doing prior to the initial contact. Touching athletes should be minimized.
- Encouraged physical interactions would include high fives, fist bumps, side-to-side hugs and handshakes.
- Coaches will not invite or have an athlete(s) to their home.
- Athletes should not sit on the lap of or otherwise inappropriately touch any YOTA team member or coach.
- Coaches will not date or have a personal or sexual relationship with YOTA athletes.

CONDUCT FOR TEAM TRAVEL

- Athletes & coaches cannot travel one-on-one, regardless of age or other circumstance. This includes travel trips, rides to and from practice, or any other travel.
- All interactions between athlete and coach should be **observable and interruptible**.
- When entering athletes' rooms on travel trips, for purpose of curfew and safety checks, there will be at least 2 coaches/chaperones.
- If athletes are sharing a room with other athletes they will be of the same gender and similar age.
- There will be no male athletes in female athletes' rooms and no female athletes in male athletes' rooms.
- Athletes are not permitted in coaches' rooms.
- Swimmers are to remain with the team at all times during the trip. Swimmers are not to leave the competition venue, the hotel, restaurant, or any other place at which the team has gathered without the permission/knowledge of the coach and/or chaperone.

ELECTRONIC AND SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATION

The YOTA Swim Team recognizes the prevalence of electronic communication and social media and that many of our swimmers use these means as their primary method of communication. While YOTA acknowledges the value of these methods of communication, we also realize that there are associated risks that must be considered when adults (coaches) use these methods to communicate with minors (athletes). Additionally, athletes need to adhere to a set of standards when communicating with one another via electronic communication and social media.

CONDUCT FOR ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

All communication between a coach/other YOTA adult and an athlete must be professional and solely for the purpose of communicating about YOTA Swim Team activities. The content and intent of all electronic communications must adhere to the USA Swimming Code of Conduct regarding Athlete Protection.

All communication between an athlete and coach or athlete and their peers should be **Transparent, Accessible and Professional.**

Transparent: Your communication should not only be clear and direct, but also free of hidden meanings, innuendo, and expectations.

Accessible: All electronic communication between coaches and athletes should be considered a matter of record and part of the YOTA Swim Team records. Whenever possible, include another coach or parent in the communication so there is no question regarding accessibility or content. The YOTA Swim Team will utilize a group messaging service whenever possible.

Professional: All communication between a coach and an athlete should be conducted professionally as a representative of the YOTA Swim Team. This includes word choices, tone, grammar, and subject matter that model the standards and integrity of a staff member.

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Coaches are not permitted to have any athlete member of the YOTA Swim Team join their personal social media accounts as a "friend."
- A coach should not "friend" request or accept any "friend" request from an athlete. In addition, the coach should remind the athlete that this is not permitted. Athletes should report (to a trusted coach, the Director of Competitive Swimming or the YMCA Confidential Hotline) if they receive a "friend" request from a coach.
- Coaches and athletes are not permitted to "private message" each other through any social media accounts.
- The YOTA Swim Team has official Facebook/Twitter/Instagram pages that athletes and their parents can "friend" for information and updates on team-related matters.

OTHER COMMUNICATION PRACTICES

- Athletes and coaches may use email to communicate; a parent or other YOTA coach should be included.
- Coaches may communicate electronically with an individual athlete to convey practice/program information; communication should include a second adult, preferably another YOTA coach or parent.

- Vulgar, bullying or sexualized communication will not be tolerated between YOTA Swim Team athletes, coaches or parents via text, email, or social media
- Athletes may not text, email, post, tweet, or otherwise communicate with derogatory content regarding the team, a coach, or a teammate. (This includes vulgar, bullying or sexualized language, photos, videos)
- Athletes, parents and staff will discuss proper social media usage at the beginning of each season.
- No one should be taking photos/videos while behind blocks or in the locker rooms at any time.
- No one should post personal information of any kind about another member of the team without prior consent.

Violation of these policies could result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the YOTA Swim Team.

LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS

- Athletes and coaches must use designated locker rooms or changing areas when changing into or out of a swimsuit. Changing, in whole or in part, is prohibited on the pool deck.
- YOTA staff will randomly and regularly monitor the use of locker rooms and changing areas. This monitoring will be conducted through:
 - sweeps of the locker rooms before athletes arrive; with women checking on female locker rooms and men checking on male locker rooms
 - regular intermittent staff supervision during periods of use
 - leaving doors open when adequate privacy is still possible

Swimmer Code of Conduct - (Appendix C)

As representatives of the YOTA Swim Team and the YMCA of the Triangle Area, swimmers are expected to speak and behave in a manner that is respectful, responsible, honest, and caring. If each swimmer is mindful of these traits, appropriate conduct should never be an issue. (All you really need to know about good conduct you learned in kindergarten)

The following guidelines are to be followed by YOTA swimmers at all practices, meets, and other team functions. Special activities, such as team travel trips, require adherence to additional activity-specific conduct guidelines, which must be signed and returned prior to the activity or trip.

Practice and Meet Behavior

During practice and meets, swimmers are expected to follow the guidelines and rules of behavior.

1. Follow verbal or written directions of the coaching staff
2. At no time will an athlete hinder another athlete's practice
3. Know what time practice and meets start in order to be on time and prepared
4. Follow proper lane etiquette at practice which includes:
 - No sitting nor pulling on lane-lines
 - Feet-first entry into pool – unless instructed by coach to do otherwise
 - Circle swim, leave adequate distance between swimmers (5-10-secs)
 - If being passed by another swimmer, be sure to allow adequate space on your left side to allow the faster swimmer to pass by or briefly stop at a wall until the faster swimmer has passed by.
 - If you must rest – get out of the way of the other swimmers
 - When finishing a swim – move out of the way so the person behind you can finish

These rules are designed to help teach the swimmers the core values of respect and responsibility and to ensure that the staff is providing the best teaching environment possible. In addition, swimmers are expected to adhere to the following behavioral guidelines when at practices, meets, and team activities.

The following behaviors are not acceptable:

1. Unsportsmanlike conduct including taunting, teasing, or speaking negatively about teammates, competitors, officials, or coaches
2. Use of inappropriate, strong, or vulgar language or gestures
3. Lying, deceit, dishonesty
4. Littering, abuse, or misuse of equipment, furniture, or other items of property
5. Any electronic device use that violates USA Swimming's Athlete Protection Policy regarding the use of electronic and recording devices
6. Want to mention specifics like no photos/video in locker rooms, etc...? - MH
7. Any behavior as outlined in the YOTA Safe Sport policy. (See attachment A)
8. Sexual harassment
9. Bullying, Harassment or Hazing (as defined below by the athlete protection training from USA swimming)

Bullying - Definition:

Repeated and/or severe aggressive behavior directed at minors that is intended or likely to hurt, control or diminish another person emotionally, physically or sexually.

Examples:

- Ridiculing, taunting, name-calling or intimidating someone
- Excluding or ignoring a member of the team
- Cyberbullying: Using social or electronic media to harass, frighten, intimidate, or humiliate someone

Harassment - Definition:

Repeated and/or severe conduct that causes fear, humiliation or annoyance; offends or degrades; creates a hostile environment; or reflects discriminatory bias. Attempts to establish dominance, superiority or power over another.

Harassment often occurs over issues of:

- Race/ethnicity/culture
- Religion
- Gender identity
- Sexual orientation
- Physical or mental disability

Examples:

- Using racial slurs against a teammate
- Excluding a teammate based on a perceived difference
- Repeatedly teasing a teammate based on stereotypes

Hazing - Definition:

Conduct that subjects another person—physically or emotionally—to anything that may endanger, abuse, humiliate, degrade or intimidate the person as a condition of joining or being accepted by a group. Hazing differs from bullying. Hazing is meant to bring someone into a group, not exclude them

Examples:

- Requiring a teammate to drink excessive amounts of alcohol as part of initiation
- Pummeling a teammate with punches to prove they are tough enough to be part of the group.

The following actions will not be tolerated:

- Verbal or physical abuse toward others
- Theft of any kind
- Vandalism or any destruction of property, public or private
- Use of tobacco products or vaping
- Use of alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or other illegal substances
- Sexual activity on team travel trips

Possible Consequences for Violation(s) of this Code of Conduct:

- At a minimum, a meeting with athlete(s) (and possibly the parent(s)) and coach will occur to discuss the violation, which could result in a verbal warning, suspension or even dismissal from YOTA depending on the findings.
- Removal from an event or swimming session without refund of travel fees.
- Temporary or permanent dismissal from the swim team without refund of fees associated with membership on the YOTA Swim Team
- Possible dismissal from the community YMCA premises and possible revocation of membership and/or usage privileges.

I have read the YOTA Competitive Swimming Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its provisions. If I do not abide by these provisions a meeting will occur between swimmer(s), parent(s), Head Coach, and the Director of Competitive Swimming and, if necessary, the YMCA VP of Youth Development to determine exact outcome.

Appendix D - YMCA of the Triangle
Fundamental Principles of Youth Sports



