

## **YMCA of Greater Erie Swim Lesson Enrollment Guide**

In the YMCA Swim Lessons program, participants are taught not only swimming skills but also skills that will allow them to enjoy the aquatic environment and develop a healthy spirit, mind and body. YMCA Swim Lessons are divided into 3 programs to keep the participant with peers. Each program consists of 5 components—Personal safety, personal growth, water sports & games, stroke development and rescue skills.

The three programs are:

1. **Parent/Child**—for children **ages 6 months to 3 years and their parents**. Primary objective is to get both parent and child comfortable in the water. The classes are designed to allow the child to have fun in the water while parents will become aware of how to teach his or her child basic aquatic skills such as body positioning, arm strokes, kicking and breath control.
2. **Preschool**—for children **ages 3–Grade School**. This is the child's first experience in the pool **without their parents**. Children are taught the basic skills that are the building blocks of swimming, proper body positioning, arm strokes, kicking, and breath control. Class participants are divided into 1 of 4 levels. The following gives a brief description of the stroke development in each level.
  - **PIKE**—This beginner level will help children develop safe pool behavior, adjust to the water, and develop independent movement. Not only will instruction include how to develop proper body positioning on the front, back, and the side, but also will allow the child to develop the paddle stroke, kicking skills, and comfort in putting the face in the water while blowing bubbles and moving. Back flotation is used as an instructor aid. To advance to the next level, children are expected to swim the width of the pool on their front, back, and side with proper form and endurance.
  - **EEL**—This advanced beginner level will reinforce all Pike skills and continue to develop endurance. Children in this level will start developing a rudimentary crawl on the front and back as well as a symmetrical pull for the breaststroke and elementary back. Back flotation is also used in this level as an instructor aid. To progress to the next level children are required to complete all rudimentary strokes with proper form and endurance to swim 25 yards. Water adjustment for the large pool is also recommended.
  - **RAY**—This advanced level will develop endurance for swimming 25 yards with and without flotation. Children will continue working on their rudimentary strokes (front and back crawl, breaststroke, sidestroke, and elementary backstroke). An introduction to diving will be given and treading skills will be developed. To progress to

the next level children must be able to swim continuously for 25 yards without flotation.

- **STARFISH**-This advanced level is a review of previously learned skills for children who are now comfortable in the water without flotation and who can perform the 5 basic rudimentary strokes (mentioned above) for 25 yards. Children will remain in the Starfish level till eligible for the Youth and Adult program. The correct level for your child in the Youth and Adult program will vary depending on child's ability.

**3. Youth, Teen and Adult Lessons**-for children ages 6 years and up. This program is designed to use a student centered teaching approach, problem solving and guided discovery to ensure the student's safety, and make the learning process more enjoyable. The program is divided into eight levels, each level building on the preceding level. These levels may be modified for the Adult lessons.

- **TADPOLE**-This beginner level is designed for the school-age children to develop safe pool behavior and the basics to develop independent movement. Instruction includes proper body positioning on the front, back, and side. Floating, gliding and kicking skills are also introduced. To advance to the next level, children must be able to perform the front, back, and side paddle stroke the width of the pool with proper form and endurance. Water adjustment for the large pool is also recommended and children must be comfortable in deep water while putting their face in.
- **POLLIWOG**-This beginner level is for children who are able to swim 25 yards on the front, back, and side with good form. Participants at this level will start developing a rudimentary front, side, and back crawl. To advance to the next level, children must perform the front, back, and side crawl with proper form and endurance for 25 yards.
- **GUPPY**-This advanced beginner level will continue working on the front crawl by adding rotary breathing. Back crawl skills will continue to develop endurance and the front and back symmetrical pull will also be introduced to start the elementary backstroke and the breaststroke pull. To advance to the next level, children must perform a rudimentary front crawl with rotary breathing, back crawl, side paddle, and the rudimentary front and back symmetrical pull with proper form and endurance.
- **MINNOW**-This intermediate level will continue developing the rudimentary strokes from the Guppy and will introduce the

scissor and breaststroke kicks, to develop a rudimentary sidestroke and breaststroke. To advance to the next level, children must perform the front crawl with rotary breathing, back crawl, rudimentary breaststroke with kick, sidestroke with kick, and elementary back stroke with proper form and endurance.

- FISH-At this advanced intermediate level students will perfect the strokes from the Minnow level and develop glides and turns used in continuous swimming. Students will be introduced to the butterfly stroke. To advance to the next level, children must perform the front & back crawl with open turns. Sidestroke, breaststroke, and elementary back with glides and open turns. The butterfly stroke must also be completed with proper form, turn and endurance.
- FLYING FISH-This advanced level uses drills to refine the technique of all strokes learn previously. Students should be able to perform the front, back, side, breast, elementary back, and butterfly strokes with turns, proper form, and endurance.
- SHARK- At this advanced level students will be introduced to the inverted breaststroke and the over arm sidestroke. All strokes are now performed using a start and a turn. More continuous swimming is encouraged to develop endurance. Children are exposed to a wider range of aquatic experiences through games, volunteering, and mentoring. To advance to the next level, children must perform the individual medley and all strokes mentioned above with starts, turns, and proper form and endurance.
- PORPOISE-This final level gives children the opportunity to develop their speed and endurance for the complete stroke from start to finish. These advanced swimmers are now developing rescue techniques and leadership skills.
- TEEN & ADULT-Beginners to advanced swimmers. Instructors will work with you on a more individualized basis to reach your goals.