



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

HEALTHY COMPETITION SKILLS FOR LIFE

**Swim Team Handbook
Eastside Family Y**

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed for Eastside Family Y Swim Team families as a reference for team philosophy, structure, policy, and helpful information. It is divided into sections and has an appendix for easy reference. The majority of the information in this handbook will be valid year after year. Current schedules, rosters, time standards, and other updates will be posted on the website and families will be notified by e-mail. While this handbook contains a large amount of information, there will inevitably be questions not answered within its pages. Please contact one of the coaches or the Swim Team Director immediately if you have a question concerning the swim team program.

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MESSAGE FROM THE AQUATICS DIRECTOR

Welcome to the Eastside Family Y Swim Team. The goal of the swim team, like all Y programs, is to promote youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Competitive swimming is the vehicle through which participants learn life lessons that will impact them forever.

Some of these include:

- Grow personally through the building of self-esteem and self-reliance.
- Clarify values and to develop moral and ethical behaviors based on the Y's founding principles.
- Improve personal and family relationships by learning to care, communicate and cooperate with family and friends.
- Appreciate diversity and to respect people of different ages, abilities, incomes, races, religions, cultures and beliefs.
- Become better leaders and supporters through the give-and-take experiences of working toward a common good.
- Develop specific skills and to acquire new knowledge and ways to grow in spirit, mind and body.
- And most importantly, Have Fun and enjoy life!

We focus on the values that will enable each participant to build strong character and we take pride in the leaders and role models who graduate from the program. Throughout the program, you will find constant examples of these traits in action from our coaches, swimmers and parents.

The mission of the YMCA of Greater Erie is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all. The Y's involvement in sports has been one means of teaching Christian ideals, values and behaviors. Sports in the Y have never been an end in itself, but rather a vehicle for achieving a much more global purpose: values education. Values education is an integral part of the National YMCA Program. The values of fair play are strongly emphasized along with respect for oneself, for the opponent, and for the official game rules. All of these fair-play values contribute to an attitude towards sports which keeps winning in perspective, that is, only one goal among other important goals. We believe that children can benefit greatly from participation in competitive swimming. In swimming they learn to practice healthy lifestyles...spiritually, mentally and physically.

While there will be some experiences that are tougher than others, the coaches and parents comprise an important team in teaching the valuable lessons of a young person's life. We are excited that you are a part of our Y program and look forward to your family's involvement throughout the year.

GO Eastside!

Emily Irwin
Aquatics Director

ABOUT THE YMCA MOVEMENT

The YMCA of the USA is a national organization, founded in 1851 (the YMCA movement began in London in 1844 and quickly spread to North America), which has evolved to promote the modern mission to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all. As “America’s Oldest Swimming Instructor”, the Y has long valued the importance of fitness activities in the development of young people. All Y programs, including competitive swimming, incorporate values education and character development through the promotion of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Today, the Y engages more than 10,000 neighborhoods across the U.S. As the nation’s leading nonprofit committed to helping people and communities to learn, grow and thrive, our contributions are both far-reaching and intimate—from influencing our nation’s culture during times of profound social change to the individual support we provide an adult learning to read.

By nurturing the potential of every child and teen, improving the nation’s health and well-being, and supporting and serving our neighbors, the Y ensures that everyone has the opportunity to become healthier, more confident, connected and secure. Best known for community-based health and fitness programs, the Y teaches kids to swim, organizes youth sports programs, offers exercise classes for people with disabilities, and leads adult fitness programs. In addition, Ys offer hundreds of other programs, including day camp, early childhood and school age education programs, teen clubs, environmental programs, substance abuse prevention, family nights, job training, international exchange and many more. National headquarters for the YMCA of the USA are in Chicago, IL.

ABOUT THE YMCA OF GREATER ERIE

The YMCA of Greater Erie is a non-profit organization whose cause is to strengthen community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Our cause is guided by our mission to: put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body for all. Serving over 45,000 people annually, the YMCA of Greater Erie includes 4 membership branches, 21 early care and school-age enrichment program centers and YMCA Camp Sherwin, an outdoor camping and recreation facility. We extend our reach through collaborative partnerships with the City of Erie to administer their summer recreation program and the Erie Housing Authority offering afterschool and summer educational and recreational programs. We reach thousands of youth through these programs and further address community need by the Summer Foods Program, offering free meals to children during the summer months.

Numerous community programs include Happy Feet, a movement class for differently-abled people; Adaptive Swimming Lessons, a program for those in the autism spectrum; ACT, an exercise based cancer recovery program; and Healthy Kids Day, a day geared towards healthy living. We also proudly support the community through an active volunteer program and collections of items for donation to area schools and nonprofits.

The Eastside Family YMCA is a branch of the YMCA of Greater Erie.

YMCA OF GREATER ERIE HISTORY

The YMCA of Greater Erie celebrates **153 years of service**, not just to the Erie community but with an outreach and influence throughout the region of Northwest Pennsylvania.

From our beginnings 153 years ago, the YMCA of Greater Erie's legacy has been about the inspirational stories shared from the individuals the Y has helped. Each year of our history has been marked by undeniable accomplishments in the face of the challenges of changing times, but more than anything, what marks our history is our commitment to helping people. The Y is a safe, reliable community resource where both the young and young-at-heart can learn, grow, be accepted and connect with family and community members.

The Y's impact in our community extends well beyond our gyms and pools. The Y is the largest provider of health and well-being, family strengthening, youth development and social responsibility programs in Erie County. There is rarely an instance in a person's life in which the Y does not play a role.

The Y removes barriers to health and wellness, aids youth development, assists personal achievement, and gives a direct connection to nature in the midst of a harried society. To a family, we might be their favorite pool. To a child, we might be their best friend. To an adult, we might be the second chance they so desperately need. All in all, we're in the business of human potential.

The YMCA is part of a world wide effort to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build a healthy mind, spirit and body for all.

Our mission is not static. It's not a destination. It evolves to meet the needs of the communities we serve and the individuals that depend on our programs and services. Understanding our mission is important. Our dedication to deliver on that mission is critical. But, it's equally imperative that we connect on a more personal level to the people that are part of our Y family. We need to know names, faces and hear their stories.

Members of the Y realize they are not just casual users of a facility but *connected*, committed members of a Y community. People have come to the Y for many reasons over the years – it began with Erie's first library and adult education classes for immigrants, then discussion and prayer groups and affordable housing. Erie's first basketball games, swimming pools, organized camp for boys and the first public playgrounds all originated with the Y. Soon began suburban outreach work, and the building of the Glenwood, Eastside and County Ys, prayer breakfasts for elected officials and the creation of "daycare" centers. Today, five Y branches offer a variety of recreational and fitness programs, 21 childcare locations provide care to infants as young as six weeks, 11 summer camp locations create an unforgettable summer for school-age children, and 1 public camping and recreation center makes lasting memories.

COACHES

Drew Foster
Kristie Freer
Emily Gowen

PARENT COMMITTEE

Placement for the positions below will be determined at the first parent meeting.

Chair:

Co-Chair:

Fundraising:

Treasurer :

TEAM STRUCTURE

The Eastside Family Y Swim Team is set up in levels based on age, ability, attitude and commitment. This enables swimmers to progress at a steady rate while building bonds with team members in the same age range. Placement into swimming levels is based primarily on the age of swimmers and used for competition. Each swimmer's age is determined as of Dec. 1. If the swimmer turns 9 on Dec. 2, they would continue to swim in the 8 & under group the entire Y season. The practice groups are as follows:

- a. Novice 5-8 years old
- b. Cadet 9-10 years old
- c. Prep 11-12 years old
- d. Junior 13-14 years old
- e. Senior 15-18 years

Swimmers age twelve and under are encouraged to participate in other activities outside of swimming while they develop the technique, endurance and competitive spirit that are the foundations for successful swimming. Junior, Senior and National swimmers make a greater commitment to swimming and to the team by participating in more practices and competitions in preparation for senior and national level competition. The Eastside Family Y program reflects that reality and prepares its swimmers not only to compete, but to succeed at each level of competitive swimming as they mature. In addition, the program values the development of time management skills, the maintenance of above average grades in school and the demonstration of the Y's core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility at all times.

Ages 5-6 – Novice

Minimum Expectation: Complete 25 yards (1 length of pool) freestyle without assistance and have beginning knowledge of the other competitive strokes.

This is the introductory level of competitive swimming for swimmers age 5-6. This group teaches the basics of competitive swimming in the Y while having fun. This group builds upon the skills learned in Y swim lessons and improves all four competitive strokes.

Ages 7-8 – Novice

Minimum Expectation: Complete 50 yards freestyle and backstroke comfortably without assistance and have beginning knowledge of the other competitive strokes. This group builds upon the skills learned in Y swim lessons and improves all four competitive strokes.

Ages 9-10 – Cadets

Minimum Expectations: Complete 50 yards of both freestyle and backstroke and at least 25 yards butterfly and breaststroke. The Cadets develop the four competitive strokes, starts and turns in preparation for team meets.

Ages 11-12 – Preps

Minimum Expectations: Complete 500 yards freestyle, 200 yards individual medley and repeat 50s of each stroke. The Preps focus on stroke technique, basic conditioning and training habits. Swimmers are encouraged to explore greater competitive events and challenges. Dryland exercises are introduced.

Ages 13-14 – Juniors

Minimum Expectations: Be able to complete repeat 200s of Freestyle and repeat 100s of the other strokes while maintaining good stroke mechanics and within reasonable time intervals for the group. The Juniors improve stroke technique, incorporates basic dryland exercises and challenges swimmers with increased training and conditioning. Swimmers compete in a full slate of competitive events and place a greater emphasis on team development.

Ages 15-18 – Seniors

Minimum Expectations: Ability to complete repeat 200s of each stroke within reasonable time intervals for the group, and a desire to challenge oneself to excel as a team member and competitive swimmer. The Junior/Senior Group is for swimmers who wish to make a stronger commitment to the team and to competitive swimming. Attendance, attitude, team support and work ethic expectations are elevated. Swimmers aspiring to excel in the highest levels of swimming will benefit from the foundations developed at this level. Dryland training and structured goal setting is introduced. Teamwork, volunteerism and a positive attitude are essential. Competitions: Participation in team dual meets is expected, invitationals and championship meets are encouraged in all age groups.

SEASONS

The Eastside March. Competitions are held in short course pools, which are 25 yards or 25 meters in length.

PRACTICES

At all levels, practice sessions develop athletic, personal and social skills. Consistent attendance is the best way to build a swimmer's abilities, enhance the coach-swimmer relationship, and strengthen the unity of the team as a whole.

SCHEDULE

Practice schedules are distributed to all Eastside Family Y families prior to the start of each season. Some updates and revisions may be necessary, especially during holidays. These are posted on the Y website and sent to team e-mail addresses.

FACILITIES

The Eastside Family Y Swim Team uses the Harbor Creek High School pool. On occasion we will practice at the Eastside Family Y.

PRACTICE EQUIPMENT

It is important to bring a suit, cap, goggles & towel to practice. The older swimmers may want to bring a water bottle also. CLEARLY LABEL ALL ITEMS THAT ARE TAKEN TO PRACTICE.

PUNCTUALITY AND PRACTICE TIMES

Please be on time to all practices. Practices begin with a warm up period to prevent injury. Instructions and important information are also given to swimmers at the beginning of practice. Ideally, swimmers arrive up to 15 minutes prior to practice and wait on the pool deck for the beginning of practice. Swimmers are picked up within 15 minutes of the end of practice. This is particularly important at Harborcreek & Iroquois, where coaches wait in the front of the building until all swimmers are picked up. If swimming at the Eastside Family Y, swimmers wait in the pool area or lobby to be picked up, not outside of the building. Older swimmers learn to balance their academic and swimming requirements. This is an important life skill they develop through participation in the program. Sometimes academic tasks become particularly demanding and swimmers feel unusual stress to stretch the balance between school and swimming. In this case it is better to take a day off from practice and devote the afternoon/evening to academic requirement. Getting out of practice early to study or complete homework means that the swimmer has given less than their best effort to both swimming and academics. It is better to commit fully to academics that day and return to swimming the next.

*YMCA of Greater Erie swimming policy prohibits staff members from transporting program participants in their personal vehicles. Please do not ask Eastside Family Y coaches to transport your child to or from practices, meets or team activities.

PARENTS AT PRACTICE

Practice is time for swimmers and coaches to concentrate on improving the swimmers' technique, increasing speed and endurance, developing a strong coach-swimmer relationship, and fostering cooperation and unity within the group. Parents are welcome to observe practice by sitting on the designated bleachers and permitting the coaches and swimmers to have uninterrupted time to develop these skills. If you have questions, please ask the group coach after practice.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Practice continues when the weather is not so favorable. Pool closure is a facility, not coach or team decision. Call ahead or go to the pool to learn the fate of practice. Coaches will make a determination whether or not to cancel practice based on the storm prediction and how much practice is left. In the event of snow or ice, practice may be canceled depending on conditions. You will be notified of cancelations by a One Call from the Eastside Family Y. Please make sure we have a current phone number on file so that you get these messages. Swim Team practice cancelations will also be posted on the website and sent out in an e-mail to all team families. Decisions are always made on the cautious side for these practices.

Keep in mind - weather conditions in one location may not be the same elsewhere in the area. If there is a question, call ahead. If parents are experiencing hazardous conditions (snow, ice, thunderstorm) while their children are at practice, please come to the pool in case practice is ended early. Be on the safe side. Use your best judgment.

SWIM MEETS

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 focal points for practice efforts. All swimmers are encouraged to compete in meets for these reasons. We encourage the Eastside Family Y swimmers to compete in team dual meets throughout the year and the Y championship meet at the conclusion of the season. Invitational meets are optional but strongly recommended for some practice groups. The meet schedule will designate which swimmers

are recommended for each meet. If you have questions regarding what is appropriate for your swimmer, please discuss with his/her coach.

CLASSIFICATION

The Eastside Family Y Swim Team competes in Y swimming meets only. There are USA swimming teams in our area; however the Eastside Family Y team is not a USA swim team. These swimming bodies both provide competitive opportunities, but they are slightly different.

USA SWIMMING

USA Swimming is the national governing body for amateur competitive swimming. It 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 (LSCs) which administer USA Swimming activities in smaller geographical areas. Our LSC is Middle Atlantic Swimming.

YMCA COMPETITIVE SWIMMING AND DIVING

YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving is unique in that it, like other Y sports programs, emphasizes the overall development of the athlete. It promotes not only physical achievement, but also mental and spiritual growth. The National YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving Committee conducts the YMCA National Championship Meets and group representatives, district committees and leagues oversee local and regional competitions. Y coaches and officials are certified by Y standards. Y competitions include dual meets, invitationals, and championship meets. Swimmers must compete in at least three YMCA meets during a season to be eligible for the league, regional and national championship meets.

*In order to ensure that the team is adequately prepared for competition, all swimmers are encourage to participate in 75 % of practices through the Eastside Family YMCA swim team. The high school swim team members must comply with all high school team and regulations in order to compete.

AGE GROUP DISTINCTIONS

In both USA Swimming and YMCA meets, swimmers compete according to their ages. Those age groups include: 8 & Under, 9/10, 11/12, 13/14, 15/16, 17/18. Some meets combine age groups, such as 10 & Under, 15-18, Senior (13 & Over) or Open (any age). For USA Swimming and some YMCA invitational meets, swimmers compete in their age as of the first day of the meet. For most YMCA meets in our region, including dual meets; their age group is determined by their age as of Dec. 1 of the current year for short course meets.

TIME STANDARDS

USA Swimming establishes national motivational standards by which its meets are classified (B, BB, A, AA, etc.). These standards are based on a national average of performances over four years with the goal of allowing swimmers to be grouped in competition with swimmers of the same general skill level. Many YMCA meets, including all dual meets, do not have time standards for participation.

ENTERING MEETS

Meet information is sent to team families and posted on the team website, www.ymcaerie.org/eastsideswimteam.

Dual Meets

There is no fee for participation in dual meets. Parents can register their swimmer(s) at the Eastside Family YMCA Welcome Center by phone or in person. Coaches choose the events for swimmers in dual meets but swimmers may request to be entered in certain events. Most dual meets limit swimmers to 3-4 events total.

Invitationals and Championships

All Invitational information will be emailed to parents with a deadline date for submission. All fees must be submitted to the Eastside Family YMCA Welcome Center with their swimmer(s) name(s), events, and payment in full. There will also be an option to hold your credit card information on file with the ESY. Your account will be billed when you submit your swimmer(s) events.

NOTE: Entries submitted after the deadlines will NOT be accepted. Meet entry fees are nonrefundable.

WHAT TO BRING TO MEETS

Team suit – team cap – Goggles – at least 2 towels – team shirt – sweats – warm-up – parka pen & paper (to write down times and events) – shoes & socks – money (for heat sheet, healthy snacks) – healthy snacks (if facility permits)

**** CLEARLY LABEL ALL ITEMS THAT ARE TAKEN TO A MEET****

Deck space is often limited at meets so swimmers should pack accordingly and keep their belongings in their bags at all times.

PUNCTIONALITY

Please arrive at the meet location and check in with coaches on deck at least 15 minutes before the designated warm-up time. This will permit swimmers to fully stretch and warm up before competing and enable coaches to make relay decisions before the start of competition. Directions to the most frequently attended meet locations are on the website.

TEAM AREA

Swimmers should sit in the designated team area. This promotes team support and unity, which in turn contributes to swimming success and fun. Depending on the facility, there may or may not be a separate spectator area for family members. When there is such an area, parents who are not volunteering sit in the stands. Younger swimmers may choose to sit with their parents if the child prefers but they are encouraged to sit with the team. At many invitational meets, parents who are not volunteering in the meet are not permitted on the pool deck. This is because deck space is limited and interruptions are distracting to swimmers and coaches. Swimmers also develop responsibility and camaraderie when working together as a team. In addition, just as swimmers are asked to sit together as a team, parents are invited to do the same. This creates team spirit and support for the swimmers from the spectator stands and is highly encouraging to the team.

BEHAVIOR

Swim meets are an opportunity to display not only athletic ability but also team pride and sportsmanship. Parents and swimmers alike represent the Eastside Family Y swim team and the YMCA of Greater Erie association. Swimmers are encouraged to cheer for their teammates and to stay until the end of the meet, meet session or until the last Eastside Family Y swimmer competes. If a swimmer must leave before the end of a meet, please notify one of the coaches before the start of the meet.

HERDING/CLERK OF COURSE/PRE-SEEDING

Some meets offer a clerk of course to help organize 10 & under swimmers for the events. Dual meets and some other meets do not have a clerk of course or bullpen and swimmers are responsible to get to their heat and lane. At dual meets, parent volunteers serve as herders who help assemble younger swimmers for each event and send them to the starting blocks. Some meets are pre-seeded. In both cases, swimmers learn to stay attentive to what event is being called to the clerk or the blocks. If a swimmer misses an event, he or she may not be able to make it up.

CHECKING WITH COACHES

Swimmers talk to their coaches before and after each swim. This is an important opportunity for coaches to give final reminders and encouragement before the event, and to offer praise and constructive review afterward. The role of parents at a swim meet is to love and support their children and to set a positive example by volunteering.

RESULTS AND AWARDS

Results are posted on a wall at each meet. Parents and swimmers may copy official times and places from these results. The kind of awards (medals, ribbons, plaques) and the number of awards given at each meet are determined by the host team, or by league by-laws. Team trophies are given primarily at championship meets. All awards are given to coaches at the end of the meet and are distributed at practice. Coaches also receive the official results from the meet. These will be uploaded into the team database.

SNACKS

Healthy snacks and beverages (water, sports drinks) are good for swimmers to have during meets, especially during long sessions (see nutrition section for tips). Some facilities do not allow food or drink on deck so please be attentive to policies at the various pools. Swimmers show respect to the facility by picking up all trash in the team area before leaving the meet.

TEAM APPAREL

Swimmers wear Eastside Family Y Swim Team attire, including the team cap at all meets. Wearing team apparel promotes team pride and unity. It also helps coaches, parents and other swimmers locate Eastside Family Y team members.

All swimmers wear the team suit at all meets. For championship meets only, swimmers in the Prep, Junior and Senior age groups may wear approved Speedo "performance" suits such as the Speedo LZR Elite, FSII or FS Pro. These suits are considerably more expensive and are the last piece of meet preparation for those swimmers who are more physically developed and participate at a very high level of commitment and effort. The benefit of these suits is negligible for young swimmers who are physically undeveloped and who do not train at a level that requires the body to break down and rest prior to the championship meet. These suits are for championship meets only, as designated by the coaching staff. All swimmers and/or parents are advised to talk to their coach prior to purchasing such a suit.

PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Swim meets are completely run by parent volunteers. There are numerous jobs to be filled at meets and volunteering is a great way to stay busy between your child's events. It also gets parents involved in the achievements of all team members and builds relationships with other parents in the swimming community. By sharing volunteer duties at both home and away meets, ESY parents contribute to a community of responsibility and support and they set a positive example for swimmers.

In line with YMCA volunteer procedures, all parent volunteers must complete the required volunteer paperwork, including Act 33 & 34 clearances which are paid for by the YMCA. As required by the State of Pennsylvania, parents are not permitted to volunteer, in an official capacity, without completion of an Act 33 & 34 clearance. You can complete online paperwork at www.ymcaerie.org/volunteer and/or contact Community Involvement Coordinator Kelly Gibson at kjibson@ymcaerie.org or 899-9622. Please allow at least 10 days for the completion of this process.

All meets require:

- 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 Swimming and/or YMCA, depending on the meet). There is always a demand for these volunteers. Training is technical but not lengthy or difficult.

Home meets also need:

- Ribbon writers - Place computer-generated labels on ribbons and other awards for swimmers. No prior experience necessary.
- Runners - After each heat, this person takes cards from timers to the computer operator. No prior experience necessary.
- Hospitality - This is usually reserved for invitational and championship meets. These volunteers provide drinks to other meet workers, act as host/hostess in the hospitality room where coaches and officials go to relax and have a snack. No prior experience needed.
- Computer Operator - This person inputs data during meets (times, relay names, etc.) and generates results from the system. Training on specific meet manager software is needed.
- Timing System Operator - This person operates the Colorado Timing System console that times each event electronically. He or she coordinates with the Computer Operator and Referee to keep the meet running efficiently.
- Clerk of Course - The clerk organizes swimmers into proper heats, gives them cards if necessary, and sends them to starting area behind blocks.
- Herder - Dual meets and some other meets do not have a Clerk of Course. In these meets, parent volunteers called "herders" are used to assemble the 10 and younger swimmers and take them to the starting blocks.
- Marshal - Monitors the pool deck, especially, but not only, during warm-up periods to make sure that safety rules are being followed.
- Head Timer - Organizes the timers and acts as a backup timer in case a timer's watch malfunctions.
- Concessions/Snack Bar - Sell snack items to swimmers and family members attending the meet.

FINANCIAL/PROGRAM FEES

There are many costs involved in operating the swim team. Much, but not all of the cost is covered by program fees. Below is a list of what is and is not covered by your program fees.

Covered:

coaches' salaries
pool rental fees
League Dues
YUSA Team Registration
general operating costs
dual meets

Not Covered:

suit, cap, goggles and training equipment
team clothing and special events,
invitational and championship meet costs
Districts and States costs
Nationals costs

Payment in Full

At the time of registration a family pays \$200 / child, \$180 for any additional swimmers and must be a member in good standing of the YMCA of Greater Erie. High School swimmer's with swim coach verification is \$105.

Financial Assistance

To apply, contact the aquatic director or the membership director. Inquiries, the application process, and awards of assistance are kept confidential.

FUNDRAISING

The Eastside Family Y Swim Team does require families to participate in fundraising and/or volunteer activities. Fundraising and volunteering is necessary for the program for specific purposes. Fundraising helps to pay for coach's travel, facility equipment, end of the year Awards Banquet, swimmer's gifts, etc.

YMCA ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Each year, the YMCA of Greater Erie conducts its annual support campaign. This raises money to help youth and families in need to participate in YMCA programs, including the Eastside Family Y Swim Team. The swim team is proud of the contributions its families make yearly to the campaign and you are encouraged to continue to help make a difference through your generosity. Volunteers in several capacities are needed and Eastside Family Y swim team families are encouraged to get involved in the campaign.

COMMUNICATION

Regular communication is essential for coaches, swimmers and parents and several means of communication are used. Please check each of these sources regularly and promptly contact coaches or the swim team director if you have questions, concerns or information to share. Please let us know if you are willing to receive text messages from the Y for swim team communication.

INFORMATION FOR SWIMMERS AND THEIR FAMILIES:

E-Mail – Information, reminders and last-minute information is sent to families via e-mail or one call. This is the primary means of communication. Please update any new information with an email to the Aquatics Director when necessary.

Eastside Essentials –Team newsletter with news, notes and a monthly calendar from the swim team Coaches on upcoming events, deadlines, changes, etc. These are posted on the website and bulletin board on or around the first of each month.

Eastside Y web site – The ESY website, www.ymcaerie.org/eastsideswimteam is a site used for most of the team management functions.

Verbal – Sometimes swimmers are given information verbally by coaches. Regularly ask your swimmer about information given verbally.

Parent meetings – Held regularly throughout the year, these meetings allow coaches to convey information directly to parents regarding the team, the season and the sport. They also provide an open forum for parents to ask questions and address concerns.

Facebook – The Eastside Y Swim Team has an official facebook page – search and like eastsideymcaswimteam

COMMUNICATING WITH COACHES:

Contacting coaches by phone – The Eastside YMCA Aquatic Directors office phone is (814) 899-9622. The director or assistant director is normally in the office between 9:00 am and 5:00 pm most weekdays.

NOTE: PLEASE DO NOT CALL COACHES AT HOME. Please respect their personal and family time by addressing issues during office hours or before and after practice.

E-mail – Parents are welcome to e-mail coaches with questions, information and ideas. Please address large issues or concerns in person with the appropriate staff member(s). Each coach may be reached by e-mail through the team website.

Individual coaches are not required, but may provide their cell phone numbers at their own discretion. Please use those respectfully and judiciously.

Meeting (formal or informal) with coaches – Coaches are usually available before or after practice time to answer quick questions. If you would like to address issues that require more time, please schedule an appointment with your child's coach or the Aquatics Director.

Electronic Communication Policy

YMCA of Greater Erie coaches and volunteers are not permitted to contact program participants by phone or electronically for any purpose other than transmitting program-specific information. Employees may not participate in social network communication with program participants. Please do not solicit such social or casual communication with Eastside Family Y coaching staff members.

GRIEVANCES

Most problems are rooted in 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 appropriate person.

Contact: Practice Level Coach

When: An issue is group-specific, site-specific or swimmer-specific or when there is a question or concern for a specific coach.

Contact: Aquatic Director

When: An issue concerns the overall swim team, financial or administrative concerns.

ANNUAL AWARDS BANQUET

Each spring the team has an awards dinner honoring the team's achievements during the previous year. Each practice level prepares a presentation summarizing its experience during the season. Graduating seniors receive special recognition as they complete their Eastside Family Y careers. Additional special awards are also given.

SWIMMER, PARENT, AND COACH

The relationship between swimmer, coach and parent is an important aspect of swimming. In order to support the swimmer's development, it is important to maintain a mutually supportive partnership with regular communication. 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 triangle is the maintenance of an environment most conducive to the development of the swimmer - both as an athlete and as a person.

PARENTS

Parents are a vital part of every child's life. They are central figures in the growth and development of their children. Parents are the primary example after which children pattern their own behavior and beliefs. For athletes, especially teenagers, the role of parents may change as other adults, including coaches, assume a strong role not only in their physical achievements but also in their mental and emotional development. Because coaches and teammates have such a strong impact on a swimmer, parents should fully investigate the philosophy and conduct of the program before registering their child. When a child begins swimming on a team, the parents put their faith in the program and its coaches to make the child's experience positive, rewarding, and enjoyable. There are ways in which parents can also aid the experience.

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

In swimming, the primary duty for parents is to love and support their swimmer(s) regardless of performance and achievement level. A child needs to know that no matter what happens, he or she is loved and supported. Praise swimmers for their own personal achievements and refrain from comparisons with other swimmers or with the past achievements of a parent or other relative. Whatever a swimmer does or doesn't achieve is a result of many factors and is not a reflection on his or her parents. In addition, much can be learned from challenging or difficult situations such as unrealized goals. By showing love and support to your swimmer during these times, rather than trying to "fix" the situation for them, you allow him or her to learn, grow and develop as an individual.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE

Children tend to pattern their attitudes and behavior after the example set by their parents. Please be aware of your attitudes and behavior, especially in the team setting. Exemplify good sportsmanship and the positive values of the Y. The Eastside Family Y program encourages swimmers to be honest, caring, respectful and responsible, to ask questions and address concerns directly and to serve others. Observing these habits in parents further enforces the lessons taught at the Y. After all, parents represent the team and the Y as much as the swimmers and coaches do.

POSITIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

We ask that parents reserve concerns and disagreements about the program for discussion with a coach or the swim team director. Questioning or criticizing a coach, team member, or the program in front of a swimmer seriously damages the swimmer's trust and confidence in the coach and the team. If your swimmer has a problem, try to gather as much information as possible and address it with the coach or appropriate person directly. Avoid passing judgment, jumping to conclusions or discussing it with others. Gossip is never constructive.

GET INVOLVED

We invite parents to become involved in the swim team in a constructive way. There are numerous volunteer opportunities that allow parents to be more involved in swimming and in the Eastside Family Y swim team. Swim meets (all meets, but especially those hosted by Eastside Family Y) require extensive volunteer efforts to run. Team social events bring parents, swimmers and coaches together in an informal and fun setting. Chaperones are needed for all team travel meets and provide an opportunity to work closely with coaches and swimmers. Help is always needed with apparel orders and distribution, bulletin board maintenance, psyche-up dinners/activities, and in other areas.

...But not too involved

Please respect the time your swimmer spends with his or her coach and teammates during practice or team activities. Reserve instruction and coaching for the coaches and preserve the uninterrupted time that coaches and swimmers spend at practices and meets. If you have a question or concern, contact your child's coach.

OUTSIDE CONSULTATION

If you or your swimmer has questions about mechanics or desires additional help with their training and preparation, consult with his/her group coach or with the Aquatics Director. Parents and swimmers are advised not to seek instruction or advice from other coaches, trainers or instructors.

SWIMMERS – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Eastside Family Y swimmers strive to be positive team members in and out of the pool. Most importantly, swimmers should always remember that they represent the Y and the Eastside Family Y Swim Team. Their words and actions reflect not only on themselves but on their teammates, parents, coaches, and the Y. With the guidance of coaches and parents, swimmers are expected to demonstrate the Y's character development traits of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

FOCUS ON TEAM

Individual achievements are important but supporting others and working together toward a common goal raises everyone's performance level. Furthermore, shared experiences are more fun and exciting than individual ones. Together Everyone Achieves More. **Act, Think, Look, and Talk Positively!** Attitudes are contagious so make sure that yours is worth catching. Every member of a team contributes to the overall team experience. Help make ours AWESOME!

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY – for your belongings, words, actions, and swimming. Attend practice regularly. Be on time and remember all equipment (cap, goggles, suit, towel, etc.) Don't blame others when things don't go your way. Excuses satisfy only the person who makes them. Demonstrate good sportsmanship at all times. Athletes with good sportsmanship habits earn the respect of their competitors and gain pride and confidence in themselves. Loud, emotional, or rude displays are inappropriate, regardless of the reason. Always think before you speak or act. Remember that you represent the Y – at the pool and away from it.

SHOW RESPECT. The best way to gain respect is to show respect. Allow others to share their opinions and ideas freely. Follow rules set forth by coaches and officials. Do not talk while others are talking, and don't talk back to coaches or officials. Refrain from speaking or acting negatively toward other swimmers, teams, coaches, or officials. Do not misuse or abuse property – in Ys, at meets, in restaurants, etc.

TAKE PRIDE. Give an effort that you can be proud of. Maintain an attitude that you can be proud of. Develop team pride by encouraging teammates to do the same. Don't cut corners or take shortcuts.

BE HONEST. Do not lie. Refrain from gossip (which often involves at least one untruth). Do what you think is right, not just what is popular. Give an honest effort toward achieving your stated goals. Communicate with coaches regarding anything that might affect your performance, or the team as a whole.

CODE OF CONDUCT

As representatives of the Eastside Family Y Swim Team and the Eastside Family YMCA, swimmers are expected to speak and behave in a manner that is respectful, responsible, honest, and caring. These guidelines are to be followed by Eastside Family Y swimmers at all practices, meets, and other team functions as well as in electronic communications. Special activities, such as team travel trips, require adherence to additional activity-specific conduct guidelines.

The following behaviors are not acceptable and may result in suspension from the team:

- Unsportsmanlike conduct - taunting, teasing, or speaking negatively about teammates, competitors, officials, or coaches.
- Use of inappropriate, strong, or vulgar language or gestures.
- Lying, deceit, dishonesty.
- Littering, abuse, or misuse of equipment, furniture, or other items of property.

The first violation will receive a verbal warning. The second will result in dismissal from the practice, meet, or team function where the violation was made. The third violation will result in suspension from the team for a period of time determined by the swim team director. A fourth violation will cause the removal of the swimmer from the program. Parents will be notified at each step.

The following actions will not be tolerated and may result in removal from the team:

- Verbal or physical abuse toward others.
- Theft of any kind.
- Vandalism or any destruction of property, public or private.
- Use of tobacco products or other illegal substances.
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages or other illegal substances.
- Sexual activity

DRESS CODE

Swimmers are expected to dress with dignity and appropriate taste whenever representing the team. This includes going into and out of practices, meets and team activities. Swimmers should not show any part of their undergarments (boxer shorts, bra straps, etc.) outside of their clothes. Rude or suggestive pictures or writing are not acceptable. Skirts and shorts must be of an appropriate length. Pants, shorts and skirts should not hang at the waist lower than the hip bones. Swimmers should routinely monitor the condition of their suits so that they are not worn by themselves when they no longer provide adequate coverage and support.

COACHES

Coaches occupy a unique place in a swimmer's life - part parent, part teacher, part friend. Eastside Family Y coaches take these roles seriously and strive to be good role models, leaders and listeners.

Coaches:

- instruct swimmers in all aspects of the sport: technique, training methods, mental preparation, competitive strategy, etc.
- offer encouragement, constructive criticism, and honest assessments with suggestions for improvement
- demonstrate and encourage values and behaviors consistent with the principles of the YMCA
- lead the team at competitions
- make decisions about group placement, meet opportunities, and events for swimmers (based on a number of factors and with the interest of the swimmer and the team in mind)
- communicate with swimmers and parents about plans, issues, and philosophy within the program

POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- Individual swimmers develop emotionally and athletically at different rates. This fact alone may cause stress for swimmers and external pressure cannot quicken or slow the pace of natural development. Excessive pressure can, however, contribute to burnout.
- Coaches, swimmers, and parents are human. Mistakes are inevitable. The most productive response is to admit them, excuse them, and move on. Grudges help no one.
- Let the coaches coach, let the swimmers swim, let the parents support.
- The process, not the awards, is the most valuable part of competitive swimming.

The friendships, lessons, skills, and memories gained from participating in the sport and the team last forever. They help create a healthy, happy and strong person. As stated before, parents, swimmers and coaches may not always agree but honest and open communication maintains mutual respect and a positive relationship.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION

Swimming is an ideal sport to promote total health and fitness. Here is some basic information on health and nutrition to prevent injury and to help ensure improved performance in practice and meets.

HEALTH

All pools have safety rules posted. Please read and follow them. These standard pool safety rules always apply:

1. Don't run.
2. Never swim alone.
3. Look before you dive.
4. Never bring glass containers on a pool deck.
5. No horseplay on pool deck or in locker rooms.

Some other safety guidelines pertaining to swim practices and meets:

1. Inform coaches of medical conditions and prescription drugs.
2. Swimmers with asthma should always bring an inhaler and have it ready for use.
3. Swimmers should always bring and use a water bottle for practice and meets.
4. Wear proper shoes and clothing for outdoor activities.

Swim coaches are required to be trained in First Aid, CPR, and either Lifeguarding or Safety Training for Swim Coaches.

INJURIES

Injuries incurred during practice, meets, or team activities will be treated immediately and parents will be notified. Sometimes swimmers experience pain that is not the result of a particular wound or accident. Muscle pain is common, especially as swimmers mature and their muscles develop further. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between soreness and injury. If pain restricts movement or lasts more than 3-4 days, swimmers should seek medical attention. Coaches are not doctors and can only give advice, not diagnosis or treatment. It is, however, important to keep coaches informed of injuries, treatments, and rehabilitation.

ILLNESS

In case of illness, swimmers should let their bodies heal by restricting activity. It is also better to miss a practice or two than to expose many other team members and coaches to the same illness. Once recovered, swimmers can return to practice and work to regain their strength in the water.

SWIMMER'S EAR

Otitis Externa, commonly known as "swimmer's ear," is an infection of the skin in the ear canal. The dark, warm, wet environment of a swimmer's ear canal is a breeding ground for such an infection. To prevent swimmer's ear, dry the ear well after each time in the water. Use a towel, Qtip (carefully), or gently shake the head on its side. Commercial products aid in the prevention and treatment of swimmer's ear. A cheap and easy remedy is to make a solution of 50% rubbing alcohol and 50% white vinegar. A couple of drops in each ear will help kill some of the normal bacteria and will help dry out the ear. ** Alcohol or vinegar should not be put in the ears of children with PE tubes in their ears or holes in their eardrums. (Information borrowed from Dr. Raymond B. Coors, MD.)

NUTRITION

Food is the body's fuel, and the body's performance can be helped or hindered by the quality of food that is consumed. In terms of quantity, young swimmers must strike a delicate balance between consuming enough calories and nutrients to promote growth and skeleton-muscular development on the one hand, and not eating so much that they are sluggish due to excess food storage. As for quality of food, carbohydrates should make up the highest percentage of a swimmer's diet. Carbohydrates provide the greatest source of energy during physical exertion.

Because calorie needs vary from person to person depending on age, size, amount of training, etc., swimmers should concentrate on the kinds of foods that make up their diet. In general, a swimmer's diet should contain 55-65% carbohydrates, 15-25% protein, and 20-30% fat.

Swimmers may need a boost of "fuel" before and after practice, so eating smaller meals plus snacks during the day can be helpful in sustaining a swimmer's energy. Furthermore, the body more quickly and efficiently digests smaller amounts eaten throughout the day than it does large meals eaten three times a day. This is particularly important during meets that can last several hours per session. Snacks at meets should be small, easily digestible, and able to be quickly converted to energy (foods high in carbohydrates and low in fat). Try to leave at least 20-30 minutes between the time you eat a snack and the time you swim your next event.

Perhaps the most forgotten element of good nutrition is water. Swimmers need to drink water consistently to aid in digestion, keep the body cool and replace fluids lost during workout. (Yes, you do

sweat in the pool.) The best indicator of adequate hydration is the color of your urine. Pale urine indicates good hydration. Dark urine means you need to drink more! A good rule of thumb is to drink before you are thirsty. Sports drinks can help replace some nutrients and electrolytes during intense exercise but some may have high amounts of sugar and sodium. As a general rule, if an athlete is exercising continuously for 90 minutes or longer then he/she would benefit from a sports drink with carbohydrates. Diluting sports drinks with water can help replace carbohydrates without consuming as much sugar and can help those athletes whose stomachs are upset by the strong taste of such drinks. Refueling the body after a workout is as important as fueling it beforehand. Within 30 minutes after the completion of a rigorous workout, athletes should start replacing the energy (carbohydrates, fluids and a small amount of protein) that they depleted. Having a small, easily digestible snack on the way home can help the recovery process significantly. Sports drinks, water, energy bars, crackers, bagels, etc. are good choices for replenishment following a workout.

The best diet for swimmers is one that is well-balanced, includes a variety of foods, and is accompanied by a large amount of water. Some swimmers like to take multivitamins to ensure that they are receiving recommended amounts of vitamins and minerals. Dietary supplements are not necessary if these guidelines are followed naturally. We do not encourage alternate methods of muscle or energy building such as creatine loading.

Good sources of carbohydrates: breads, bagels, cereal, pasta, fruit, green vegetables, corn, beans, milk, potatoes, rice, granola bars, crackers

Good sources of protein: lean meat & poultry, fish, low-fat yogurt and milk, soups with lean meat, peanut butter, beans, eggs

Foods to limit: sugary foods, fatty foods, greasy foods – ie: candy, chocolate, potato chips, french fries, fried anything, butter, mayonnaise, creamy sauces, ice cream, cookies, cake, cupcakes

Each person has different likes, dislikes, and preferences. Swimmers should be conscious of their food choices and listen to their bodies. Variety is the spice of life; but enjoy everything in moderation. An excellent source for nutritional information pertaining to young athletes is Nancy Clark's Sports Nutrition Guidebook. USA Swimming also has a nutrition section on their web site. USA Swimming provides a Nutrition Tracker feature on their website (www.usaswimming.org) that is a helpful tool for older swimmers to use.

GLOSSARY

"A" time (also AA- double A, AAA- triple A, AAAA- quad A): Letters are used by USA Swimming to categorize times in each event and age group. These designations begin at "B" and progress to BB, A, AA, AAA, and AAAA.

Age group - Swimmers are divided into groups by age. The age group designations for YMCA swimming are 6 & Under, 8 & Under, 10 & Under, 11/12, 13/14, 15-18 (senior). For USA Swimming they are the same, except there is no 6 & Under or 8 & Under. The terms "age group swimming" or "age group meet" refer mainly to groups and meets for 12 & Under swimmers (sometimes 14 & Under) in which swimmers are divided by age group.

Ascend - To increase times or get slower as a swimmer progresses through a swim or a set.

"B" time (also "BB") - see "A" time

Bulkhead - A wall, usually moveable, used to divide a pool across the center.

Check-in - Some meets require that swimmers check-in for certain events, esp. distance events. Names are checked or initialed to verify that they will, in fact, swim those events.

Circle seeding - A system where the fastest swimmers are placed in the middle lanes of the final three heats. The swimmer with the fastest entry time swims in the center lane of the last heat. The second fastest swims in the center lane of the next to last heat, etc.

Clerk of course - In a designated area, this person or people arrange swimmers by heat and lane, give them each a card to take to their lane's timers, and send them behind the blocks to swim.

Championship/Consolation heat - In a prelims-finals meet format, the top finishers in prelims (the number depends on the number of lanes in the pool) swim in the championship heat and the next fastest group of finishers (number depends on number of lanes) from prelims swims in the consolation heat.

Cut - Slang term for a qualifying time needed to swim in a particular meet.

Deck seeding - Assigning swimmers to heat and lanes immediately before each event.

Descend - Decrease time or get faster as a swimmer progresses through a swim or a set.

Disqualification/DQ - A swim is nullified due to the swimmer committing an infraction of a rule. (ex. kicking flutter kick on butterfly or touching the wall with one hand on breaststroke).

Dolphin kick - Kick used in butterfly and sometimes when pushing off the wall in freestyle and backstroke. Feet and legs are together and kick up and down in unison.

Drag/Dragsuit - Drag is resistance against a swimmer's movement. A dragsuit creates extra drag with excess material for the purpose of building strength and increasing a swimmer's ability to combat extra resistance.

Drill - an exercise focusing on a particular part of a stroke with the goal of improving the overall stroke technique.

Dryland training - Exercises performed outside the pool to improve overall fitness and enhance swimming performance.

Dual meet - A competition between two teams.

Event - A particular swimming race - eg. 100 Freestyle, 200 Backstroke, 400 IM, etc.

False Start - A swimmer moves forward or dives before the horn, beep, or gun is sounded to start a race. A swimmer is disqualified if she/he does this.

False Start Rope - If a swimmer false starts, the starter sounds the horn, beep, or gun several times and this rope, across the center of the pool, is dropped to stop the swimmers.

Fastskin - A type of suit made of a material that is meant to resist water and thus aid in the hydrodynamics of a swimmer who wears it. These suits are very expensive and their benefit remains the subject of debate in the world of competitive swimming.

Finals - In a prelims-finals meet format, each event is contested twice. The top finishers (number determined by the number of lanes in the pool) in the preliminaries (the first time the event is contested)

swim again in finals. The order in which swimmers finish in finals determine their placement, points, and awards for each event.

FINA – The international governing body for competitive swimming.

Flags/Backstroke flags – A line of triangular flags strung across the pool, 15 ft. from each end of the pool in a short course yards pool and 5 meters from each end of the pool in a long course or short course meter pool. These signal to swimmers that they are nearing the end of the pool.

Flutter kick – The kick used in freestyle and backstroke. The feet and legs move up and down alternately in short fast motions.

Group/Training Group/Practice Group – Swimmers are organized into groups according to age, ability, and commitment.

Heat – Events are divided into heats. In each heat there is one swimmer in each lane swimming a particular event or race. The number of heats in each event depends on the number of competitors in each event.

Heat Sheet – A listing of the swimmers in each event, divided into heats and lanes (indicating which swimmers swim in each heat and lane).

IMX – USA Swimming program designed to motivate swimmers to compete in all strokes and in longer distances of each stroke. Swimmers' times in the designated events are ranked nationally with all other swimmers in the respective age group.

Individual Medley/ IM – An event in which each competitive stroke is swum in this order: butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle. This is competed in distances of 100 (1 length each stroke), 200 (2 lengths each stroke), or 400 (4 lengths each stroke).

Invitational Meet – A meet involving more than 2 teams, sometimes lasting 2 or more days.

Juniors – A slang term for USA Swimming Junior Championships or the time standards required for that meet.

J.O.s – short for Junior Olympics, this is actually a nickname for the age group championship meet, held in the spring and the summer. A USA swim term.

Lane/lane ropes – pools are divided into lanes – by lane ropes or a line of floating markers– so that swimmers may compete side by side.

Long course – a 50 meter pool; competitions in the summer are held in long course (50 meter) pools.

LSC – Local Swimming Committee; United States Swimming's regional branches which oversee the conduct of meets and records, and rules under USS guidelines.

Lap counter – Square plastic device with moveable numbers used by a person to count laps for a swimmer competing in an event 500 yards or longer.

Medley – An event involving all four competitive strokes. An individual medley is swum by one person; a medley relay has 4 swimmers – one per stroke.

Meet Director – Person who organizes and oversees the conduct of a meet.

Negative split – swimming technique in which the swimmer swims the second half of a distance faster than the first.

NTV – National Time Verification – A form issued by a verification official certifying that a national qualifying time was made by a swimmer.

Official – A certified judge on the pool deck who enforces swimming rules.

Open – In reference to a meet or event, anyone may swim, regardless of age, and sometimes, time.

Pace clock – A clock, either digital or with rotating hands on a face, which counts seconds and minutes so that the swimmers may do interval training sets.

Preliminaries/Prelims – In a prelims–finals meet format, the prelims session is when each event is first contested. All swimmers compete in their events in prelims; the top finishers in each event compete again in finals.

Pre-seeded – Swimmers are assigned heats and lanes before the start of the meet.

Proof of Time - A requirement at some meets, particularly championship meets, to prove that swimmers have legally met the time standards for the meet and have actually swum the times at which they are entered.

Psyche sheet - A listing of entries for a meet, divided by event but not heats. These are subject to change as swimmers scratch events before the meet.

Qualifying time - The minimum time needed to swim a particular event in a particular meet.

Referee - The official who has authority over all the other officials at a meet. He/she makes final decisions and sees that a meet runs efficiently.

Relay - Event in which four swimmers compete as a single team, one after another.

Re-seed - Re-assigning swimmer to heats and lanes after a change occurs.

Ribbon writer - Person, usually a parent volunteer, who writes names and times, or puts computer generated labels on ribbons or medals to be awarded to swimmers.

Runner - Person, usually a parent volunteer, who collects cards from timers after each heat is swum and takes them to the computer operator.

Sanction - Official approval of a swim meet, given by either an LSC (for USA Swimming meets) or a YMCA field coordinator (for YMCA meets). To receive a sanction, a meet must be conducted according to the rules set forth by the body (YMCA or USA Swimming) issuing the sanction.

Scissors kick - The feet begin apart and move straight toward and then past one another. This kick is illegal in breaststroke.

Scratch - Removal of a swimmer from an event.

Seeding - Placement of a swimmer in an event based on their entry time in that event.

Seniors - All 13 & older swimmers are "senior" swimmers. In the YMCA program this term commonly refers to the annual program for 13 & older swimmers. Also, it is a slang term for the USA Swimming National Championships.

Session - A distinct portion of a meet, having its own warm-up time and slate of events to be swum.

Shave - Swimmers shave the hair off their bodies before their focus meet in order to gain a fast feel in the water and thus a psychological boost for their swims. Shaving is not recommended for 12 & under swimmers.

Starter - official who starts each race by saying "Take your mark", then sounding a beep, horn, or firing a gun.

Starting blocks - Platforms at the starting end of each lane, from which swimmers dive (or start in the water for backstroke) to begin each race.

Streamline - Swimmer's body position used when starting or pushing off walls to reduce water resistance. The body is fully extended. Feet and legs are together with toes pointed. Arms are extended above the head with one hand on top of the other.

Taper - Gradual reduction in yardage and intensity allowing the muscles to rest and recover for peak performance. Taper is effective for teenage swimmers whose muscles have developed to the point that they are able to "break down" during long periods of intense training. Taper also incorporates positive mental preparation for peak performance. Because taper has a strong effect on the body and mind, it is most effective as part of a training cycle and is incorporated into the season plan at intervals that allow for sufficient intense training between periods of taper.

Timed finals - Meet format in which each event is only contested once (no prelims or finals).

Timer - Person, usually a parent volunteer, who uses a stopwatch to time a swimmer in each heat and record the swimmer's time on a card.