

YSWIM TEAM™

We build strong kids, strong families, strong communities.

YMCA of Greater Des Moines

Dear Parents:

The YMCA mission is: To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

The YMCA strives to build character in all who participate in YMCA programming. The character values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility are part of every program the YMCA offers.

The swim team seeks to encourage and motivate each swimmer to develop his or her individual skills and to enhance self-esteem. The team can only accomplish this through the active involvement of each swimmer and his/her family. Everyone involved in the coordination of the swim team: the administration, aquatics personnel, swim team parent group, coaches, volunteers and more, pledge to make this an experience that will positively shape your child. The YMCA motto is “we build strong kids, strong families and strong communities;” therefore, we encourage families to be involved in the swim team activities. You may choose to attend a competition as a spectator or volunteer at home swim meets, but know that your involvement at any level is meaningful to your child, healthy for your family and helps the YMCA accomplish its mission. Let me thank you in advance for your involvement and commitment to this program.

We look forward to a fantastic swim season.

Sincerely Submitted,

Your YMCA Aquatics Executives and Directors
YMCA of Greater Des Moines

Minimum Swimming Requirements

To participate on the swim team, each swimmer must meet the following minimum requirements:

- 25 yards each of a LEGAL freestyle & backstroke
- Recommended 25 yards of a legal breaststroke kick and a knowledge of the full stroke. Also some knowledge & understanding of the butterfly stroke.

The goal of the swim team is to place children in appropriate levels, regardless of age, to maximize instruction and to create a quality learning/practice environment. Placement of swimmers will be decided by the YMCA coaching staff.

Communication

As you see we use many ways of communicating with Swim Team Families. Please check the different means of communication OFTEN!

- Team websites can be found off of main YMCA of Greater Des Moines Website. www.dmymca.org Select which branch you are swimming for then your swim team home page. Watch the online calendar for updated information
- For coach, swimmer, & parent communication purposes we use an e-mail list as the primary source of communication.
- Family file folders are located in the YMCA Pool Area throughout the swim season. The file folders will be used to distribute printed information (as needed), meet ribbons, etc.
- Also check pool bulletin boards often for announcements.
- You are encouraged to talk with the coaches **AFTER PRACTICE**, or set up a time that is convenient for everyone. Please do not try and talk to the coaches when they are running practice or busy at a meet. If a parent feels immediate attention is required, comments should be directed to your Aquatics Director.

Swim Team Practices

- We recommend that each swimmer attend at least two practices a week.
- If necessary due to numbers, some practices may be adjusted by the coaches.
- There are no practices at the YMCA when the public schools dismiss early or cancel classes because of inclement weather.
- Parents will be notified for weekend, holiday, and other interruptions to the normal practice schedule. (via email)
- No make-up practices will be scheduled due to school cancellations, holidays, etc.
- No refunds or credits will be issued because of canceled practices.

Family Involvement/Team Support

Family involvement is critical to the success of the team. **The assistance of all families is needed to conduct home meets.** There are many opportunities for involvement, ranging from timing, to computer work, to monitoring the swimmer holding area. Most of these jobs require no previous experience. Further information for volunteer positions specific to your branch will be handed out by your coaches or Aquatics Director. Each family will be assigned a volunteer team. Details will be given to you by the Aquatics Director or the Team Leader as the meets draw closer.

Parent Responsibilities

- Keep yourself abreast of your child's swim team activities.
- Volunteer to help us run our home swim meets.
- Be uplifting and supportive of your child throughout the season.
- We encourage all parents to attend the competitions.
- Help your child plan, set, strive and achieve their goals.
- Be patient. Each swimmer progresses at a different pace.
- Make sure your swimmer attends all practice sessions.
- Much of swimming is an individual event, but most importantly swimmers are part of a team. We encourage you as a family to stay until the event is over to cheer the team on.

The single most important thing that parents can do to help their child is to try to instill a strong and healthy sense of sportsmanship, character and self image. Swim team at the Y is a program to create better general life skills, not just produce a great swimmer.

Swim Team Rules & Expectations

We want to set the ground rules as to maintain a POSITIVE learning and practice environment. It is intended to help, not to rule.

To participate on the YMCA swim team, participants will be required to be YMCA members (winter season only) for the duration of the season. They must also practice, with the team, a minimum of one time per week (during a week night) to swim in YMCA swim meets. Please remember that the skills will best be developed by regular practice attendance. If you will be gone for a period to attend camp, vacation, etc. please let the coach know ahead of time. If the coaches feel your child is not progressing past the minimum level of stroke development after a reasonable amount of time on swim team, the coaches may recommend OR require that your child take additional swim lessons for more one-on-one help.

Swimmers Should

- Have Fun!!
- Have equipment available and adjusted before every practice. Always have an extra set of goggles with you on the pool deck
- Put belongings in the locker rooms or bleacher area of the pool and wait for practice in designated area so not to interrupt other aquatics programs.
- MAINTAIN proper spacing between swimmers before you start drills. (at least 5 seconds)
- Touch swimmer's foot in front of you when attempting to pass. The swimmer in front should then stop/move to the side so that you may proceed to pass. (do not pull, yank, hit swimmer in front of you)
- Begin sequences of drills precisely on time and finish by touching the wall first, not the bottom of the pool.
- Treat others with respect and not interfere w/ the ability of other swimmers to complete their workout.
- Listen and follow directions from coaches with no talking during drill instructions
- Maintain proper eating, sleeping and studying habits.
- Be a leader and HAVE FUN!
- Follow all pool rules
- Demonstrate proper sportsmanship
- Refrain from playing with pool equipment/toys or being in the pool office prior to practice.
- **Uphold the YMCA mission statement, philosophy, and character values.**

The following progressive discipline steps will be taken if deemed necessary:

1. Verbal warning to swimmer.
 2. Swimmer sits out for 5 – 10 minutes.
 3. Swimmer will be asked to leave the activity or event for the day. Parents will be notified and an incident report will be filed.
 4. Swimmer will be asked not to participate for an extended period in team activities. This action will be communicated by the Aquatics Director to the parent and swimmer.
- If any facilities or equipment are damaged, the swimmer and family will be responsible for the cost of the repair or replacement.

YMCA Locker Room Etiquette When Swim Team is in the YMCA for practice there are a lot of youth in one area. Our locker rooms are not big and are used by all members of the YMCA. Please remind your swimmers to be respectful while using the YMCA facility.

At the Swim Meet

Prior to the Meet

- Parents can print the entries off online at www.aquahawks.com
 - Final Meet Entries will be posted by Friday AM
 - Meet Directions are posted online

Warm-Ups

- It is required that all swimmers warm-up at our assigned team time (unless approved by a coach)
- Please arrive at meet sites at least 15 minutes prior to warm-up times.
- Prior to the beginning of each meet swimmers are to check in with the coaches.
- After checking in with the coach, each swimmer will receive their event #'s
- Swimmers should stretch prior to warm-up.

General Meet Info

- Swimmers are **ALWAYS** required to be wearing shoes/sandals between events.
- **It is EACH swimmers responsibility for being at the clerk of course at the proper times.**
- Swimmers should have warm clothing to wear between events. Temperatures vary and waiting areas often times will be cool. Bring a couple of towels. Use one during the meet and save the other so you will have a dry one **AFTER** the meet.
- Meets can take anywhere from 3 hours to 6 hours, depending on the number of swimmers present and how efficiently the meet is run. The home sponsor of each meet sets the schedule for their meet, so this schedule will vary.
- Bring nourishing snacks for your swimmer to eat at the meet. Most pools usually have a concession stand as well. Some snack suggestions include fruit, cookies, granola bars, sweet cereals, candy bars, and sports drinks or water.
- It is expected that swimmers engage in restful activities or cheer on their teammates between events.
Please stay in designated areas.
- We ask that all parents and children stay out of computer results areas to avoid distractions and meet delays.
- Please remember that you are representing your family, coaches, town and YMCA.
Please represent us well.

Meet Transportation

Parents are responsible for driving the swimmer to and from any away meet. Carpooling is encouraged, **but not facilitated by the YMCA**. Prior to the first swim meet, a team roster will be put in your family file folder. This may assist you in setting up carpools. **Coaches are not permitted to be involved in transportation due to YMCA insurance limitations.**

If a meet must be canceled because of inclement weather, the coach, the YMCA front desk, the parent group calling tree, and the team e-mail list will be notified to spread the message as efficiently as possible.

Championship Meets

The Sectional meet (winter season only) is the qualifying meet for the State meet
To be eligible to compete at the Sectional meet each swimmer **MUST** swim in **three** YMCA sanctioned meets prior to this meet.

To qualify for the State Swim Meet (winter season only) the swimmer must equal or better the state qualifying times AT THE SECTIONAL MEET. A swimmer may also qualify for State by placing first in his/her event in the Sectional meet.

To go to Regional Meet in MN (winter season only), the swimmer must meet qualifying times during the season. To go to Regionals with your team you must meet sectional requirements as listed above. You must also have a YMCA membership by January. Further information regarding this meet, costs and qualifying times will be given out during the season.

Championship Relays:

The team that qualifies for state at the Sectional meet will stay the same for the state meet, as long as participants maintain their attendance at practices. The only change will be if a swimmer from the relay is unable to attend the State meet, they will then be replaced by another swimmer.