

Baby Seals Swim Academy
PARENT HANDBOOK AND LESSON GUIDELINES

NEVER CONSIDER A CHILD WATER SAFE OR DROWN PROOFED! ALL CHILDREN SHOULD BE CAREFULLY SUPERVISED WHEN IN OR AROUND WATER NO MATTER HOW MUCH TRAINING THEY HAVE RECEIVED.

1. STATEMENT OF LIABILITY AND PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

Parents, you and your children's safety are **your** responsibility completely until the instructor takes your child out of your hands and into the water in a scheduled training exercise. Even though the instructor is a certified lifeguard, you must still assume full responsibility for your child(ren). Neither I nor my staff assume responsibility for you, your children, or visitors that may be with you either in the pool area, parking lot, or on the way to or from lessons.

Children waiting for their lessons or dressing after lessons, as well as any other children brought to the pool, must be kept beside you or on your lap. Do not leave children unattended for any reason. Children are not allowed to roam around the pool area. **Parents must accompany and supervise their children in the bathroom.** Please hold onto your child when walking to and from your car.

You must assume responsibility in explaining all rules and regulations of the pool facilities to any visitors or babysitters.

2. HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR LESSONS?

For your child's safety and as a courtesy to everyone else, all children who are not "potty trained" must wear our **snugly fitting reusable swim diapers during lessons with disposable diapers underneath.** The double diapering will make sure that no solid waste enters the pool, which would result in pool closure and cancellations of lessons due to health hazards. The reusable diapers are available for purchase from your instructor (unless you already have some well fitting ones). Remove diapers (please take them with you) and then dress your child in his swim diaper. (Swimsuits are optional) If your child has long hair, try to braid it, tie it back and use barrettes to keep the hair out of her eyes. Be sure to bring enough large, dry towels. After the lesson, your child should be dried and dressed in warm clothes. Please arrange your schedule so that you do not have to rush a cold, wet baby or child outside.

DO NOT FEED YOUR CHILD FOR TWO HOURS PRECEDING HIS LESSON. DO NOT ALLOW FRUIT, VEGETABLES, MEAT OR MILK PRODUCTS FOR SIX HOURS BEFORE THE LESSON. (THIS INCLUDES FORMULA, MILK, EGGS, CHEESE AND YOGURT). Breast milk, rice milk, toast and cereal (without fruit or nuts) may be given two hours before a lesson. Some children swallow a lot of air and some water during the lessons. When the stomach is distended the muscles tighten up across the abdomen, and a child will burp. If there is food in the stomach when this happens, the food will come out with the air and the child will spit up in the pool. The pool filtration system will clear the pool quickly, so if this happens to your child, do not be frightened or distressed; it is NOT considered a contaminant. This happens to some children regardless and is not anything to worry about, but controlling feedings just before the lessons will help. You can usually expect an increase in appetite and longer naps as a result of this exercise. Please allow for good naps and try to avoid going shopping right after a lesson.

3. HOW SOON CAN I EXPECT MY CHILD TO LEARN TO SWIM?

An instructor will not rush a child, nor allow the parents to do so. Usually babies 12 to 24 months are doing very well after four or five weeks of lessons. Older children typically need less time than these younger babies. This often depends on the individual child. Younger infants (6 to 9 months) who are "floaters" take less time initially (3-4 weeks) because they are learning only a part of the swim-float-swim sequence. Infants who attend **continuation lessons** (see #9 below) following their initial floating lessons will often require less time to learn the complete swim-float-swim sequence as toddlers. Expect to spend between 3-6 weeks of lessons after your floater turns a year, depending upon individual development and attendance in **continuation lessons**. Since you will be present during each lesson, you should have a good idea of what your child is and is not capable of doing. Remember, each child goes at his own pace, so do not compare your child's progress with that of other children.

4. WHAT IF WE ARE LATE OR MISS A LESSON?

Swimming lessons are approximately 10 minutes in length, four days per week, Monday through Thursday. Since your lessons are only 10 minutes, it is helpful if you arrive 10 to 15 minutes before your scheduled time. This allows sufficient time to have your child ready to go into the water (without rushing) at the scheduled time. If you are late, the instructor will try to fit you in whenever possible, but your lesson time might be shortened. Consistency is a very important ingredient of the

program. Steady attendance will increase your child's rate of progress. If you find you have a conflict on a certain day, it may be possible to make advance arrangements with another parent to switch your lesson time. Sometimes it may be possible to add you to the end of the schedule. Please talk with your instructor if this should occur.

5. MAY VISITORS AND CHILDREN COME TO WATCH?

Adult visitors are welcome to observe lessons. It is best to check with the instructor to determine how this might affect your child's progress. Children other than students are strongly discouraged from coming. The instructor needs to concentrate completely on your child in order to teach him efficiently. If other children are running or playing, then the instructor becomes a lifeguard which detracts from your child's lesson. Your cooperation in this matter will be greatly appreciated. If it is absolutely necessary that you bring a child once in a while, have him stay immediately by you, in a stroller, or on your lap during the lesson.

6. LET'S PRETEND

It's normal and healthy for children to "teach" their teddy bears, dolls, siblings and friends how to "look at my hand", "get the wall", "keep your chin on your speed button", or "splash your legs". They also at times hide or throw their swimming suits out of car windows while traveling 40 mph. Be prepared (pack extra suit and clothes in your swim bag), it may happen to you -- STAY COOL. When you tell the family about it that evening, it really will be funny.

7. ARE THERE MAKE UP LESSONS FOR ILLNESS & VACATIONS?

If your child begins lessons on Monday, you are expected to pay for the week. Scheduling may make it impossible to offer make-up lessons. However, options are available. If you know your child is going to be ill for an extended period of time, or you are planning a vacation, you may give up your time and go into a "first priority waiting list". As soon as you are ready to come back into lessons, let me know, and the next available time slot will be offered to you. If I have someone on the waiting list for "update" lessons (see #9 below) I can often give you back your original time slot. With this procedure, you do not pay tuition and your instructor is not standing idle in the water. If you choose to have your spot held, you may do so by continuing to pay your tuition. If you have paid for the time --- it is yours. If a child is ill for a day or two, most parents choose to have their spot held. It is

important for you to watch your child's health during lessons. I will try to offer make-up lessons for a missed class but can not guarantee it.

Unexcused missed lessons will be charged. If you know you will be missing a lesson please let us know at least 24 hours in advance, if not more. That way we can get students that are on a waitlist for maintenance lessons to use this time slot.

8. Continuation Lessons!

Continuation/Progress classes are once a week classes designed to maintain and progress skills acquired in program lessons and teach your child that the water is a wonderful place to have fun. They are offered to all students who have learned to roll over to float.

Students who have the opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills following lessons not only maintain confidence in their swimming ability, they make the leap from survival swimming to recreational swimming. I view water play as a healthy component to the physical and emotional development of children and have observed that practicing skills on a regular basis boosts retention, promotes self esteem and prepares children for more advanced stroke instruction.

Be sure to talk with your instructor about scheduling **continuation/progress lessons** for your child as soon as he is ready. **Ideally, students should move immediately into a weekly class at the completion of private lessons.**

9. WHY UPDATES?

Babies need updates not because they will forget their skills, but because they outgrow them. Particularly during the first two years, rapid growth causes a shift in a baby's center of gravity, affecting his ability to float. Updates, or refreshers, are similar to a well baby pediatric check up; they allow your instructor to readjust the float position and keep your child's swimming skills sharp.

Your child will retain most of what he learns after being out of the water for up to a year. However, they will likely lose their self-confidence if they are out of the water for too long. **Experience indicates that children 12 months and older who participate in our maintenance classes immediately following initial lessons and continue for a year seldom require refresher lessons.** However, without the opportunity to swim with our instructors, you may find that your child will cry, cling and refuse to use his skills. **DON'T PANIC!** They have not forgotten all. After only a few days of brush-up lessons, all will be well. Children have many

fears, some which stem from a lack of confidence. During refresher lessons, they will soon regain the needed confidence and know they **CAN** do it! Have patience..

The investment for private lessons for the 6-week Kinder Swim (12 months to 5 years) is \$792, PLUS a non-refundable registration fee of \$97, for a total \$889.

The investment for private lessons for the 4-week Infant Survival (6 to 12 months) is \$528 per 4 weeks, PLUS a non-refundable registration fee of \$97, for a total \$625.

The non-refundable registration fee is usually paid before lessons start, and will assure that the start date and time slot are locked in.

Payments can be made via Venmo, Zelle, cash and check. You will receive Venmo/Zelle information during the registration process to assure the correct recipient.

Please make your check payable to "Baby Seals Swim Academy" and pick up your registration packet before your child begins lessons. Take time to read the materials prior to starting lessons so we are all "on the same page" so to speak! If your child is ready to advance into progression/maintenance class in less than 6 weeks, the balance of the tuition paid for private lessons will be applied toward progression/maintenance classes. If you need to make other arrangements for payment, please feel free to discuss this with me.

10. REFUNDS?

Please **do not start** your child in this program unless you fully intend to complete the entire learning process. You are investing in a full program, and in your child's safety.

Once your child begins lessons, the balance of your program fee is non-refundable if you withdraw your child. These funds would, however, stay on your account with us and you could use them at any time in the future.

The reason the instructor places this firm financial responsibility on you is that the initial training period is a very critical time of adaptation to a new environment, instructor, and technique for you and your child. It can be a time of very low self-confidence in the water because the child has not had time to acquire and perfect his/her skills in the aquatic environment. If the child's lessons are terminated during this time, the foremost thing the child will remember about the water is that lack of self-confidence in and around water. The instructor specializes in working with children with water-fear problems, and the instructor does not want to be involved in putting a child in that situation. We know this is a great program

for any child. However, **make sure that this program is for you before you register**, then stay with it and support your child in every way until he/she is skilled and ready to participate in group classes.

11. ABOUT THE POOL

No food or drink in the pool area;

No running around the pool at any time by anyone;

Children who are not toilet trained and under 3 years of age must wear a reusable over a disposable swim diaper in the pool. **Please take used diapers with you!**

All children must be supervised at all times.

12. IF YOU NEED TO TALK WITH YOUR INSTRUCTOR

I want this program to be a positive experience for everyone involved and I look forward to working with you and your child! If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call me at 805-235-7535.

Please respect the other participants in the program by not discussing issues with me while I am conducting a class. Thank you so much for your cooperation.