



Parent's Guide



**For Youth Development
Nurturing the potential of every child and teen**

Dear Parents:

We have prepared this booklet to provide you with necessary and helpful information about our Swim Instruction Programs. It includes a detailed description of each program and the different levels offered. Also included in this booklet are answers to many frequently asked questions.

As your child enters YMCA Swim Lessons, we promise you the following:

- We will provide your child with a positive and safe learning environment.
- Your child will always be treated with respect.
- Your child will be treated as an individual, while being encouraged to perform each skill to the best of his/her ability.

We welcome you and your child to the Swim Lesson Program! Please do not hesitate to talk to your child's instructor or call the Aquatic Office at 715-342-2980 with any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Tiffany Seubert

Helpful, Important Information!

Location – Participants should be 5 minutes early and be seated on the bleachers in the Adventure Pool. Each class, a member of the Aquatic Department Management staff will be available on deck to introduce all children to their instructors.

Locker Rooms – All participants should enter through the Adventure Pool or Family locker rooms located to the left of the YMCA Front Service Desk. Only a swimming suit is necessary.

Goggles, swim caps, or wet suits are also accepted, but not required. In an effort to keep the pool area clean, spectators are asked to remove their shoes before entering.

Progress Reports – Progress Reports will be handed out to every student on the second to last day of class. This report enables you to register for the appropriate class in the upcoming session.

Parent Viewing – Parents are welcome to join us on deck for Swim Lessons, and to observe from the bleacher area.

We ask that parents help us ensure that classes run without interruption and to only speak to children when absolutely necessary.

YMCA Core Values & Safety Day – The last day of the session focuses on the Four Core YMCA values Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility. Water Safety and a complete review of skills already learned is also included, along with time to play and use the Adventure Pool water slide.

Private Lessons – Private Swim Lessons are one on one and offered for all levels and ages. Students work on basic swimming skills appropriate for their ability and in accordance with their individual goals. Private lessons are often beneficial to children who are having difficulty mastering a particular skill, have special needs, or have been in the same level for 3 consecutive sessions or longer.

Open Swim - Some children remain at the same level for several sessions. This is often due to a swimmers interest in learning or stage of growth and development. Preschoolers especially, will often progress at very different rates from their classmates. Attending YMCA Open Swim with parents to play or to practice skills often helps children progress in the YMCA Swim Lessons program.

We are proud to provide you with a swim program, which follows National YMCA guidelines!

Cancellation Policy:

- The YMCA reserves the right to cancel or combine classes that do not have sufficient enrollment. In the event of a cancelled class due to low enrollment, a full refund or credit will be issued.
- A full refund or credit voucher, minus a \$5.00 processing fee, will be issued if participant cancels before the first day of class.
- Only prorated credits will be given if participation ceases once the session has begun.
- There are no credits given for individual classes missed.

Safety First, Last and Always!

Your child's safety is our number one concern.

Our swimming instructors are also certified lifeguards, trained to provide a safe environment and respond to emergency situations.

You as a parent can help to ensure the safety of your child in the following ways:

- Encourage and reinforce all pool rules.
- Accompany all young children whenever they are in or around water.
- Talk to your swim instructor about your swimmer's progress.

Parent/Child Swim Program

6-36 months with a parent

- Kippers
- Perch
- Mighty Might

These classes are designed for children 6-36 months of age with parent participation.

One or both parents participate and must accompany each child in the water. Water adjustment, basic movements, group games, songs, safety, and holding positions included. Along with additional skills such as submerging, kicking, floating, and arm movements as children show readiness. Kippers and Perch classes are held in the Mushroom Area of the Adventure Pool and are 30 minutes long.

The Parent/Child program is an excellent opportunity for parents and their toddlers to strengthen family bonds and have fun in a warm and safe environment.

Toddlers must wear elastic leg attire. "Swim diapers" are required, and may be purchased at the Front Service Desk. Regular diapers are not allowed in the pool.

Kippers

This class is for 6-12 month olds with a parent. Children much have reached their sixth month by the first day of class.

Perch

This class is for children who are 13-36 years old with parent. When your child turns 3, they should register for the Mighty Might parent/child class or for the Preschool Swim Lesson Program.

Mighty Might Swim

This class is for children who are 3 – 5 years old. Children learn preschool swimming skills with the assistance of their parents. At this level, children are gaining confidence and skills to work with an instructor by themselves. Classes are 40 minutes long and include water adjustment, skill work, and games.

Preschool Swim Lesson Program

(3-5 years old)

The Preschool Swim Lesson Program objectives are: Water adjustment, stroke development, endurance, safety, and fun.

Children also learn basic skills such as attention span, taking turns, and working with others in a caring and fun class setting.

The Preschool Swim program begins at the age of 3 years. When a child turns 6 years old, he/she will transfer to the corresponding Youth class. The approximate equivalent for both Preschool and Youth levels are listed below.

Pike.....Polliwog
Eel.....Polliwog
Ray.....Polliwog or Guppy
Starfish.....Guppy or Minnow

Pike and Eel will automatically go into Polliwog. Your child's instructor will recommend the appropriate level for children in Ray and Starfish.

Children are placed in the appropriate class based upon their age and skill level. Swimmers new to YMCA Swim Lessons should attend a skill evaluation for proper placement. Evaluations are held in the Adventure Pool Mondays at 5:15pm. An aquatics center management team member will be on hand to skill check kids, provide registration information, and to answer questions. Please accompany your child to the adventure pool dressed in a swim suit and be seated on the bleachers.

The Preschool levels are:

Pike

Beginner Preschool Children become acquainted with the pool and the use of flotation devices. Beginners are introduced to, entering the water, stroking, kicking, front & back floating, & submerging. Children work up to swimming very short distances with little assistance.

Good form is not expected at this level, but feeling comfortable while floating and submerging is important before progressing on to the Eel level.

Skills required to progress include:

- Front & back float 10 seconds
- Front, side & back paddle with little assistance 9 feet (without a flotation device)
- Submerge to pick up an object
- Jump into the pool with assistance
- Endurance Swim of 12 yards (with a flotation device & little assistance from the instructor)

Skills to be introduced include:

- Bobbing
- Games
- YMCA Character Development

Eel

Intermediate Preschool Skills acquired in Pike are now performed with increased duration. Paddle strokes on the front, back, and side should improve in form and distance. Instructors emphasize good body position and strokes that better propel the swimmer. Rhythmic breathing with a kick board is introduced, and children will prepare for the combined front crawl stroke learned in Ray.

Skills required to progress include:

- Front & back float 20 seconds with little movement
- Front, back, and side paddle 18 feet
- Jump into the pool independently
- Rhythmic breathing with a kick board 12 yards
- Endurance Swim 25 yards with a flotation device (with little assistance)

Skills to be introduced include:

- Streamline push offs
- Climbing down and up a pole
- Games
- YMCA Character Development

Ray

Intermediate Preschool Children will learn the back crawl, rhythmic breathing with the front crawl, and get used to deep water in the Adventure Pool. A child's strength and endurance should increase at this level. Rays work to demonstrate good front and back crawl strokes in deep water for at least 12 yards. Diving, rotary breathing, and symmetrical arm strokes are also introduced.

Skills required to progress include:

- Front crawl with rhythmic breathing 12 yards
- Front & Back symmetrical arm paddle with flutter kick 12 yards
- Rotary breathing 12 yards with a kick board
- Kneeling & Standing Dive

- Underwater swim 10 feet
- Endurance Swim 25 yards on front, back & side 25 yards without a floatation device.
- Tread in deep water 20 seconds without a float.

Skills to be introduced include:

- Front and back somersaults
- Jump from starting platform and swim in deep water
- Games
- YMCA Character Development

Starfish

Advanced Preschool Parents should be aware that the majority of children will enter first grade before reaching this advanced level. Starfish is an open-ended class and children remain as a Starfish until turning six years old.

At that time, the appropriate corresponding level of the Youth Program will be recommended.

Children must be very comfortable in deep water and exhibit good strokes and endurance in order to move into the Starfish class.

Major skills include rotary breathing, elementary backstroke, and increasing endurance. Additional skills such as breaststroke and a competitive swimming dive will be introduced in this class as children show readiness.

Skills to be mastered include:

- Front crawl with rotary breathing 25 yards
- Back crawl 25 yards with good form
- Elementary back stroke 25 yards
- Endurance Swim 50+ yards of front & back crawl
- Jump in deep water & tread for 2+ minutes
- Deep water bobs
- Underwater swim 20+ feet

Skills to be introduced include:

- Competitive swimming dive

- Breaststroke
- Games
- YMCA Character Development

Youth Swim Lesson Program

6 to 12 years old
(Children must be 6 by the first day of class)

- **Polliwog**
- **Guppy**
- **Minnow**
- **Fish**
- **Flying Fish**
- **Shark**

Components of the Youth Program are stroke development, endurance, personal safety, water games, and personal growth.

The class descriptions on the following pages list the skills taught at each level, and what to expect as your child progresses through the program.

The YMCA program philosophy focuses on building a healthy spirit, mind and body. The four core character values Caring, Honesty, Respect, and Responsibility are incorporated throughout all YMCA programs. These values form the base from which swimming and other YMCA activities are presented. We convey these values in our Youth swimming lessons while teaching skills

Polliwog

Beginner Level: This class is taught in the Adventure Pool. Children will work on improving their front crawl while adding rhythmic breathing. The back crawl stroke is introduced. This class will be the first experience in deep water for many children. Students need to be comfortable jumping into deep water and

treading for a short period of time before progressing to the next level.

Skills required to progress include:

- Paddle on front with rhythmic breathing 10 yards
- Back paddle 10 yards
- Front float with face in the water, 10 seconds
- Back float with little movement, 10 seconds
- Rotary breathing with a kick board 15 yards
- Elementary backstroke arms with flutter kick 10 yards
- Bob and get breath 10 times in shallow water
- Front crawl 25 yards with rhythmic breathing, with or without a flotation device
- Back crawl 25 yards with or without a flotation device

Skills introduced include:

- Push off the wall on front and back with glide
- Climb down and up pole
- Underwater swim 10 feet
- Water games

Guppy

The front and back crawl are most often used for fun and fitness throughout one's life. These skills are emphasized in Guppy. Good leg and hip position is stressed along with learning high elbow recovery and more efficient arm pulls. The elementary backstroke and the sidestroke are introduced in this level, although they do not need to be mastered. Performing these skills in deep water will be stressed at this level. The endurance component of the lesson is accelerated to 3 continuous lengths of the pool without assistance.

Skills required to progress include:

- Front crawl with rotary breathing 25 yards
- Back crawl 25 yards
- Elementary backstroke 25 yards
- Side stroke 25 yards
- Jump into deep water without assistance
- Swim underwater 10 feet
- Kneeling Dive
- Endurance swim, 3 continuous lengths with any combination of strokes
- Tread water 1minute
- One length of front crawl followed by one length of back crawl

Skills introduced at this level:

- Front and Back somersaults without help
- Introduction to breast stroke
- Water games

Minnow

With a more efficient front and back crawl, students will be better prepared to accomplish the goal of 5 pool lengths in Minnow. The elementary backstroke is perfected in this level and breaststroke and sidestroke are heavily emphasized. The breaststroke is a complicated stroke and during this level the kick is stressed to the student. Open turns and standing dives are also introduced.

Skills required to progress:

- Front crawl with rotary breathing and straight arm recovery 50 yards
- Back crawl 50 yards
- Elementary back stroke 50 yards
- Rudimentary breaststroke 25 yards
- Sidestroke 50 yards
- Standing dive
- Endurance swim, 5 continuous lengths, any combination of strokes

- One length front crawl, 1 length back crawl, 1 length elementary backstroke
- Tread water 2 minute
- Under water swim 20 feet

Skills introduced in level:

- Open turns on front and back
- Vertical flutter kick (no hands) 15 seconds
- Dolphin Kick
- Water Games

Fish

Perfection of the breaststroke and practicing the butterfly are highlighted in Fish. Instructors will look for good body position as well as a pull, breath, kick, and glide through the stroke. Students are introduced to the arms of the butterfly. Fins are used to help the student get a feel for the stroke while propelling them through the water. Development of high elbow recovery for the front crawl and bent arm pull with a roll for back crawl is also a component of Fish.

Skills required to progress:

- Front crawl with high elbow recovery, rotary breathing, and open turns, 75 yards
- Back crawl with roll, bent arm pull and open turns, 75 yards
- Elementary back stroke with glide, 75 yards
- Breaststroke with a pull, kick, glide and open turns. 50 yards
- Butterfly with fins, 25 yards
- Endurance swim, 8 continuous lengths, four must be front crawl
- Vertical flutter kick, no hands, 30 seconds
- Tread water 3 minutes
- Underwater swim 15 yards
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Skills introduced in this level:

- Standing dive from starting block
- Flip turns
- Front crawl bilateral breathing

Flying Fish

Endurance swim is increased to 10 continuous lengths, 6 of which must be front crawl. Emphasis is put on coordinating the butterfly arms with a two beat kick. Arms at this point should be following the "out, in, out" pattern and coming out of the water. Fins may still be used depending on child's ability. Sidestroke will be taught on alternate sides, and flip turns will also be mastered as a component of the endurance swim.

Skills required to progress:

- Front crawl with bilateral breathing and flip turns 100 yards
- Breaststroke with open turns 100 yards
- Back crawl with flip turns 100 yards
- Elementary backstroke with glide 100 yards
- Sidestroke 100 yards on alternate sides
- Butterfly 25+ yards with or without fins
- Flip turns
- Endurance swim, 10 continuous lengths, 6 must be front crawl
- Tread water 5 minutes
- Vertical dolphin kick, no hands, 30 seconds
- 100 Individual Medley (1 length each Butterfly, Backstroke, Breast stroke, and Freestyle)

Skills introduced during level:

- Relay races
- Synchronized swimming skills

Shark

Shark is the highest level of the YMCA Youth Progressive Swim Program. Students who pass this level have reached a high degree of proficiency in their swimming. The butterfly, introduced in Fish, needs to be coordinated with good form and without the use of fins. Streamline kicking is introduced and is expected to be used when pushing off the wall.

Skills required to progress:

- Front crawl with dive, bilateral breathing and flip turns, 200 yards
- Back crawl with streamline push offs and dolphin kicking, 150 yards
- Breaststroke with open turns and pull outs, 150 yards
- Butterfly with streamline push offs and dolphin kicking 50 yards
- Streamline kick on back and front, 50 yards
- 300 yard endurance swim, any combination of strokes
- 200 individual medley
- 30 second vertical kick, no hands, followed by a 60 second tread X3

Skills introduced during level:

- Competitive swimming start
- Synchronized swimming skills
- Training with a pace clock

Frequently Asked Questions

How does the YMCA Swim Program differ from others?

Our goals reach beyond swimming and water safety. The overall philosophy of the YMCA focuses on the development of the whole person: spirit, mind, and body. The YMCA is a non-profit organization open to men, women, and children of all ages, races, religions incomes, and abilities. Anyone requiring special

accommodations or financial assistance to participate in a YMCA program or activity should contact us.

How long should it take for my child to get through the whole program?

There are many factors involved including age, the level at which your child enters the program, opportunity for practice, regular attendance, child's enthusiasm, etc.

Children entering the program between the ages of 3 and 6, will be in the Preschool Program. This is a two-year program of five skill levels. The majority of our participants are Pike and Eel while in the preschool program. When a child turns 6, the instructor will recommend the corresponding level in the Youth Program.

The Youth Program is divided into nine skill levels and is designed to be a four to six year experience for most children starting at a beginner level.

How can I help my child get the most out of swim lessons?

Bring your child to the Family and Open swims for fun and practice! See that your child attends class as regularly as possible. Give praise and encouragement for your child's accomplishments. Do not use the words "Pass" or "Fail". Do not compare your child to others. Be patient. Each child will progress at his or her own speed. Focus on your child's enjoyment and personal development.

How many lessons should a child remain at the same level?

The water skills and strokes presented in each class level usually require more than one session to master. It is normal for your child to remain at the same level for 2 or 3 sessions.

Improvements may be made within a level without progressing. However, if your child remains at the same level more than four

consecutive times, or if you have concerns about your child's progress, please discuss this with your child's instructor or call the Aquatic office. Extra help is available for your child through private swim lessons.

How can I communicate with my child's instructor?

Many classes have a 5-minute period between them in which parents may be able to talk to the instructor. The Head Swim Instructor or Aquatic Director will also be happy to assist you. Please bring any questions or concerns to our attention as soon as possible. We will do our best to serve you.

What are skill checks and why are they important?

There are several reasons:

- If your child turned 6 since last attending swim lessons, he/she will need to be evaluated for correct placement in the Youth Program.
- There may have been some changes in the skill requirements at your child's level since he/she last attended.
- A child who has been practicing may be ready for a higher level. A child who has not practiced may find a particular level too difficult.

An evaluation takes just a few minutes and is free of charge. It will ensure that your child is placed in the correct level before the session begins.

How can I register my child for the next swim session?

Swim Lesson registration can be handled at the YMCA front service desk, online at our website

(<http://www.spymca.org>), or over the phone. Children register for the time slot and level. Please attend a skill

check or contact the Aquatic Director or Head Instructor at ext. 327 or ext. 345.

Aren't games a waste of class time?

Fun and games are an important part of the total swim program. Not only do we want to teach your child how to swim, we want them to enjoy the water as well. Most games have a purpose other than just "play". Many basic swimming skills are introduced through the use of appropriate water games. Kids need to have fun in the water!

What goes on the last day of swim lessons?

Water safety is a very important part of the swim program and is emphasized throughout the session. We have chosen the last day of the session to focus on some of the more time consuming safety skills. Some of the topics presented are: the use of life jackets, safe and simple rescue techniques, rescue breathing, safe boating, and sun safety.

We also reward all of your children's hard work with the opportunity to go down the waterslide and play under the mushroom.

What happens when my Preschooler turns six?

If your child has not been in lessons recently, call the Aquatic office for an evaluation or check the program book for days and times.

Children currently in Pike should go into the Polliwog level of the youth program. The instructor will recommend the appropriate level for children in the Eel, Ray, and Starfish.

What if my child misses the "testing day"?

There is no "testing day". It would not be fair to a child who was absent on that particular day. Instead, instructors are evaluating

their students throughout the whole session, recording their skills as they are mastered.

What benefits does a YMCA membership carry in the Swim Lesson Program?

A YMCA member will always have the opportunity to register before the general public. Having this benefit gives the member a better chance of getting into the class that best fits their schedule. YMCA members also receive special member rates for all YMCA programs, including aquatics.

How can I tell if my child is ready to try swim team?

The SPDY swim team is for beginners that participate in the Swim Lessons program (Ray, Starfish, & Guppy-Shark) through advanced swimmers that compete at the state and national levels. Practice times focus on fundamental competitive swimming skills, stroke instruction, and team building. Interested swimmers must be able to swim 1 length of the pool. Swimmers new to SPDY should take advantage of a two-week free trial. Swimmers may try the team for two weeks without obligation at any time during the season. Trial passes are available at the YMCA service desk or call the swim team coach for further information. (342-2980 ext. 327)

If my child is in a Ray class at another YMCA, can they sign up for a Ray class at the YMCA in Stevens Point?

The YMCA of the U.S.A. gives all YMCA's guidelines to follow, but they also allow us to meet the needs of our community. The needs of this community, i.e. class sizes, the division of skill levels etc. may differ from one YMCA to another.

What are the adult/teen lessons?

This class is designed for older youth and adults who would like to learn how to swim, but do not feel comfortable in the group

lessons. The class is usually taught by two instructors and geared toward the student's individual goals. Adult/teen lessons can be registered for just as the rest of our Progressive Swim Program.

Check out what else we have to offer:

- **Competitive Swim Team "SPDY"**
- **Community First Aid and Safety**
- **Masters Adult Swim**
- **Lifeguard Training**
- **Water Exercise**
- **Synchronized Swimming**

Mission: To put Christian Principles into Practice through Programs that Build Healthy Spirit, Mind, and Body for all.