



# SWIM TIME GUIDE

KEEPING YOUR “SWIMMER” SAFE

## SWIMMING

Swimming means your hands are off of your child, their face is in the water, their body is horizontal, and they are independently moving towards a safe target such as the stairs, a wall, or a supervising adult.

## JUMPING

If your child has permission to jump into a pool, they must also be able to swim to a wall or a supervising adult, or find a back float after jumping in. Catching your child after they jump, without having them swim or float, can create a false sense of security and overconfidence.

## FINDING AIR

Swimmers are safest when they consistently find their own air by finding a back float, swimming to a wall, the pool steps, or the hand of a supervising adult. Picking up a child before they find air independently can prevent them from learning how to be a problem solver in the water.

## DISTANCE & FREQUENCY

Less is More! Encourage your little one to swim very short distances for 5-10 minutes, depending on their level, building up to longer swim distances if their skills are strong and efficient.

## FAMILY HELP

Use discretion when choosing who plays with your non-swimmer or developing swimmer. Say no to those who won't reinforce and respect your water strategies, and teach those who will how to effectively and safely swim with your child in the pool.

## “LOVING IT”

Remember your child does not need to love the pool yet. There is plenty of time for your child to love the water. Until they are fully skilled and confident, it is fine for your little ones to love the water from the safety of your arms.

## LET THEM BE LITTLE

Toddlers are not Olympians, and babies are not party tricks. Self-rescue skills need to be nurtured, respected, and practiced in short spurts. Hold children in the water or let them play with toys on the stairs.

## ROUTINE

What happens before and after swim time needs to be consistent and clear with your child. Set up a routine and expectation that they do not even try to touch the water before swim time starts or after it ends.

## RATIO & FLOTATION

Wearable floatation devices were never created to be used in a pool for leisure. If you are outnumbered by unskilled swimmers and cannot ensure the safety of your child without a flotation device, opt for a sprinkler or splash pad.