Swim Lessons

Parent Information
Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Wilton Family Y. My Staff and I are committed to making your child’s experience with us safe, educational, and fun!

All of our swimming classes follow criteria developed by the YMCA of the USA. Each class level (Pike, Eel, etc) teaches five program objectives designed to make a safe and competent swimmer.

The program objectives are:

- Personal Safety
- Stroke Development
- Water Sports, Games, and Competitive Concepts
- Personal Growth
- Rescue

The following pages will provide you with a good deal of information regarding many aspects of swim lessons.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments regarding the program, please feel free to contact me at 203-762-8384 Ext. 211 or email me at shagan@wiltonymca.org.

Thank you for being part of the Wilton Family Y's Aquatic Program.

Sincerely,

Sarah Hagan
Aquatic Director

Wilton Family Y Mission Statement
The Wilton Family Y is a charitable organization dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles and positive values by offering a broad range of health enhancing, recreational, and social programs affordable and accessible to all people in our community.
Swim Levels and Descriptions

Parent/Child Levels: These classes introduce both the parents and child to the pool environment through basic water acclimation and skill introduction, as well as through songs.

- Shrimp (ages 6m-18m)
- Perch (ages 19m-36m)
- Seahorse (ages 2.5yr-3)—This is a transitional class for kids who have taken the shrimp and perch levels, and are ready to swim with a small group of kids and an instructor. Participants continue basic water skills, and learn to be in a class setting without a parent.

Preschool Levels (ages 3-5):

- Pike 1: Beginner level for those who have never taken swim lessons or those who are still nervous to swim. Children are working on water acclimation, safety, and basic swimming skills. Children may or may not swim independently with a float belt (3 bubbles).
- Pike 2: Beginner level for children who have taken parent/child classes, seahorse, pike 1, or other forms of swim lessons. Children are working on basic swimming skills, safety, self-confidence in the water. Children swim independently with float belt (2-3 bubbles).
- Eel 1: Intermediate level for children who have completed pike 2 or other swim lessons. Children work on swim strokes for front and back, safety, self-confidence, and endurance. Children swim independently with float belt (1-2 bubbles).
- Eel 2: Intermediate level for children who have completed eel 1 or other swim lessons. Children work on more advanced swim strokes for front and back, safety, self-confidence, and endurance. Children begin rotary breathing for freestyle. Children swim independently with float belt (1 bubble) or without a belt.
- Ray: Advanced level for children who have completed eel 2 or other forms of swim lessons. Children must be able to swim 1 length (25yds) of front crawl with rotary breathing (breathing to side) and 1 length of backstroke. Children work on front crawl, backstroke, perfecting rotary breathing, basic breastroke, and endurance. Children swim independently with no float belt (zero bubbles).

Progressive Levels (first grade to 12yrs)

- Polliwog: Beginner level for children who have never taken lessons, or have not taken them in a while. Child may be able to swim a half length (approx. 12 yds) of the pool on their front or back. Children work on water acclimation, safety, self-confidence, and basic swimming skills for front and back crawl. Child swims independently with or without a float belt (bubbles).
- Guppy 1: Beginner level for children that have completed preschool lessons, polliwog, or other forms of swim lessons. Children must be able to complete 1 length (25yds) of front crawl and backstroke without stopping. Children must have an understanding of rotary breathing and are working to strengthen skill. Children also work on backstroke, safety, and endurance. Must be able to swim independently without float belt.
- Guppy 2: Intermediate level for children who have completed preschool levels, guppy 1 or other forms of swim lessons. Children must be able to complete 1.5-2 lengths (approx 35-50yds) of front crawl and backstroke. Children must know rotary breathing and are working to perfect it. Children work on front crawl, backstroke, basic breastroke, safety, and endurance.
- Minnow: Intermediate level for children who have completed guppy 2 or other forms of swim lessons. Children must be able to complete 3 lengths (75yds) of front crawl(with proper rotary breathing) and backstroke. Children work on front crawl, backstroke, breastroke, some basic butterfly skills, and endurance.
- Fish: Advanced level for children who have completed minnow or other forms of swim lessons. Children must be able to complete 4 lengths (100yds) of front crawl (with proper rotary breathing) and backstroke. Children must also be able to complete breastroke for 1-2 lengths (25-50yds). Children are working on front crawl, backstroke, breastroke, learning more advanced butterfly skills, endurance.
- Flying Fish: Advanced swim level for children who have completed fish or other forms of swim lessons. Children must be able to complete 5-6 lengths (125-150 yds) of front crawl (with proper rotary breathing) and backstroke. Must also be able to complete 3-4 lengths of breastroke (75-100 yds), and 1 length of butterfly. Children are working on perfecting all 4 strokes, endurance, starts, turns, and dives.
Teaching Methods/Philosophies

The goal of the preschool swimming program at the Wilton Family Y is to increase the preschool swimmer’s confidence and to allow them to sustain a swimming effort before they have mastered breathing techniques. The Wilton Family Y will provide them with flotation devices, bubbles, noodles and other instructional devices for the development and safety of each swimmer.

The National YMCA encourages the use of bubbles (float belt) as an instructional aid during swimming lessons. The bubble helps to develop the child’s proper positioning in the water, and to help develop correct kicking methods. It is also important to note that it is just as essential to allow the swimmer to experience swimming without a bubble. This prevents the swimmers from becoming dependant on a bubble, helps to demonstrate what to do if young swimmers falls into the water without a bubble, and to evaluate the progress of the swimmer.

Ratios

The Wilton Family Y is dedicated to maintaining a safe instructor-to-child ratio in all swimming classes. Guidelines established by the YMCA of the USA are a ratio of 1 instructor for every 6 preschool swimmers, 1 instructor for every 8 progressive swimmers. This ratio also pertains to recreational swimming (play time). Please note that for younger and/or more beginner classes, we try to keep the ratios smaller by adding in teaching helpers when possible. Safety is our number one priority at the Wilton Family Y and we will not compromise the welfare of your children.

Building Closures/Lesson Cancellations

In the event of a facility closure due to equipment failure or inclement weather, the Wilton Family Y reserves the right to cancel a scheduled class at any time. When time permits we will make every effort to contact the class participants ahead of time to notify them of the cancellation. Occasionally, due to circumstances beyond our control, this communication is not possible. Fortunately, we do not have such occasions often, but appreciate your understanding when they occur.

Parent Observation

In order to give your child the maximum benefit of swim lessons, we require that all parents/guardians wait outside the pool area. This policy exists for safety purposes, and so that your child will focus on learning the skill rather than on the visitors. If the child does not bond and have trust and confidence in their instructor, they will have trouble progressing in our program.

Therefore, parents are permitted to remain in the pool area during the first and last lesson of the session only. (However, exceptions can be made for visiting relatives, such a grandparents.) Please see Sarah Hagan, Aquatic Director, for permission.
Class Cancellations

If the Wilton Schools are delayed, our morning classes are cancelled. If the schools are cancelled, our morning classes are also cancelled, and a decision regarding afternoon classes will be made by noon of that day. Closing due to inclement weather or emergencies can be confirmed by calling the front desk at 203-762-8384, and pressing “0” when prompted or you can go to our web site at www.wiltonymca.org .

All make-up swim lessons (classes that are cancelled by the Y) are made up at the end of a session during the break week (week after the lessons end). Make-ups will be held at the regularly scheduled time. All make-up schedules are posted on online and on the bulletin board outside the 25 yard pool. Please note, make-ups are only for cancelled classes. We cannot guarantee a make-up for a missed class. No credits will be issued for missed classes unless a doctor’s note is provided.

Deck Lifeguards

Deck Lifeguards will be patrolling the deck. Their function is to ensure the safety of all participants and provide basic first aid. Please refrain from engaging in a conversation while lifeguards are on duty.

Evaluation

After each swim session each child will be given an evaluation as to what level they completed and what level to continue on to.

Remember: Swimming is NOT a PASS/FAIL program.

Each child develops these physical skills with practice and time. It is not uncommon for a child to be in the same level for half or even the entire school year. Each child is an individual, and needs to seek and accomplish his/her personal growth, not their group/peer goals.

Medical Guidelines

At the end of this handbook you will find our “Medical Guidelines” that we ask you, as parents, to seriously consider when making a decision as to whether or not your child should attend swim class.

Parent’s Role

Parents often ask how they can help their children in their swimming development. It is important for parents to remember that children will progress at different levels, so there are different standards and expectations for each child. Remember to encourage your children and not to push them if they are not ready. Moving a child up a level before they are ready tends to do more harm than good, and encourages improper techniques that become harder to fix as a child grows. The most important goal of the Wilton Family Y swimming program is to give children confidence. The confidence will allow them to master all of the swimming techniques.

Questions

If you have any questions or concerns at any time during the session, feel free to speak with myself, Sarah Hagan. Our goal is to provide a safe, fun and rich learning environment. Our contact information is as follows:

Sarah Hagan – 762-8384 ext. 211 or email shagan@wiltonymca.org
Drew Schoenster—762-8384 ext 210 or aschoenster@wiltonymca.org
Ed Danielsen—762-8384 ext 212 or edanielsen@wiltonymca.org
Commonly Asked Questions:

Q. What if my child’s instructor is absent the day of his/her class?

A. We encourage our staff to take time off during break weeks, understanding that the relationship with the children and instructor needs to be consistent and continue through the school year. However, on occasion, your child’s instructor will be absent and a substitute will be appointed.

Q. Why can’t my child have the same instructor from session to session?

A. As you already know, your child is very likely to spend several sessions in the same level and it is not uncommon for your child to repeatedly have the same instructor. Again, consistency and trust are important skill/confidence builders in the development of good swimmers. We try to have the same instructor for a particular level for at least two sessions. However, your child might move to a different level the following sessions, which most likely means that he/she would have a different instructor.

Q. My child has been in the same level for 3 sessions, why has he/she not moved up yet?

A. Every child is unique, and will master class skills and goals at their own speed. Swimming takes a mix of confidence, strength, endurance, and technique, all of which can be reached at different rates. Do not be discouraged if your child stays in one level repeatedly. Many of the lower and intermediate levels practice skills that call for a lot of coordination and strength. It is better to keep your child in a level until the skills are mastered. Many kids have a harder time when placed in a level that is too high for their skill sets, and tend to become discouraged or upset if moved down. Recreational and Family swim time is encouraged in order to practice skills.

Conclusion

We hope that you have a good understanding of the Wilton Family Y swimming program, and hope that your child will have fun while developing their swimming skills. If you have any questions or concerns that were not addressed in the handbook, please stop by or call us and we will do our best to help you.

Medical Guidelines

To minimize the number of pool closings due to children vomiting or defecating in the water, we ask parents to observe the following rules:

- Do NOT feed your child before swimming.
- Do NOT bring your child swimming if they have a cold, congestion, upset stomach, or digestive problems.
- Be sure your child goes to the bathroom right before swimming.
- Ask your child if they feel well before going in the pool.

If your child vomits or defecates in the pool the following action will be taken:
- First offense: a $75.00 fine will be assessed to compensate for the loss of services and cost incurred.
- Second offense: a $250.00 fine will be assessed.
- Third offense: a $500.00 fine will be assessed and you will be suspended from using the pool for 30 days.
Pool Procedures (lessons and recreational/family swim times)

- Bating suits must be worn, no cuts off or under garments.
- Shoulder length hair should be tied-back or in a bathing cap. Practicing breathing skills becomes problematic with long hair as it will get in the child’s face.
- Soap showers with warm water must be taken before entering the pool.
- Life guards must be on duty before entering the pool.
- No inflatable, noodles, beach toys, water wings, beach balls, face masks, snorkels and fins are permitted while recreational swimming.
- No children in strollers are permitted on the pool decks without supervision at all times.
- All lap swimmers must circle swim.
- All Lifejackets must be coast guard approved.
- Non swimmers must be within arms length of a parent or guardian.
- No blowing of the nose into the pool or gutters is prohibited.
- Persons with severe infections or cuts are not permitted in the pool.
- No Breath holding or prolonged underwater swimming.