



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CLARION COUNTY YMCA
499 Mayfield Road
Clarion, PA, 16214
814-764-3400
www.clarioncountymca.org

CLARION COUNTY YMCA

STAGES OF SWIMMING

PARENT HANDBOOK

Contact us at any time

Branch Director – Jesse Kelley: jkelly@clarionymca.net

Program Director – James Collins: programdirector@clarionymca.net

Objectives	Page 1
Program overview	Page 1
How do I choose a class?	Page 2
Registrations	Page 3
Absences and Cancellations policy	Page 3
Age policy	Page 3
Bathroom policy	Page 4
Showers	Page 4
What should I not bring to lesson?	Page 4
Parent observation	Page 4
What should I do if my child is crying?	Page 4
Extra practice outside of lesson time	Page 5
Testing and moving class	Page 5
Individual differences	Page 5
Bubbles	Page 6
Volunteers	Page 6

Our mission: "To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all"

Our core values: Caring - Honesty - Respect - Responsibility

Objectives:

- 1) **To empower participants with the skills and knowledge to survive in water**
- 2) **To provide aquatic activities for the purpose of improving: range of motion, endurance, muscular strength, gross motor skills and general fitness**
- 3) **To provide a safe and positive learning environment where participants have opportunities to develop key swim strokes**
- 4) **Through positivism, increase all participants self confidence.**

Program Overview:

SWIM STARTERS Parent* & child lessons	SWIM BASICS (Safety Around Water) Recommended skills for all to have around water			SWIM STROKES Skills to support a healthy lifestyle			PATHWAYS Specialized tracks	
A Water Discovery 	B Water Exploration 	1 Water Acclimation 	2 Water Movement 	3 Water Stamina 	4 Stroke Introduction 	5 Stroke Development 	6 Stroke Mechanics 	Competition  Leadership  Recreation 
Introduces infants and toddlers to the aquatic environment	Focuses on exploring body positions, blowing bubbles, and fundamental safety and aquatic skills	Increases comfort with underwater exploration and introduces basic self-rescue skills performed with assistance	Encourages forward movement in water and basic self-rescue skills performed independently	Develops intermediate self-rescue skills performed at longer distances than in previous stages	Introduces basic stroke technique in front crawl and back crawl and reinforces water safety through treading water and elementary backstroke	Introduces breaststroke and butterfly and reinforces water safety through treading water and sidestroke	Refines stroke technique on all major competitive strokes and encourages swimming as part of a healthy lifestyle	
Outcomes Accompanied by a parent, infants and toddlers learn to be comfortable in the water and develop swim readiness skills through fun and confidence-building experiences, while parents learn about water safety, drowning prevention, and the importance of supervision.	Outcomes Students learn personal water safety and achieve basic swimming competency by learning two benchmark skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Swim, float, swim—sequencing front glide, roll, back float, roll, front glide, and exit - Jump, push, turn, grab 			Outcomes Having mastered the fundamentals, students learn additional water safety skills and build stroke technique, developing skills that prevent chronic disease, increase social-emotional and cognitive well-being, and foster a lifetime of physical activity.			Outcomes Students build confidence, cultivate their passion, and stay active through specialized tracks.	

*We define parent broadly to include all adults with primary responsibility for raising children, including biological parents, adoptive parents, guardians, stepparents, grandparents, or any other type of parenting relationship.

Our mission: "To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all"

Our core values: Caring - Honesty - Respect - Responsibility

How do I choose a class?

WHAT AGE GROUP DOES THE STUDENT FALL INTO?



6 months–3 years
PARENT* & CHILD:
STAGES A–B–1



3 years–5 years
PRESCHOOL:
STAGES 1–4



6 years –12 years
YOUTH:
STAGES 1–6



13+ years
TEEN & ADULT:
STAGES 1–6

All age groups are taught the same skills but divided according to their developmental milestones.

WHICH STAGE IS THE STUDENT READY FOR?

Can the student respond to verbal cues and jump on land?	NOT YET	A / WATER DISCOVERY
Is the student comfortable working with an instructor without a parent in the water?	NOT YET	B / WATER EXPLORATION
Will the student go underwater voluntarily?	NOT YET	1 / WATER ACCLIMATION
Can the student do a front and back float on his or her own for 10–20 seconds?	NOT YET	2 / WATER MOVEMENT
Can the student swim 10–15 yards on his or her front and back?	NOT YET	3 / WATER STAMINA
Can the student swim 15 yards of front and back crawl?	NOT YET	4 / STROKE INTRODUCTION
Can the student swim front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke 25 yards?	NOT YET	5 / STROKE DEVELOPMENT
Can the student swim front crawl, back crawl, and breaststroke 50 yards?	NOT YET	6 / STROKE MECHANICS

Our mission: "To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all"

Our core values: Caring - Honesty - Respect - Responsibility

Registration

Information:

- **Classes are 30m long and run for 4 weeks.**
- **You must register for a session (a block of 4 weeks) by the 1st of the month. You can register for 1 month in advance.**
- **Me and my Shadow has a limit of 20 spaces and parents must accompany the child in the water**
- **For 1+2+3 classes our instructor to student ratio is set at 1:5.**
- **For 4+5+6 classes our instructor to student ratio is set at 1:10.**

How to register:

- **You must fill in a registration form to enroll. These are available at the front desk and on our website: www.clarioncountyyymca.org**
- **We cannot accept first time registrations over the phone because there is a waiver. However, if we have a registration with a signed waiver on file for the participant already then we can accept registration and payment over the phone.**

Absences and Cancellations

- **Unfortunately, we are unable to “make up” any classes due to absence or cancellation of participants. We have many participants to enroll and we strictly adhere to class ratios to ensure a consistent and positive experience.**
- **If the YMCA cancels a class for any reason, other than a public holiday or inclement weather, classes will be offered at a rescheduled time.**
- **If the building is closed it will be announced on the YMCA facebook page and may be mentioned on local radio. There will also be a sign posted on the door of the facility. There will be no “make up” classes due to inclement weather.**

Age policy

- **All children under 8 years old must be supervised at all times within the building by a parent, even if coming for swim lessons.**

Bathroom policy

- Please take your child to the bathroom **before** the class. If your child needs to go during the lesson, and they are under 10 years old, their parent must take them to the bathroom.
- If a child under 10 needs to use the bathroom during a lesson and their parent is not present, the instructor will accompany the child to the family bathroom and wait outside. All other participants must wait out of the water.
- Swimmers aged 3 and older **must** be potty-trained. Swim diapers are not permitted for swimmers older than 3.

Showers

- Showering before entering the water removes: body oils, sweat, lotions, deodorants and perfumes. This is an important step in keeping our water clean and our pool filtration system functional.

What should I not bring to lessons?

- Open wounds
- Contagious diseases or illness (if you have had diarrhea please wait two weeks before using the pool)

Parent Observation

- Parents are invited to watch their child's swim lessons. Benches are on the pool deck near the window on the far side. When observing a lesson you must remain on the benches and the benches must remain in their position.
- We ask that parents do not interrupt the class; our instructors are trained to manage behavior. – If an instructor needs you they will invite you over.

What should I do if my child is crying?

- It is quite common for first time participants to become overwhelmed by a new swim lesson experience and it is also quite normal for children to become upset when initially separated from their parent. Your child may show great apprehension or cry during the first few weeks of lessons. They may not wish to return or pretend to be ill. Please be persistent and we will support them to overcome their anxieties and fears.
- The best thing for you to do is to give your child to the instructor and sit down straight away. Sometimes, leaving the pool deck entirely and returning at the end of the class helps because the child does not feel that the opportunity to leave the lesson part way through is there.
- Our instructors are experienced and trained professionals. They are quite used to these situations. Please consider their advice.

Extra Practice outside of lesson time

- **Please bring your child to the pool during open swim and give them the opportunity to show you what they have learnt in lesson time.**
- **The more opportunities the participant has to practice, the faster their progress will be.**
- **Frequency is the key to early swimming success. There is a link on our website to Home Activities that you can do with your child to support the development of their skills.**
- **Practice in the bathtub at home is very beneficial if your child needs some support in acclimating to getting their face and ears wet.**
- **Remember, never leave a child alone in or near any body of water.**

Testing and moving classes

- **There is no official “test day”**
- **Participants are continually assessed by their instructor against key criteria, (available to view on our website), and when the instructor feels they are competent in each area they will be invited to progress to the next stage.**
- **At the end of a 4 week session; parents will be given a progress report showing where the participant was at the start and what they have achieved by the end.**

Individual differences

- **Every child is different and will progress at different speeds. We believe in our progressive swim program and our instructors are trained to differentiate the lessons to allow for progress to be made by everyone. Please do not be discouraged if your child does not seem to progress as quickly as their peers, there are many reasons why progress may be slow:**

- 1) **Fear or water**
- 2) **A longer time is needed to feel comfortable under the water**
- 3) **Challenges with coordination**
- 4) **Attention span**
- 5) **Developing self confidence**

Bubbles

- **The bubble is not an approved PFD (personal floatation device). It is a teaching aid to be used like a kickboard or pool noodle. We encourage participants to develop their confidence in the water without a bubble.**
- **At the beginning stages of the program we teach participants the knowledge and skills needed to survive in the water in the event they find themselves in an emergency situation without a floatation aid.**
- **If you choose to put a bubble on your child outside of lesson time, you must be in the water with them.**

Volunteers

- **We are always looking for volunteers! If you have any free time, we would welcome your support during swim lessons. Please contact the Program Director for more information.**