

How to Be an Awesome Swim Parent

This is a wonderful article from Olivier Poirier-Leory entitled “[How to Be an Awesome Swim Parent](#).” The article can be found in its entirety by [clicking here](#). Here are the three points from the article:

Encourage accountability

At the end of the day you want swimming to be your swimmer’s sport. *Their* thing.

Let them take ownership of the sport by letting them have their own goals, and encourage them to evaluate and track their workouts to further instill a sense of control of their swimming.

If they have their own reasons for swimming and showing up every day to work hard they are going to be more intrinsically motivated to stay (and succeed) in the sport.

Avoid over-identifying with your swimmer’s performance

How they swim isn’t a reflection of you.

Don’t fall down the over-identification trap where your child’s swim performance is a reflection of you, leading you to ignore how they feel about the sport and focusing on your feelings. Taking the burden for their swimming also removes accountability on your swimmer’s part.

The more likely it’s their thing, the more likely they are to be successful.

When issues come up with the coach, address them privately and directly

There will be times when as a swim parent we have questions or concerns regarding our kid’s swimming. Over the course of a swim career, this is unavoidable.

Maybe your swimmer hasn’t improved at all in a couple months and we’d like to know more about why this is. Or perhaps she is being held back a group. Or you have questions about the plan for the team.

Too often when a parent has an issue with the coach they will sit in the stands gossiping and complaining to other parents, which does nothing but create a divisive environment for all involved.

Set a time to meet with the coach so that you can talk distraction-free (blindsiding them on the way to their car after practice doesn’t count).

Undermining the coach, whether it’s giving contradictory techniques and training instruction out of the water, only serves to confuse and put your little swimmer in a place where they have to choose between listening to you or coach when they are at practice. In ideal situations, parents parent, and coaches coach.

Additional Resources:

- [Advice to Parents of Kid Athletes](#)
- [Ted Talk- How to Raise an Olympian](#)
- [Sport Psychology Principles in Parenting Youth Athletes](#)