

Welcome To Kentucky Aquatics!

Welcome to Kentucky Aquatics! Kentucky Aquatics is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit competitive swim team open to members of the greater-Lexington community. Originally established as Wildcat Aquatics, Kentucky Aquatics has been a standard bearer of excellence in the Kentucky Swimming LSC since 1961. We're honored to include you and your family as a vital part of our continued success.

The information in this New Parent Handbook is intended to help you understand a bit more about the expectations and policies of our team but is just a starting point. Your questions are encouraged! Parent meetings will be held in September, and you may email us any time using the addresses below. We hope you will become an engaged, enthusiastic supporter of your swimmer(s) and our organization. Thank you for choosing Kentucky Aquatics!

Who to Contact with Questions:

Devin Murphy, Head Coach (Senior Elite/ High Performance) - dmurphykya@gmail.com

Lynnette Murphy, Head Age Group Coach/ Billing/Admin (Gold/Senior Prep)
lmurphykya@gmail.com

Saxon Simpson, Assistant Coach (Silver) - SSimpsonkya@gmail.com

Alev Lunsford, Assistant Coach (Bronze/ Pre-Competitive) - alevuzay@gmail.com

Parent Role at Kentucky Aquatics

It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is the parent's role to provide love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to help a young athlete feel positive about him/herself. Be the person that your swimmer can look to for constant, positive reinforcement. Strive to provide your swimmer with the basic opportunities s/he needs to have a positive swimming experience. Make sure your swimmer regularly attends practice and swim meets.

Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to the various methods of skill presentation. Some swimmers take more time to learn; this requires patience on the part of the coach and the parent, both of whom must remember that the swimmer's ultimate swimming potential may be as great or greater than that of a faster learner. Avoid comparing the skill, courage, determination, attitude, performance, or improvement of your swimmer to other swimmers. Swimmers mature physiologically and psychologically at different ages; the weakest swimmer in a practice group this year could be leading practices in the future.

Communication

Effective communication between parents, swimmers, and coaches is essential to maintaining a successful team and meeting the goals and expectations of all concerned. We use a variety of methods to establish and maintain communication with parents and swimmers. We always have the best intentions of keeping all members up-to-date and informed of all club activities/updates. The more active a role the parents and swimmers take in assuming responsibility for keeping informed, the more successful we will all be. Ask lots of questions, use veteran swimming parents as a support system, and reach out a helping, informed hand to novice swimming parents. In matters of communication, as in everything we do, teamwork is the name of the game.

Stay up to date on information. Check the website for updates, read the emails we send and communicate through the REMIND app when you have questions. Honor commitment dates and "closing" dates. The KYA coaching staff is not in control of deadlines for meets that we do not host. Please refrain from asking your coach to waive deadlines for you or enter your child after a deadline has passed. This creates extra work for the entry chairperson of the host team and creates the perception that our team is unorganized.

Athlete role

As our swimmers progress through the groups of Kentucky Aquatics, more responsibility will be placed on them to communicate with their group coach. When in the Bronze or Silver (10 & Unders swimmers) all communication will go directly between coaches and parents. As a swimmer enters into the Gold Group (11-12), they will be introduced to accountability and communication using the Remind app and/or email communication between themselves and the coach. Examples of this type of communication include goal setting, meet events and attendance policy. As a swimmer reaches the Senior Prep, Senior Elite or High Performance group, a swimmer will largely be communicating directly with their group coach. This is an effort to train swimmers to take responsibility for themselves and to prepare them for direct communication with adults when they get into college or the workforce. At every stage, communication between coach, athlete and parents will always be encouraged.

Guidelines for Watching Practice

Parents are encouraged to watch practice whenever you'd like. Here are some important guidelines to follow for practice with Kentucky Aquatics.

First, We have been instructed by the Lancaster Aquatic Center and Transylvania University staff not to leave children unattended. Please do not drop off 12 and Under swimmers more than 15 minutes before their scheduled practice time unless accompanied by an adult.

Second, young swimmers want parental approval more than anything in the world. For swimmers to learn as much as possible during practice, it is important that coaches have each swimmer's undivided attention. Communicating with your swimmer in any manner during practice will distract your swimmer as well as their teammates when being provided feedback or instructions from their coach.

Third, we ask you to communicate with a coach via email, the Remind App and 15 min prior to beginning of practice or once the coach ends their practice and all swimmers are out of the pool safely. If you need to communicate with a coach on a subject matter that needs more than a simple answer, please schedule an appointment with the coach so it can be answered in the most appropriate way.

Fourth, our coaches spend a considerable amount of time planning weekly training sessions for each of their practice groups. Every training set or instructional drill has a purpose. One practice and/or practice set often builds on another during each week. Remember what you may be seeing is a snapshot of the bigger progression, you may not understand the purpose of what the swimmers are doing on any given day. Taking your child's lead and having a good / positive conversation on the ride home may help you better understand and may also provide a stronger relationship that can encourage your swimmer to continue to grow in the sport.

Lastly, to help continue to build positive relationship moments with your swimmer, when observing practice there should be no video recording or filming of any kind. Please do not coach or advise your swimmer based on what you see (or think you don't see) him/her do during practice. Many times when teaching stroke skills, coaches ask their swimmers to do things that may not look correct or actually might be illegal during competition. However, the drills have an important purpose in teaching skills.

To comply with USA Swimming Insurance coverage, anyone on the pool deck must be a USA Swimming member coach or a USA Swimming athlete member. USA Swimming's Insurance is void if the rules are not followed. Therefore, parents should watch practice from the following areas:

- The stands of Lancaster Aquatics Center
- The lobby of Transylvania University
- The bleachers of Falling Springs

Note: Please make sure siblings are safe, courteous, and well-behaved at all facilities. Also, please make sure the area is clean before leaving.

Videoing/ Photography Policy

As a member of Kentucky Aquatics you have agreed to abide by the USA Swimming Safe Sport Guidelines provided to you at the time of your registration. That policy can be found [HERE](#) and should be reviewed annually. As a reminder- video recording during practice is not permitted.

Group Placement

Age Group

Currently, age group swimmers (14 and Under) are typically placed into roster groups based on their age. We hold group moves 3 times per year where we take into consideration the swimmers age as of the next championship meet. Swimmers will start the short course season (August) in the group they compete in at the December champs meet. After the December mid-season champs meet swimmers will move into the group they will compete in for March LSC Champs. Swimmers will start the long course season in the group they will compete in July for LSC Champs. This time-table is more of a guideline than a rule and any exceptions for the benefit of the swimmer will be communicated by your group coach.

Senior

Currently, there are two groups for senior swimmers to participate in, Senior Elite and High Performance.

Placement in High Performance is largely coaches discretion. To be *considered* for placement into High Performance you must:

- Show 80% attendance or better in the previous group
- Have Senior Sectionals cut in at least one event
- Will be expected to attend 100% of practices and will be removed from the group if attendance drops below 90%
- Will be expected to attend 100% of meets
- Must show an interest in competing collegiately

Attendance

We do not have specific minimum requirements for practice and meet attendance for groups below High Performance. HOWEVER, if your swimmer is active on the roster, they should be attending practice. If your swimmer is coming to practice, they should be attending meets. We are a competitive program- not a recreational program- and our lane space is limited. We offer at least one meet per month for each group. If your swimmer is not attending meets to the satisfaction of the coaching staff a meeting between the coaching staff and parent will be required. The coaching staff understands that sometimes unexpected things come up and that swimmers may be late. Communication in these instances with your group coach is key. Because warmup/ dynamic stretching and the explanation around the practice is crucial to success, joining the practice after warmup can be a distraction and detrimental to the rest of the group. Each group coach will address their policies around coming into practice late and will communicate those expectations to the parents of the swimmers in his or her group.

Caps/Suits/ Shoes/ Water Bottles/ Equipment Bag/Headsets

KYA Team caps are required for all practices and meets. Other team/fun caps are not permitted. Each swimmer receives 2 silicone team caps at the beginning of each season. Please reach out to your group coach at practices or meets to purchase additional caps and your account will be billed.

We do not currently have a team suit. Please make sure all suits worn at practice and meets are competitive and not recreational. Boys jammers should not cover the knee. Please do not wear swim shirts or buoyant/SPF swimwear.

Please have your swimmer wear or bring shoes to each and every practice in case we are unable to get in the water due to unforeseen circumstances. Each swimmer should also have his/ her water bottle and equipment bag with appropriate gear. Gear requirements for each group can be found on our website.

Tech Suits

Swimmers are required to follow the Kentucky LSC/USA Swimming guidelines around tech suits and they are not required. Each group coach will make recommendations based on the upcoming meet around tech suit use. If you have questions, please reach out to your group coach.

Headsets

We utilize an underwater audio and coaching system with Swim Talk headsets. These headsets were purchased by the club and given to swimmers 11 and over in September. If these headsets are broken/need to be replaced throughout the year it will be done at the expense of the swimmers account. Swimmers 11 and older are expected to maintain their headset, keep it charged and bring it to all practices. Swimmers in the 9-10 group will use headsets that the group coach keeps in their care. Swimmers are expected to treat their headsets with respect and care and will be billed the cost of a replacement if a set comes back broken because of misuse.

Meets

Kentucky Aquatics is a competitive swim team. The combined hours of in-water practice, dryland and lifting and mental preparation all culminate to prepare the athlete to race. As such, our swimmers are expected to attend our scheduled swim meets. We strive to offer at least one local meet a month, however, that may not always be an option. All of our swim meets will be posted on our team website under the "events" tab. Swimmers will be committed to attend each and every meet they qualify for. It will be the parent or guardian's responsibility to de-commit if your swimmer is unable to attend a particular meet. If your swimmer is not decommitted from the meet by the posted deadline, you will be charged the meet fee. Please follow up with your group coach if you decline a meet that is offered to your group.

Kentucky Aquatics swimmers compete as a team and each swimmer is expected to act as part of our team. This includes:

- 1.) Dress in team apparel – Check the event information on our TU site for the Block K team shirt and team cap assignment for each session of the meet. Other team shirts/caps are not permitted at meets. If you are missing an item, contact your group coach. Swimmers are not permitted to wear swim gear that represents another team (high school or summer team) while representing KYA.
- 2.) Stretch & warm up as a team- The event information will have an ON DECK time where we will begin our team dynamic warmup. It is inferred that by this time, swimmers are READY to begin their dynamic warmup. If you require extra time to set up your belongings, change into a suit or eat a snack, you should arrive BEFORE the on-deck time. EX: if our on-deck time is 7am and your swimmer is dropped off in front of the building at 7am, they are late and not prepared to start dynamic warmup. Depending on our assigned in-water time, we may hold team dynamic stretching before or after our in-water time. Swimmers are required to warm up with the team regardless of the start time of their first event. High Performance swimmers should discuss their timeline with Coach Devin if they have any questions.
- 3.) Sit and support each other as a team. Swimmers are required to sit together as a team. As needed, we will ask for parent volunteers from the 10 and Under groups to help the younger swimmers in the team area. Parents, please respect that this is the team area, much like a dugout or the sideline of a football game. Swimmers should visit their parents where they are sitting when they have free time. Parents, please do not sit and visit in the team area. Swimmers should be able to use this area to visualize, de-stress and support each other.
- 4.) Coaches will outline individual expectations for their groups at each meet, but at a typical meet swimmers are expected to meet with their group coach before each race to discuss race plan/goals, RACE, and either warm down and then meet back with their group coach or vice versa. The hours and hours of practicing and mental and dry preparation all come together when we race. Communication and evaluation before and after racing is a crucial part of development for every swimmer. Coaches are responsible for choosing events for competition. This is much like how coaches in other sports choose playing time and positions based around the skills they cover during practice.

Championship meets

Kentucky Aquatics swimmers are expected to attend every prelim and final session of our meets. If your swimmer qualifies for finals, he/she is expected to stay for finals of that session. This includes Sunday evenings. Just like you would never leave a baseball game at the bottom of the 9th inning, we will not leave a swim meet before its conclusion. Swimmers are expected to attend the highest-ranked meet that he/she qualifies for. This includes, but is not limited to mid-season championship meets, LSC State Championships, Sectionals, Futures, NCSAs, Junior Nationals, Nationals or Olympic Time Trials. The goal at championship meets is to score as many points as possible. The coaches will determine what events (individual and relay) your child will swim. Relays could change at the meet and the coaches have complete discretion on who swims.

Scratches for meets are discouraged, but will be left to the coaches discretion. Do not scratch an event without first speaking with your group coach.

For some of our meets we will be expected to provide timers. The coaching staff will communicate which meets require this, and will have a sign-up posted with the meet under the "events" tab.

What to Say to Your Children After They Swim - Regardless of their placement in a particular event, if they get their best time, be happy with them and solidify that self-improvement is the only thing they have control over. If they do not get their best time, don't be disappointed in them, but ask them if they learned anything from the swim. The swimmers are hard enough on themselves and don't need the added emotions that your disappointment brings. Always strive to make every swim a learning experience and keep things as positive as possible. Let the coaches be the coaches. Parents please do not confuse your swimmer with your racing philosophy.

Volunteering

As a member of Kentucky Aquatics you are required to volunteer. Each family is required to have at least one member volunteer for each day of our home swim meets. These meets are vital fundraisers for our team and we need an "all hands on deck" mentality to ensure their success. Volunteer positions include, but are not limited to, timing, officiating, working concessions, working hospitality, being an on-deck parent for younger swimmers, announcing, or working the doors. A failure to have at least one member of each family volunteer will result in a fine to be donated to our team fundraising. The amount of this fine will be communicated before our first home meet.

Even if you are a volunteer in one of our committees such as the fundraising/ sponsorship committee or spirit committee, you are still expected to volunteer for our home meets. We can't do it without you and appreciate your participation!

Fees/Billing

We utilize a billing system which is viewable on-line when you log in to our TeamUnify web site. The benefit is a more detailed invoice with the ability to access your account at any time to view all current and previous activity on the account.

In order for a swimmer to begin practice, parents must have:

Completed online registration, authorized monthly payments by Visa, MasterCard, Discover credit cards or added their banking account information. We do not accept any payments by check or cash. It is your responsibility to keep all payment information up to date and your invoice current. Invoices that have not been paid past 30 days are subject to a \$30 late fee.

Team members are responsible for the following non-refundable fees:

- New Member Team Registration Fee
- Annual Admin Fee (returning members)
- USA Swimming Registration Fee
- Swim Meet Fees and other one time fees as associated with your account (travel expenses, caps, etc)
- Monthly Fee. On the 1st of each month an invoice will be generated for all active members.

Families with 3 or more swimmers receive a 50% discount on the third swimmers monthly practice fee. This policy does not include registration or annual fees.

Leaving the team/ extended pause We require written notice 60 days in advance to cancel your account/membership with Kentucky Aquatics. If you need to pause your membership due to extended illness or injury, etc, please contact us.