



**Elmwood Sharks Swim Team
Handbook**

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Welcome to Elmwood Sharks Swim Team Program

Aquatics Department Mission Statement

Our Mission is to provide the skills and motivation necessary for each swimmer to achieve their full potential. Ochsner Fitness Center Aquatics “Inspires Confidence” through self-motivation, goal setting, personal achievement, and the pursuit of excellence, while having fun in the process!

Our Vision is to provide swimmers of all ages and abilities the skills and motivation necessary for their continued growth and achievement in competitive swimming, as well as, a path for each child to develop his/her confidence, discipline, determination, and self-respect.

Parent/Guardian Handbook

The Elmwood Sharks Swim Team Handbook is a main point of reference for all individuals and families swimming for the Sharks Program. The manual contains sections for our parents/guardians as well as sections for both the swimmers and parents/guardians to read and understand. Our team success depends upon the commitment of the coaches, swimmers and parents/guardians,. We ask that both the parents and the swimmers sign the Code of Conduct of the handbook acknowledging they have read through the material and commit to play an active part in the Elmwood Sharks Team. Any questions regarding information or expectations should be directed to the Group Coach, Head Coach or Aquatics Supervisor.

General Information

Contact Information

All coaches can be contacted through Ochsner Fitness Center's Aquatics Office and their emails found on our team website. If your coach is unavailable, please leave a message on voicemail and your message will be relayed to the appropriate coach.

Team Email: SharksSwimTeam@ochsner.org

Phone: (504) 729-4205 – Aquatics Office, Sarah Carr

Mailing Address: 1200 South Clearview Parkway, Suite 1200,
Harahan, Louisiana 70123

Email – Sarah.Carr@ochsner.org – Sarah Carr, Aquatics Supervisor

Website: <https://www.teamunify.com/laes>

Coaching Staff

The swim team coaching staff has been carefully selected to make sure your child learns from the best. All our coaches and instructors are USA Swimming certified and have the level of expertise needed to help our swimmers excel.

Beau Caldwell – Head Coach

Laura Fox – Assistant Coach

Brett Dipuma – Assistant Coach

Tim Buisson – Senior Group Coach

Eve Thomas – Assistant Coach

Max Theriot – Assistant Coach

Sarah Carr – Aquatics Supervisor

Swim Team Groups

The Elmwood Sharks Swim Team has 6 groups focusing on ability levels and development to give each swimmer the best chance of reaching their full potential. Swimmers will be placed in groups according to the Head Coaches' discretion based on which group will allow the swimmer the best opportunity for progress appropriately.

The Sharks Coaching Staff will continually evaluate the swimmer's progress and goals. When a swimmer demonstrates the capability of performing at the next level, the swimmer's parents will be contacted by the coach to discuss the opportunity. If a swimmer wishes to be considered for promotion/advancement to another Sharks Swim Group, the swimmer **MUST** be able to demonstrate and consistently perform the skills and/or drills for that particular group, to the satisfaction of the Sharks Coaching Staff.

If a swimmer shows that they are no longer able to maintain or demonstrate the required skills necessary for the current group, the Head Coach can make the determination to move that swimmer down a group until the skillset has been re-established. Swimmers need to consistently perform and uphold expectations to avoid injury or improper training.

Novice Group (Junior Silver) – beginner level learning to compete in freestyle and backstroke

Intermediate Group (Senior Silver) – beginner level further development of freestyle and backstroke, introduction to butterfly and breaststroke

Junior White Group – intermediate, further development of stroke technique of all four strokes and increased competition expectations

Senior White Group – intermediate, stroke technique emphasis and an increase in practice time and yardage.

Junior Blue Group – Intermediate/Advanced, stroke technique and an emphasis on aerobic training.

Senior Blue Group – Advanced, emphasis on training aerobic, anaerobic and threshold, stroke technique less emphasized. Preparations for Junior and Senior National level events.

Strength Training

The state-of-the-art facilities and wellness professionals at Ochsner Fitness Center provide the Elmwood Sharks with unique opportunities for training in and out of the pools. Senior Swimmers will train bi-weekly with the Strength & Conditioning Coaches at Ochsner Performance Training on site.

Along with the benefits of swimming, the extra level of intensity added by strength training gives swimmer the extra edge and helps with preventing injuries. The repetitive forward

motion of swimming can put developing athletes at risk; adding strength training to the swim program will help keep your child fit, healthy and injury free.

Swimmers will start with age-appropriate balance, coordination, core strength and flexibility exercises, progressing to body weight and light resistance activities.

Junior and Senior White Groups will add fun fitness activities that will improve their cardiovascular fitness and body control. Junior and Senior Blue Groups will perform balanced circuits that will include upper, lower, core and cardio stations using stability balls, medicine balls, dumbbells, resistance bands and plyometric boxes.

All athletes should be at least 9 years old and on the Junior White group or higher to participate in any regularly scheduled dry-land training.

Program Goals

These goals are based upon the assumption that the swimmer will be a member of the Sharks Swimming Program for a minimum of two seasons.

Developmental/Instructional Swimming Programs

Each swimmer should be able to:

- perform ALL four of the competitive swimming strokes properly (Butterfly, Backstroke, Breaststroke, Freestyle)
- do a competitive forward racing dive from the starting blocks
- perform the proper start for all four of the competitive strokes.
- perform the proper turn for all four of the competitive strokes.
- learn how to utilize the pace clock correctly.
- learn how to utilize the swimming equipment correctly.
- participate in at least three Sharks Swim Meet per swimming season.

Advanced Competitive Swimming Programs

Each swimmer should be able to:

- record “personal best times” in every stroke and at every distance within their ability and age group.
- compete in every stroke and every distance within their age group, including at least two (2) distance events.

Membership Fees

Swimmer Registration

All new swimmers must be registered with USA Swimming in order to participate on the swim team. This is an annual fee of \$88 which provides insurance coverage and USA Swimming access for your child to participate in swim practice and swim meets. Athletes must complete their Elmwood Sharks registration packet within eight (8) days of their tryout date. The registration packet should be processed with Ochsner Fitness Center Member Services, then the Aquatics Supervisor will send the unique registration link for Parents to complete all USA Swimming registration.

Parents Association

The Sharks Swim Team Parent's Association is a liaison for the parents. The Association and its members help in planning social events, state meet team hotels, fundraising activities, and other functions necessary for the team and buying additional team supplies. A \$100 annual fee per swimmer, that will be charged to your account upon the anniversary date of your child joining the swim team, goes to the planning and functioning of the team. Throughout the year, you will receive emails from the Association regarding special events that need you to RSVP. Please take the time to respond to these emails which helps the our volunteers better prepare for events for our swimmers.

Fee Summary:

All fees must be paid in full by October 1st of each year for each swimmer will be to remain eligible to participate.

Program Fee Junior/Silver Group.....	\$75 members, \$80 non-members
Program Fee Junior White Group.....	\$85 members, \$95 non-members
Program Fee Senior White Group.....	\$100 members, \$115 non-members
Program Fee Blue Group.....	\$110 members, \$125 non-members
USA Swimming Registration Fee (annual).....	\$88
Elmwood Sharks Parents Association (annual).....	\$100

Communication Resources

There are numerous way we communicate within the swim team. The primary and most efficient way of staying updated is through our Team Unify system (sent directly to your email on file) and through messages on our Facebook page. If you are not receiving these types of messages or any of the following forms of communication, please let your coach know so we can correct the issue.

1) Phone and Text Message

- Please do not hesitate to call/contact any member of the Sharks Coaching Staff to discuss your child's progress or any questions or concerns you may have.
- Immediate notifications e.g. practice cancellations due to weather will be sent out by email and our team BAND account.

2) Email

- Short reminders to check the website for new or important information will be sent out by email to parents on the Sharks Swim Team list. If you are not receiving emails from us please contact us so we can update the list.

3) Handouts

- Primarily given at the beginning of the season or to new members.
- Available at the Parents Association Meeting at the beginning of each season.

4) Website

- Our website is one of the most important resources to access information. We will post all schedule updates, meet entries, upcoming events, etc., on the team's website at <https://www.teamunify.com/laes>. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure they check the website regularly.

5) Parents Meetings

- All team or Parent Association meetings are open to swim team parents/guardians.
- Meetings will be held at least once per quarter and will be announced on the team calendar on the website.
- **Swim Meet Information – Events**
- Available for every swim meet and event on our team website under the “Events” column.
- Contains information about the up-coming swim meet; location, directions, warm-up and meet starting times, the event numbers that each swimmer has been entered; list of events and their event numbers; a section for additional swim meeting information; hotel information, and other important information.
- Posted on the website 3-7 days prior to the 1st day of the meet (both “home” and “away” meets).

Responsibilities

Parents play a critical role in efforts to develop a healthy and successful swimmer. We welcome you to attend practice and, of course, competitions and we do welcome your input and support. Here are a few guidelines to assist us in our journey:

On the emotional side, provide unconditional love, encouragement, and support for your swimmer. Your love should never be based on your child's performance. We focus on personal improvements and efforts as a measurement of success. While winning is not the most important thing, it is something we strive for.

In addition, it is very important to show good sportsmanship at all times towards coaches, teammates, officials and opponents. You are a role model.

Swimming is an extracurricular activity and should come second to education and school. There will be times when deadlines, important tests, and missed assignments will surface during the year. Please just inform us when they arise.

General

1. Attend all parent meetings.
2. Volunteer 10 or more hours throughout the year by timing, stroke judging etc. Please sign up for these on the website 3-7 days before the meet.
3. Communicate with your coach about your child's meet entries or meet absences. Once the deadline notification has passed, meet entry fees will be charged to your account, even if your child does not attend the meet.

Practice

Updated practice schedules, including changes and vacations, are regularly posted on the website. Please take a few minutes each week to check and see what changes may affect your swimmer.

1. Please ensure swimmers arrive to practice 10 minutes early so they are ready physically and mentally for their workout. Swimmers should have their cap and goggles on and equipment out and ready at the start time of practice.
2. Please do not drop off young swimmers and let them get into the pool without supervision. Ochsner Fitness Center has multiple entrances; parking lots and facilities are busy during practice times. Swimmers should check-in at the desk with their member cards.
3. Ensure that they have the necessary attire and equipment for swimming or strength training.
4. Please do not coach your child at home or during practice. This behavior diminishes the coach/athlete relationship.

5. You are encouraged to watch your child's practice from one of our wooden decks or from the covered café seating area. Please stay off the immediate pool deck during practice to eliminate distractions for the swimmers and coaches. This allows the coach to devote all of their attention to the swimmers.
6. If you have questions or concerns, talk to the coach **before or after** practice or schedule a 1-on-1 meeting.
7. Please inform your coach if your child will miss practice due to vacations, illness, injury, or medication. If a child has an injury there may be different options to help keep the child's fitness conditioning, so please talk to your coach.
8. Ensure your athlete stays hydrated and has adequate nutrition.
9. Please pick up your child promptly at the end of practice. Please respect the time and responsibilities of our coaches.

Competition

If the practice/meet attendance goal is not met for your swimmer, the coaches reserve the right not to enter the swimmers in high competition meets.

1. Please attend every competition to support your child and the team.
2. Please make sure your swimmer is ready to go when they arrive at the competition. Once the swimmer gets into the pool, parental contact will cease to allow the swimmer time to focus. The swimmer will be allowed to visit with you after warm-ups, and their events.
3. Please provide healthy snack, food and drink choices for your swimmer. Please avoid sugary and high fat content options.
4. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure there are behind the block in adequate time before their race. Be aware of all policies and procedures for each meet, including clerk of course or check-ins.
5. Do not correct your child or others during the meet.
6. Cheer but do so in a courteous manner so as not to adversely affect other swimmers or judges.
7. Please maintain at least 5 feet from the edge of the pool to allow officials and coaches to move freely.
8. If you have a genuine complaint, please inform your coaches only. Remember the coaches are knowledgeable professionals with many years of experience. If we feel a judgment was inappropriate we will go through proper procedures to find answers. Under no circumstances is a parent or swimmer ever to approach a meet official to inquire about a ruling during or after a competition.
9. If you have concerns about the way your child performed in a competition, please talk to the coach in a 1-on-1 meeting after the meet concludes.
10. If a parent is unable to attend a particular competition, please do not assume that another family will take care of your child. Take care of the following details before travel.
 - Know the name of the host club and number in which the competition is being held.
 - Communicate trip details clearly with your child and host family before their departure and provide them with an emergency contact number.

Swimmer and Parent Handbook

Respect for the Sport of Swimming

Your actions will dictate the level of respect you have for yourself, your teammates, and Elmwood Sharks Swimming. The way we act at practice, competitions, team functions, and while traveling directly states how you represent yourself. Only high standards of behavior will be acceptable.

1. Stay current with your USA Swimming membership.
2. Attend at least 65% of practices for your group, all mandatory competitions and special events.
3. Team swimsuit is required. No two piece swimsuits.
4. Visible Piercings (other than the outer ear) and tattoos are not allowed.
5. No jewelry is permitted at competitions.
6. Swim cap must be worn during practice and meets.
7. Arrive 10 mins early so that you are ready to start when practice starts. Late swimmers are a distraction to your group.
8. Bring necessary equipment for swimming and/or strength training.
9. Always bring your water bottle.
10. Always work hard and try your best.
11. Treat your teammates with respect. Be kind and supportive to our up-and- coming athletes, they will replace you one day. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, respect yours.
12. Ask permission to leave the pool every time.
13. Rude and belittling comments, displays of disgust or anger, talking back to your coaches or adults, or simply crying because of frustration or fear will not be tolerated.
14. Honesty is the best policy. Cheating is a form of disrespect to your team, your parents, and most of all yourself. If you cannot complete an assignment please see your coach.
15. Always communicate with your coaches about the intensity of workouts.
16. Keep your body nourished with healthy foods.
17. Respect the rules of safety by staying out of the pool until supervised by your coach.
18. No cell phones will be allowed during practice unless authorized by your coach.
19. No drug or alcohol use.

Rules for Competition

1. Find coaches as soon as you arrive.
2. Remain in the designated team area (both athletes and parents).
3. Be in proper competition attire.
4. Accept times with dignity and without criticism. Do not allow a mistake to carry over and affect the rest of your competition or your team.
5. Be polite and respectful to all meet personnel and other athletes.

Other areas of swimmer Accountability:

1. Swimmer learns to accept the responsibility for his/her performance
2. Swimmer learns coping strategies to deal with peer pressure
3. Swimmer learns coping strategies to deal with parent pressure
4. Swimmer understands and performs personal race strategies
5. Swimmer demonstrates an ability to balance school, social, swimming and family
6. Swimmer can effectively communicate her/his commitment to her/his parent, coach and teammates
7. Swimmer knows the team goals and will take an active part in developing specific and attainable practice group goals
8. Swimmer understands the relationship between his/her personal commitment level and results

Awards

Additional awards may develop throughout the season. If you have any suggestions, please contact the coaching staff.

Disciplinary Action

The rules and policies, which dictate the behaviors of our swimmers and their parents, have been outlined in this handbook. If at any time there is a major disruption or an ongoing pattern, we may impose some disciplinary action to improve the situation at hand. The following list is not an all-inclusive list of what we feel may be appropriate.

1. The swimmer may be asked to sit out until his/her attention and focus is regained.
2. The swimmer may be asked to leave the pool for the day if his/her behavior is distracting to the assignment of the team.
3. The coaches may request a meeting with the swimmers family.
4. The swimmer may be suspended from the team for a few days or a competition. Please note that if a swimmer is suspended from a competition for poor attendance, work ethic or attitude the entry fee is nonrefundable.
5. The swimmer may be asked to leave the team permanently if his/her behavior will not conform to team expectations.
6. It is also possible that a swimmer will have to leave the program due to the actions of his/her parents. We will not tolerate parents whose actions and words do not comply with our policies and values.

We will be unable to discuss every daily occurrence. Our goal is to develop an understanding and appreciation of our athletes. However, if there is a serious concern, we will include the parents. Our coaches and athletes have all worked very hard to achieve the level of success and the reputation that we have. A documentation procedure will be used when deemed necessary.

Athlete Code of Conduct

As a member of the Sharks Team, I am expected to uphold a high standard of conduct. Representing the Sharks Swimming Team is both a privilege and a responsibility and any actions I take reflect upon my fellow swimmers, parents, coaches and the entire Sharks Team Program.

Any failure to live up to the Sharks Program higher standard rules of conduct can result in my dismissal and/or suspension from the Swimming Team subject to the final discretion of the Head Coach and Ochsner Fitness Center Management Team.

Swimmer's Signature

Date

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

Parent Code of Conduct

As a parent of a Sharks Swim Team Member I am expected to uphold a high standard of conduct. Representing the Sharks Swimming Team is both a privilege and a responsibility and any actions I take as a Sharks parent reflects upon my fellow parents, children, and coaches.

Therefore, as a parent of a Sharks swimmer, I will show good sportsmanship towards coaches, officials, opponents, and other parents. I will never approach a meet official to inquire about a ruling during or after a competition. Complaining to other parents or the starting of rumors will not be tolerated. I will approach my child's coaches if I have a concern.

I have read my responsibilities as a Sharks parents which includes attending parents meeting and team events, staying off the pool deck during practice and volunteering at least 10 hours of Shark's team work throughout the year.

Failure to abide by the Parents Code of Conduct will be viewed as an act to discredit the Sharks Swimming Program. If this action occurs, the consequences are, but not limited to, suspension and/or dismissal, to myself and child. This may be enforced by the Sharks Coaches and Ochsner Fitness Center Management Team.

Parent's Signature

Date

Child's Name