



Be a Supportive Parent

Before you read this guide. Please understand we are not trying to teach you how to parent. Parenting is your job, and coaching is ours. But as you read on, look at this through the lens of the big picture of swimming and the vision of COM Aquatics. “Create a life changing environment where success is certain”

Being a supportive parent is one of the most powerful things you can do for your swimmer. Your role is **not to control every detail or focus only on winning**. Your role is to bring **joy, encouragement, and balance** — so your child can grow both as an athlete and as a person.

The Big Picture vs. the Little Picture

It's easy to focus only on times, medals, or place. That's the “**Little Picture**.”

The **Big Picture** is more important — life lessons, friendships, confidence, and love for the sport that stay long after the race is over.

Parent Tip: Support your child in ways that fill their emotional tank, not just chase results. Listen, smile, clap, and celebrate effort and courage.

Keep Swimming Fun

The number one reason kids swim is because they enjoy it. Pressure and high expectations can take the fun away. Let's keep swimming joyful. The best thing you can say after a race is: “*I love watching you swim.*”

Parent Tip:

- Cheer loudly and positively, even if the race doesn't go perfectly.
- Focus on the experience, not the time on the scoreboard.
- Encourage team energy — cheer for all teammates, not just your own child.

Show Pride in All Moments

Your swimmer wants to know you are proud — not just on good days, but also when things don't go as planned. Celebrate **effort, learning, and progress**. This builds resilience and self-belief. That's when real growth happens.

Parent Tip:

- Highlight courage and effort, not just the scoreboard.
- Support mental skills like visualization, mindfulness, and goal-setting.
- Stay confident in your child's abilities — your belief gives them extra security. Kids feel safe to take risks, try new things, and push their limits.

The ELM Tree of Mastery for Athletes

- **E = Effort** → Always give your best.
- **L = Learning** → Always look for ways to improve.
- **M = Mistakes** → Don't fear them, learn from them, and move forward.

Parent Tip: Mistakes are part of growth. Teach your swimmer to “flush mistakes” — let them go and refocus on the next opportunity. A swimmer who learns how to bounce back quickly will not only be stronger in the pool but also better prepared for challenges in everyday life. Celebrate the growth process.



Fill Their Emotional Tank

Athletes perform best when their “tank” is full. Think of it like a car — no fuel, no movement.

- Tank Fillers: specific praise, appreciation, listening, clapping, smiles.
- Tank Drainers: criticism, sarcasm, ignoring, eye rolls, frowns and shame.

Parent Tip: Listening is one of the most powerful tank-filers. Sometimes your child just wants to share how a race felt, not hear how to swim it differently. Your calm attention sends the message: “What you feel matters.”

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Enjoy the moment. Cheer loudly. Smile often. Let the coaches handle technique and winning. Your positive energy helps your swimmer stay motivated, confident, and excited to come back to the pool every day. Think of every meet as a family memory. Years from now, your swimmer won’t remember their exact times — but they will remember your smile, your support, and the fun you had together.

In the end, true success is not measured by medals, but by the joy of swimming, lessons learned, and love for the sport that lasts a lifetime. When you focus on the Big Picture, you are giving your child a gift far more valuable than trophies: passion, confidence, and joy that stays with them forever.