

Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District

Aquatics Department



Learn To Swim

Parent

Handbook



INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Tualatin Hills Park & Recreation District (THPRD) Aquatics Department's Learn to Swim Program. We are pleased that you have selected our program for your family. All of our swim classes are taught by highly trained and/or certified Instructors. We have developed a highly effective lesson program based on over 55 years of teaching patrons to swim in our community. Our primary goal is to teach all participants to swim to the best of their ability, in a fun, friendly and safe environment. This booklet will assist you in answering some of the questions you may have. It will also provide you with several suggestions that may be beneficial to you and your child. Please review the information carefully. If you have any additional questions the THPRD Aquatics staff will be happy to assist you.

PHILOSOPHY

The THPRD Aquatics Department is dedicated to providing a fun and creative atmosphere for the development of swimming skills in youth and adults in our community. We are committed to the importance of water safety and training, for our staff as well as our community. We believe in the value of swimming as a lifetime skill, as well as a healthy recreational activity.

GOALS

- To give children and adults from our community an opportunity to learn to swim.
- To provide a safe environment that allows effective progress through our swim lesson program.
- To make the learning process FUN!
- To provide well trained instructors.
- To educate the community in water safety.
- To provide valuable classes and programs for the community.
- To develop new programs that meet the changing needs of our community.

WHAT LEVEL SHOULD I REGISTER MY CHILD?

If your child has not taken swimming lessons in the past three months, we recommend that you register for the previous level taken, even if your child successfully completed that level in the last session. Children, especially younger ones, lose their “swim conditioning” after long breaks, and reviewing skills is very helpful.

To assist you in registering for the appropriate level, please refer to the swim level descriptions in this section. If you have any questions or are coming from another program and are unfamiliar with our lesson program, please do not hesitate to ask. THPRD Aquatics staff will be happy to assist you.

Baby & Me (6 months-18/24 months)

A fun introduction to the water for parent and child, with singing songs, playing with water toys and learning basic skills.

Toddler & Me (18 months/2 years-3 years of age)

A fun introduction to the water for parent and child, expanding on the skills learned in Baby & Me. This is an ideal class to take before beginning our preschool swim lesson program.

You & Your Preschooler (3-5 years of age)

This class is for children who are not quite ready to be in swim lessons without their parent. It includes basic swim skills and learning to become comfortable in the water with an instructor.



SWIM LESSON PROGRAM

1

Level 1 is an initial adjustment to the water environment. Swimmers will experience bubble blowing and breath control exploring the water while on their front and back both assisted and unassisted. Upon successful completion swimmers will be able to kick on a kickboard, steamboat and back glide for two body lengths and jump into the water, all unassisted.

2

Level 2 will build confidence for the swimmer to perform floats and glides on front and back, while introducing crawlstroke and combined back. Rotary breathing will be introduced. The swimmer will be able to coordinate side breathing with armstrokes for five breaths and swim five body lengths on their back, winging and kicking.

3

Level 3 will focus on further developing crawlstroke skills and will learn backstroke. We will also begin to introduce deep water experiences with treading water and beginning diving skills. Swimmers will practice performing skills for longer distances. Upon successful completion, swimmer will be able swim crawlstroke and backstroke for 15 yards.

4

Level 4 introduces breaststroke and standing front dive. The focus will be increased proficiency and endurance of crawlstroke, backstroke, and treading water. Upon successful completion swimmers will be able swim crawlstroke 25 yards and 25 yards backstroke.

5

Level 5 focuses mainly on stroke proficiency and building endurance. Upon successful completion, swimmer will be able to swim continuously for 300 yards, tread water for 2 minutes, perform a long shallow dive and demonstrate underwater swimming.

SWIM LESSON PROGRAM

Advanced Swimming

At this point your child has developed strong swimming skills. However, there are many opportunities available to them as they continue to develop their water skills. We offer two tracts of learning: Pre-Competitive, where they learn competitive strokes and skills or Pre-Lifeguarding, where the participant learns more about water safety.

Pre-Competitive

Swimmers will refine their strokes and increase their endurance. They will learn how to read a workout, use a pace clock, pull buoys, fins, hand paddles, as well as learn training principles. Upon successful completion, they will swim 500 yards continuously as well as a 100 yd I.M.

■➔ Next steps:

Splash program (THPRD recreational swim team)

Club programs (swimming, water polo, synchronized swimming or diving)

Pre-Lifeguarding

Swimmers will learn strokes that can be used effectively with rescue skills. They will learn more about water safety and further explore their abilities in the water. Upon successful completion, participants will swim 300 yards continuously as well as surface diving and underwater swimming.

■➔ Next steps:

Junior Lifeguard/Swim Aide program (ages 12-15 yrs.)

Lifeguard Training (ages 15 yrs. & up)

AGE DEFINITIONS

- Preschool:** Ages 3-6 and toilet trained
- School Age:** Ages 7 years & up (or has started the 1st grade)
- Teen/Adult:** Age 13 & up



INSTRUCTOR/STUDENT RATIOS

Classes are designed to have 1 instructor:

- per 5 preschool students
- per 6 school age students

Specialty classes may have different instructor/student ratios. There may also be a situation where your child is working with two instructors in the same class. This occurs as part of our instructor training program. While providing assistance, the new instructor is gaining practical experience working along side an experienced instructor.

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SWIMMING LESSONS

We want the instruction program to be a positive, safe and fun experience for you and your child. It is our hope that your first experience makes a positive impression and that swimming will become a lifelong recreational activity for your entire family. Following are some suggestions we feel will help create a more positive swimming experience.

- It is not uncommon for new surroundings to be a little frightening. Frequently, there are other activities taking place during lessons and combined with the new surroundings, they may intimidate the child further. To reduce the child's anxiety, give your child a tour of the dressing rooms, shower area and even show them the spectator section where you will be sitting during lessons.
- Please pull long hair back or have your child wear a swim cap. Hair in your child's eyes and mouth makes it difficult to swim.
- Please take your child to the restroom prior to each class. If your preschool age child needs to go to the restroom during class, please be prepared to take them.
- Please remove all bandages and spit out gum prior to class. If your child is sick or has an open sore/wound, it may be best not to attend class.
- All persons must shower prior to entering the pool. Parents please note that street shoes are not allowed in the shower area. If you need to assist your child in the shower, please remove your shoes.
- Please notify your child's instructor of any special circumstances that may affect your child's progress.
- Parents are encouraged to watch their child's class from the spectator section. Spectators are not permitted on the deck during class. Also, please enter the deck from the dressing rooms only. Some pools have specific deck entrances that are for staff or emergency use only.

Continued

PREPARING YOUR CHILD FOR SWIMMING LESSONS (cont.)

- Parents must be aware of factors that cause a fearful situation as well as those that promote a positive attitude. Watch out for the use of fright words with your child. DROWN is the most common fright word. A non-swimming child who has been taught a fear of drowning is usually also afraid of the water. This is a big hurdle for that child to overcome. It is important to educate potential dangers without instilling fear.
- Please keep in mind that each child progresses at their own pace. Don't expect miracles from your child. In swimming lessons we de-emphasize passing or failing and emphasize improvement. Each child will receive a report card at the end of the session to let you know what the child has accomplished within the progression and what skills to practice. It is not uncommon for a child to repeat a level several times before moving on to the next level. It is important that your child is improving and having FUN! Remember- be positive!
- Please be on time to class. A child who is rushed often comes to class upset. It is also less disruptive to the instructor and the other students if everyone starts at the same time.
- Bring child to Open Swim.

Please be aware of the following:

- No running on the pool deck or in the dressing rooms.
- State law requires a shower before entering the pool.
- Please do not allow your child to swing on the bars in the dressing room.
- Food is allowed in the spectator section only. No gum chewing in class.

CHILD SAFETY PROCEDURES

- Children under ten (10) years of age are always to be walked into the building. Never leave a child outside the building for them to walk in alone or accompanied by another child.
- When dropping off or picking up your child be certain that a THPRD staff member acknowledges that your child is arriving or leaving the pool.
- The parent, guardian or caregiver of children under ten (10) years of age must remain on the premises for the duration of the class.
- Your child's instructor will not release your preschool aged child from class until a parent, guardian or caregiver is present. Please make your way to the pool deck the last five minutes of class so that you are available to collect your child.
- Occasionally parents, guardians or caregivers of children are not present by the end of class. Should this occur, the child will be taken to an area supervised by staff until the parents, guardian or alternate contact arrives. Staff will then do the following:
 - ◆ Contact the family by telephone if possible
 - ◆ Contact emergency telephone and alternate contacts if provided.
 - ◆ If contact cannot be made with the parent or alternate contact after 30 minutes, call the police/sheriff non-emergency number



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why is class time wasted on safety skills?

Safety is never a waste of time. The Learn To Swim program tries to incorporate the safety skills into the daily lessons. Most “safety days” are kept to a minimum. Some “safety days” may be longer depending upon the pool condition (i.e. cold water due to an upcoming special event). Children often learn from repetition.

2. What is the water temperature?

Water temperatures above 82 degrees are conducive to swimming lessons. THPRD swim centers are maintained by the following approximate temperatures:

Aloha Swim Center	85 degrees
Aquatic Center	83-84 degrees
Beaverton Swim Center	86 degrees
Conestoga Recreation & Aquatic Center	
Leisure Pool	89 degrees
Main Pool	84 degrees
Harman Swim Center	88-89 degrees
Sunset Swim Center	85 degrees
Raleigh Swim Center	84 degrees
Somerset Swim Center	84 degrees

3. Should my child wear goggles?

Goggles are allowed in swim lesson Levels 2 and above as long as they don't interfere with the class. We discourage goggles at the beginning levels, so that the children can learn to explore. A child who relies on goggles may be reluctant to swim the day they forget to bring them. In higher levels, your child may be asked to swim without goggles.

4. I like my child's instructor. Can I request the same instructor next time?

Instructors are scheduled based on the classes offered and the demand. It is not always possible to have the same instructor. Children often benefit by experiencing a variety of teaching styles.

Continued

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

5. How long will it take for my child to pass the levels?

Children vary when it comes to learning new skills. It is more important that your child have fun learning the skills in each level and gain confidence in their abilities, rather than how quickly they progress through the levels. We want this to be a pleasant experience and allow children to learn without being pressured.

6. What if I have a question for my child's instructor?

It is best to leave a message for the instructor at the front desk. Please be aware that the instructors often go from one duty to the next with only a few minutes in between. The instructors will be happy to discuss your child's progress; please do not wait to voice your concern until the end of the session.

7. What if I signed up for the wrong level?

All children are skill tested on the first day of class. If a situation arises where the child is not in the appropriate level for their skill ability, every effort will be made to place that child in an appropriate level, based on availability. If an appropriate level class is unavailable at the same time, we will transfer your child to the class time where there is an available opening.

8. How do I know if my child is being taught at the appropriate level?

If you have questions as to your child's progress, please contact the instructor. They will be happy to discuss your child's progress with you.

9. What if my child is new to lessons and cries?

It is not unusual for a child to become nervous with new situations and the separation from their parent. The instructors are very understanding and are experienced in dealing with fearful children. It is best to allow the instructor to work through the fear and to build that trust between student and instructor. The child will often relax and have fun during the lesson, but keep in mind this could take a couple of days in extreme cases. We just ask you to continue to be positive and supportive of the instructor's efforts.

Continued

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

10. What if my child becomes ill during the session?

Please notify the instructor prior to class when your child becomes ill. Please do not bring your child to swimming lessons if they are not feeling well. They will be unable to perform their skills and we take the risk of exposing the other children and the instructor to the illness.

11. What if my child get “stuck” in a certain level and does not seem to be making any progress?

Plateaus are not uncommon while a child is learning to swim. Many times the skills that a child is struggling with are the skills that take endurance or coordination of multiple skills. We make every attempt to provide a variety of drills to help the child attain these skills, but it just takes time and patience. In order to prevent your child from becoming frustrated, please remain positive. We also recommend that families come to the pool during open swim for playtime. This reinforces the positive aspects of swimming, which helps the child relax and will make learning the skills easier during lessons.



INSTRUCTOR/PARENT RELATIONSHIP

Please keep in mind the instructor is only with your child for a short amount of time. We need your assistance with their personality traits or special needs, which may be inhibiting their lesson performance. The same holds true for effective discipline. If there is a method that works effectively for you with your child, and the instructor is not having success, they would welcome your input.

If you have questions or concerns, please leave your name and phone number at the front desk and the instructor will notify you immediately following their teaching schedule. In the event the instructor cannot resolve your problem, please notify the Center Supervisor of the facility.

PARENT EVALUATIONS

We value your input and we do listen. At the end of every session of lessons, evaluation forms are available for you to complete. We want to know how your experience throughout the session was for you and your child. These evaluation forms are used to help us gauge the effectiveness of our program.

REFUND POLICY

- Full refunds are given when the Park District cancels a class.
- Refunds will be given to requests made at least 48 hours before the first class.
- All refund requests must be made in person or by phone to the facility where the class was to be held.
- No refunds will be given with less than 48 hours notice, without a Doctor's excuse.

CLASS TRANSFER PROCEDURE

Requests for transfers will be accommodated only if the request is made at least 48 hours prior to the first class.

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
PLEASE CONTACT:**

Superintendent of Aquatics:

Sharon Hoffmeister 503/645-6433

Aloha Swim Center - Sabrina Taylor Schmitt
18650 SW Kinnaman Rd., Aloha. 503/629-6311

Beaverton Swim Center – Sharron Patapoff
12850 SW Third Ave, Beaverton. 503/629-6312

Conestoga Recreation & Aquatic Center – Debbie Schoen
9985 SW 125th Ave, Beaverton. 503/629-6313

Harman Swim Center – Laurie Conlin
7300 SW Scholls Ferry Rd. 503/629-6314

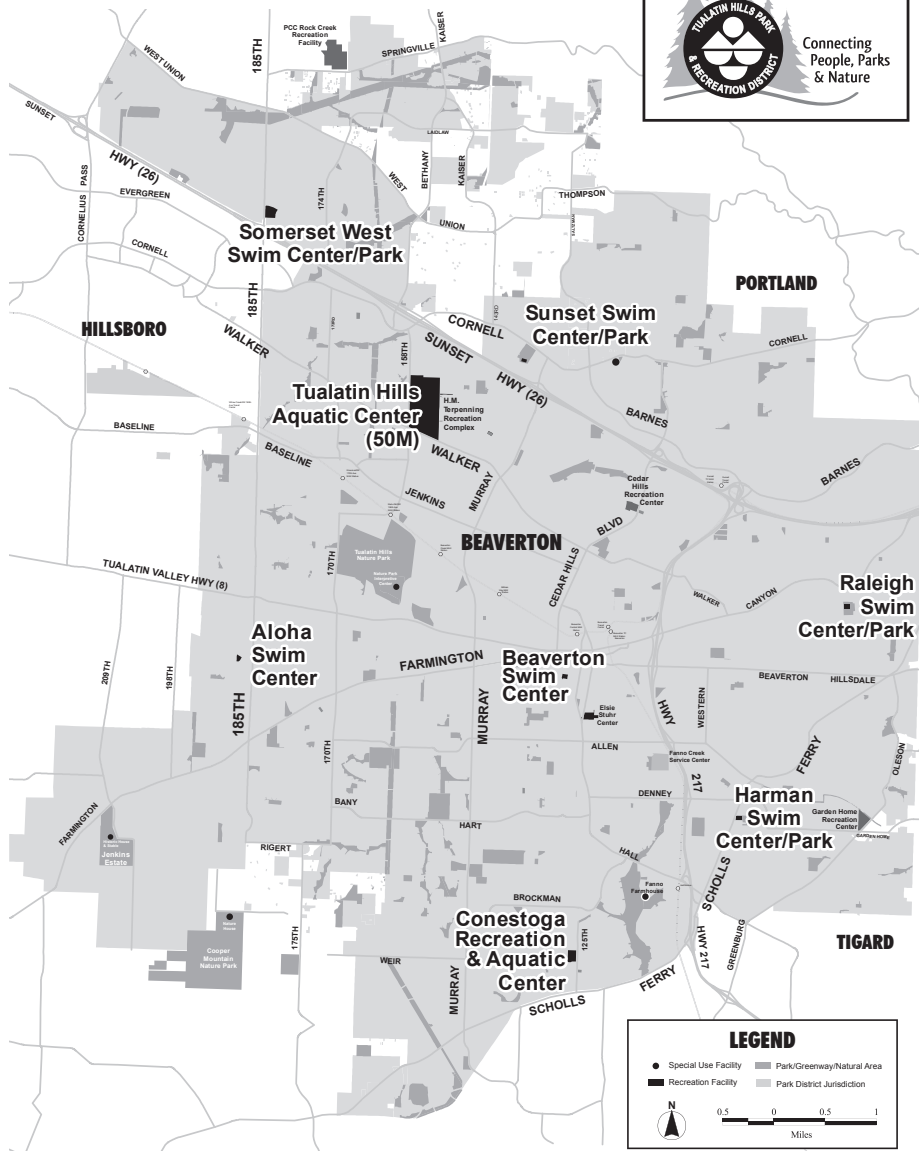
Raleigh Swim Center (outdoor) – Brian Powers
3500 SW 78th Ave., Portland 503/297-6888

Somerset West Swim Center (outdoor) – Sabrina Taylor Schmitt
18300 NW Parkview Blvd., Portland 503/645-1413

Sunset Swim Center – Brian Powers
13707 SW Science Park Drive 503/629-6315

Tualatin Hills Aquatic Center (50M) – Diana Waterstreet
15707 SW Walker Rd., Beaverton. 503/629-6310

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