

Blue Ridge Swim-Float-Swim Guidelines

NEVER CONSIDER A CHILD WATER SAFE OR DROWN PROOFED! ALL CHILDREN SHOULD BE CAREFULLY SUPERVISED WHEN IN OR AROUND WATER NO MATTER HOW MUCH TRAINING THEY HAVE RECEIVED.

HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR LESSONS?

For your child's safety and in consideration of all, CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 4 YEARS must wear our snugly fitting reusable, cloth swim diapers during lessons. Each participant will receive one complimentary reusable diaper upon registration. Please dress your child in the reusable swim diaper. (Swimsuits are optional) If your child has long hair, try to braid it, tie it back and use barrettes to keep the hair out of her eyes. Please bring your own towel to lessons. With the pool just going up, we are limited with resources. We hope to have a bathroom up by this fall. Until then please plan ahead. We will have a changing station and diaper pail. For emergency potty breaks you can use our house, but please be mindful and remove your shoes at the porch. A

DIETARY GUIDELINES

DO NOT FEED YOUR CHILD FOR TWO HOURS PRECEDING HIS/HER LESSON. DO NOT ALLOW FRUIT, VEGETABLES, MEAT OR MILK PRODUCTS FOR SIX HOURS BEFORE THE LESSON. (THIS INCLUDES FORMULA, MILK, EGGS, CHEESE AND YOGURT). Breast milk, Rice Dream, toast and cereal (without fruit or nuts) may be given two hours before a lesson. Some children swallow a lot of air and some water during the lessons. When the stomach is distended the muscles tighten up across the abdomen, and a child will burp. If there is food in the stomach when this happens, the food will come out with the air and the child will spit up in the pool. The pool filtration system will clear the pool quickly, so if this happens to your child, do not be frightened or distressed. This happens to some children regardless and is not anything to worry about, but controlling feedings just before the lessons will help. You can usually expect an increase in appetite and longer naps as a result of this exercise. Please allow for good naps and try to avoid going shopping right after a lesson.

HOW SOON CAN I EXPECT MY CHILD TO LEARN TO SWIM?

Each child progresses at a different pace, has a different personality, and is at a different stage of development and coordination. Some will be very quick to acquire new skills, and others who may have a fear of water or who have learned ineffective behaviors in the water may take a little more time. Personality also plays a key factor in

learning. An instructor will not rush a child, nor allow the parents to do so. Usually babies 12 to 24 months are doing very well after four or five weeks of lessons. Older children typically progress more quickly than these younger babies, particularly children over 4 years who receive 20-minute private lessons. Younger infants (6 to 9 months) who are “floaters” take less time initially (3-4 weeks) because they are learning only a part of the swim-float-swim sequence. Expect to spend between 4-6 weeks of lessons after your floater turns a year and is walking, depending upon individual development. Please note: there is an additional charge for private lessons to teach floaters the swim float swim sequence. Whatever the case, we teach each student with a gentle and encouraging approach, recognizing that each child is uniquely different. Your child may learn one skill quickly and then it may take longer to acquire another skill. Like dance, sports skills or learning a musical instrument, learning to swim is a process that must be nurtured and developed over time. It is a motor skill that will improve with consistent exposure, repetition and practice. You may also notice that your child will learn some skills quickly and then be hesitant to learn anything new. This is perfectly normal for children (and adults, too!). Once a child has accomplished a skill, they will want to do it again and again. Just as we would, he/she feels secure, confident, and proud of their accomplishments. Rest assured that acquisition of new skills and allowing your child to feel confident with his/her ability in the water will be kept in balance throughout the learning process.

WHAT IF MY CHILD CRIES DURING LESSONS?

It is important to note that there are different reasons for crying and different degrees of crying. A certain amount of crying or complaining is to be expected from most beginners and is not cause for concern. At first, your child may show some reluctance. A positive attitude from Mom or Dad will go a long way in reassuring a reluctant child. You will see that as skills are developed, your child will settle into the lesson routine and may very well begin to enjoy his/her newfound skills. Our instructors use a variety of methods so that each child gains trust in the instructor and in the lesson process. Important: We believe no child should be subjected to a fearful or intimidating learning environment. However, it is unrealistic to say that children never cry during swimming lessons. In some instances babies may become tired or hungry during the lesson and sometimes they may cry as a means of complaining about having to work in the water. Frequently they cry because they are learning new skills, which they have yet to master. These cries are very different than a fearful cry and our instructors are in tune to those differences. It is important for parents to offer enthusiastic support, not sympathy, for their child’s efforts and hard work.

WHAT IF MY CHILD HAS A MEDICAL CONDITION?

If you believe your child has any medical condition that might reasonably affect his/her safe participation in lessons, please explain the condition on the registration form. A written clearance signed by a doctor may be needed prior to your child starting lessons.

WHAT IF MY CHILD IS AFRAID OF THE WATER?

Some of the more common causes of early fear of the water have to do with the way parents or caregivers relate to children in and around water. Being involved in water activities before being properly skilled, having parents who are afraid of the water and who have either knowingly or unknowingly communicated this fear to their children, being raised in an environment that prohibits childhood water play, whether as a result of lack of opportunity or parental actions, and experiencing or witnessing a traumatic water incident can all cause very valid fears in young children. Because we understand this, we commit to be relaxed, patient, and understanding toward your child, provide a reasonable amount of control to a frightened child, and create a positive learning environment with praise, toys and activities that promote the learn-to-swim process.

LATE OR MISSED A LESSONS

Swimming lessons are approximately 10 minutes in length, four days per week, (Monday through Thursday) for children under 4 years of age, and 20 minutes in length, four days per week for children over the age of 4. Since your lessons are short, it is helpful if you arrive 10 to 15 minutes before your scheduled time. This allows sufficient time to have your child ready to go into the water (without rushing) at the scheduled time. If you are late, the instructor will try to fit you in whenever possible, but your lesson time might be shortened. Consistency is a very important ingredient of the program. Steady attendance will increase your child's rate of progress. Sometimes it may be possible to add you to the end of the instructor's schedule. Please speak with Kelly should this occur.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK

It is critical to bring a positive attitude to each lesson. We can teach your child skills, but it is your support that will most affect his/her attitude and progress. Children do much better when parents are involved and cheer as they acquire and develop new skills. It is also important to know the appropriate time to clap and cheer. Sometimes what the instructor is looking for during lessons is different from what might look good to you. If we together show approval for the same things, it will help your child feel successful and increase his/her chances of correct swimming behavior. For privacy reasons, videotaping of lessons is prohibited without express permission. It is fine for you to videotape to share with family, but posting to social media is prohibited. There are safety concerns with people thinking they can learn these techniques by watching. Remember your instructor went through over 200 hours of hands on learning for 6 weeks to be able to safely teach babies and young children the proper techniques.

COST & PAYMENT

The rate for our initial program is \$110/week. Children who are walking and under 4 years receive four private, 10-minute lessons each week for six weeks (\$660). Children 4 and up also pay \$660, but do about 3 weeks of 20 minute lessons. Infants who are not walking receive four private, 10-minute lessons each week for four weeks (\$440) to learn initial floater survival skills. Once they are walking, they return to private lessons to master the swim-float-swim sequence. This typically requires an additional 4-6 weeks of daily lessons in order to learn the swim float swim sequence. You will need to pay a one time registration fee of \$100 at the time of registration. Once your child begins lessons, your session payment is due and non-refundable.

MAKE UP LESSONS

Once your child begins lessons, you are expected to pay for the 6-week program of ten-minute lessons (4 weeks for infant floaters) or 3-week program of twenty-minute lessons. In the event of inclement weather, instructor illness, or a holiday, a make up lesson will be offered on that Friday. In the event that your child is sick, we will of course add time on to finish them up! This program is about your child's success, not a timeline!

REFUNDS

Please do not start your child in this program unless you fully intend to complete the entire learning process. Once your child begins lessons, the balance of your tuition is non-refundable if you withdraw your child. The reason for this firm financial responsibility is the initial training period is a very critical time of adaptation to a new environment, instructor, and technique for you and your child. It can be a time of very low self-confidence in the water because the child has not had time to acquire and perfect his/her skills in the aquatic environment. If the child's lessons are terminated during this time, the foremost thing the child will remember about the water is that lack of self-confidence in and around water. One of our instructors' specialties is working with children with water fear problems, and we do not want to be involved in putting a child in that situation. Therefore, make sure that this program is for you (we know it is for your child) before you register, then stay with it and support your child in every way until he/she is skilled and ready to participate in group classes.

KELLY MELLO's BIO

My name is Kelly Mello. I moved to Charlottesville in 2009 after graduating from The Savannah College of Art and Design with a B.F.A. in Furniture Design. I worked as an in-house packaging designer for several years before settling into married life and deciding to be a stay at home mom. It was at this time that I was exposed to the concept of survival swim. After discovering there were no options available for my son to learn these vital skills locally, I began looking into training. In 2016, I traveled to Colorado for my 6 week program of intensive training with Judy Heumann, founder of Infant Aquatics. It was one of the best decisions I could have ever made.

As the mother of an active three year old boy and newborn baby girl, I know the value of safeguarding our little ones when it comes to the threat of drowning. My children were my motivation for becoming a certified Infant Aquatic Survival Specialist, and I am so excited to share these life saving skills with my community. The skills your child will learn through this aquatic survival program can and do save lives. It is the next best safeguard to effective supervision which should always be your priority around water.

The Infant Aquatic Survival program is unlike any other swim program in our area. Within 4-6 weeks I will teach your infant, toddler or young child the age appropriate skills they need to survive an unexpected encounter with water. Infants (age 6 months until walking) will learn to roll back into a survival float from fall-in or face-down submersion within 4 weeks of training. Children who are walking take 6 weeks to learn the Swim-Float-Swim sequence, allowing them to swim to safety while using their survival float to rest and breath as needed. Lessons are every day Monday-Thursday and last 10 minutes. Through the process of learning these survival skills, your child will have a foundation for a lifetime of enjoyment, respect and safety around water!

CONTACT AND LINKS

If you ever have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Kelly. We want this program to be a positive experience for everyone involved!

phone: 912.596.7760

Emial: kelkakes@gmail.com

Links:

<https://infantaquatics.com/survival-swim-instructors/kelly-mello>

<https://www.facebook.com/Blue-Ridge-Swim-Float-Swim-LLC-1747121825607883/>

COVID GUIDELINES

As we all know Covid is still very much present and I will be doing my best to keep everyone including my family safe! The CDC says that it does not transmit in water, but we still need to be safe around the pool! I will be wearing a face shield and/or mask while working with your kids. I will also have sanitizer by the pool to use between children. Please also have your kids sanitize before entering the pool. I will be taking temperatures with a touchless thermometer before kids enter the water. Here are some other protocols...

- Arrive only 5-10 minutes early for lessons to prevent overcrowding
- Change your child in your car and only enter the pool area before the start of your lesson.
- Please keep all children off the playground or other toys to prevent infection to my kids and yours.

- Bring your own towels and dry your child away from others.
- Head out asap to allow others to remain safe

The address is 3211 Hardware River Rd, Charlottesville, VA 22903. Right now we have room for 3 extra cars to comfortably park in our driveway. If it seems full, just street park to prevent anyone getting blocked in. We plan to clear some trees to allow for more room soon.