

The Pathway

Active Start – learn to swim: physical literacy in an aquatic environment including breath control; buoyancy; floating and gliding; kicking; arm propulsion; coordination; connection or feel for the activities. Chronological ages 0-6.

FUNDamentals – stage 1 of training for females 5 years to 8 years; males 6 years to 9 years where the fundamental movement skills are developed. During this stage activities should be structured and fun. Learning all the strokes and start building technique would be paramount at this level.

Learn to Train – Chronological ages: Female 8-11 years; Male 9 to 12 years; In this pre-growth spurt period focus on repetition of skills towards mastery in stroke mechanics plus learning and moving towards mastery of racing skills: starts; turns and finishes is best done in this stage.

Train to Train – Building the Engine for Performance; Chronological ages: Female 11 to 14; Male 12 to 15; during the training to train stage, there should be an emphasis on aerobic conditioning combined with speed work and developing anaerobic capacity. In this period there can be greater individualisation of fitness and technical training and learning correct weight lifting techniques could begin. The focus should still be on training rather than competition.

Train to compete – Optimising the engine! Chronological ages: Females 14 to 16 years; Male 15 to 18 years. During the training to compete stage there should be continued emphasis on physical conditions with more training building the race pace work and the anaerobic system. At this stage swimmers are developing individual strengths and event selection would be fostered. Training should continue to develop strength, core body strength and maintain flexibility. In competition target both National Open and Age Meets to gain experience and confidence at domestic level whilst striving to gain national team representation and international experience.

Compete to Win – Sustain podium success at the international level for up to two of more Olympics

How can home life help or hinder your child's development and ultimately their performance

HINDERING

- Do you pack and unpack your child's swim bag before and after training?
- Does your child eat fast food more than once a week?
- Do you wake up your child for morning training?
- If your child loses a piece of swim equipment do you replace it without consequences?
- Do you discuss swimming at length every night over the dinner table?
- Does your child have to wait for you to get ready in the morning before leaving to the pool?
- When questioned about any of the above is your answer "he/she's only young..."
- Do you do your child's entries for meet?

HELPING

- Do you support your child with reassurance and positives when they swim good or bad?
- Do you support the coach's feedback given your child, (asking questions one to one with the coach and not in front of your child)?
- Do you help plan your child's training week together before the week has begun?
- Do you have all the important dates for the season written down?
- Do you put your hand up to help at meets?
- Do you make sure your child gets to bed at a reasonable hour over the weekend?