

A HOT TOPIC - SWIMMING LESSONS IN WINTER



Continuity is important in gaining the most from swimming lessons, maintaining water safety and avoiding the need to repeat vital steps.

The benefits of consistency

Learning to swim is like learning any other coordinated physical activity, it takes longer if you do it in stages with breaks in between. And by not attending lessons in winter you are doing exactly that to your child's progress. Experience shows that not only do children forget some of the skills they have learnt during the previous summer, but that they can also become frustrated by having to re-learn something they thought they had mastered.

The economics of continuity

Practise, consistency, continuity, and routine all lead to the most cost and time efficient progress. The catch-up lessons to regain previously learnt skills after a winter break are an added cost in both your time and money. Our goal is to help you give your child the ability to be safe and comfortable in the water as efficiently and economically as possible.

Progress you can see

As parents, we all want to see progress and improvement, whether our children are at infant level or squad training. Maintaining a consistent routine allows you to keep track of their skills – and ensure you plan your supervision of their water activities with their true ability and safety in mind.

Why do some people stop over winter?

We hear reasons ranging from "I don't want my kids to get sick", to "it's too cold to go out", and - one of the worst - "there is no danger of them drowning in winter, they don't go near the water". Unfortunately this is simply not true as many water hazards exist all year round.

Winter swimming won't make children sick

Swimming is an inside sport in which your children get excellent exercise in a warm pool. The heated surrounding area ensures neither parents or children get cold.

Our pool is clean and constantly monitored, any germs that people may bring in are killed by our state of the art filtration process and ozone and UV systems, then flushed down the drain with waste water. There is no reason why a professionally maintained pool would be dirtier in winter than summer.

We would like to thank; Kidsafe, Royal Life Saving Society, Kidsafe Victoria and splashmagazine.com.au for data used in these information sheets.

Why swim in winter?

In addition to the more efficient progress, mentioned above, winter swimming is fun. When it's cold outside, coming into a warm pool is a reminder of summer and a break from having to rug up in heavy clothes for protection from the long winter chill.

It's a great exercise to help keep children healthy

Swimming lessons are healthy exercises which can help boost your children's immune systems, and assist in keeping winter cold and infections at bay.

Babies and toddlers especially benefit from the exercise of swimming lessons in winter as we tend to keep them inside on chilly days. Wet hair and warm water don't cause a cold, or make us sick, viruses and bacteria do that.

Maintain water safety skills

The best way to keep up safety skills and confidence is year-round continuity of learning. It is unfair to take a child to the beach or river and expect them to understand the dangers of water when they haven't been near water all winter. The safety messages we teach are reinforced constantly, in panic situations children can forget and do the wrong thing. Especially in younger children, we need to confirm water safety messages every week. You never know when they will need to remember their safety skills and have the confidence to use them.

It's a rare winter social experience

We all know Ballarat can be cold and that lots of people tend to stay indoors and don't visit or socialise as much as they do in the warmer months. Your weekly trip to the pool can be a fun time for you and your child, an opportunity to catch up with other parents and little friends.

Time spent in the water, indoors with other parents and children of the same age is especially important for babies because they don't get as much interaction as kinder and school aged children. Even mums or dads benefit from 30mins sitting in peace, watching and or talking with other parents.

Things you can do in winter to enjoy swimming

- Come dressed in warm clothes
- Have a warm shower after your lesson and get dressed into warm clothes, never leave the pool in bathers and a towel
- Wear a beanie when you leave swimming and dry your hair at home
- Wear socks and shoes, warm feet help the rest of our body feel warm