

IN THE POOL – WHEN YOUR CHILD LEARNS TO SWIM ALONE



You've enjoyed being in the pool with your little one, but when they turn three, it's time for them to learn alone, and for you to take a break and watch from the poolside.

When they reach three years old, children are well into the process of becoming more physically and emotionally independent. This is the perfect time for them to transition from being in the pool with you, to being in the pool with the instructor and you supporting them from the deck.

This is not only a big step in their swimming lessons, but it's also a life milestone, as you give your child the opportunity to become more independent. Swimming is an ideal way to introduce them to learning on their own, with your support, in a familiar environment.

From Tiny Tots to Lil' Dippa's

When your little swimmer graduates from their Tiny Tot's class they will transition into the Lil' Dippa's level. Here, our instructors take over the teaching journey and you get to stay dry and enjoy a well-earned rest.

Hints and tips to making a successful transition

Lil' Dippa's Teachers

Specialised training specific to this age group and small class sizes combine to help children settle in to the new format. Our teachers understand that each child is different and that their physical, mental and emotional development can span a wide range. Our teaching methods recognise this and allow every child in each class to proceed at their own pace.

On Deck Supervisors

To support you, your child and the teacher in the water, deck supervisors have the knowledge and experience to assess and act as required. If you have any questions, or anticipate

any issues that your child may have, please talk to them. They are here to make everyone's experience enjoyable and hassle-free, and they are always happy to chat to you about your child's learning plan and progress.

Helping your child build new bonds

You and your child have a special bond that's helped in their swimming until now. When they move into a class without you, they need to build a new bond with their teacher. How long this takes depends on the child, some take one lesson while others may take a term.

Please don't put expectation on your child, but be positive and encourage them. They need time to find their own way, and build their confidence as well as learn to follow rules and listen to what their teacher say. The best thing we can do is be patient and have realistic expectations of them.

Preparing at home

Have a dress rehearsal, let them wear their bathers, goggles, and cap – share their excitement about swimming lessons. Ask for the name of your child's teacher and use it when talking to your child about swimming.

Tips for a Positive Start

- Arrive early so they can get a feel for the environment
- Have the right gear, good fitting bathers, goggles and cap
- Talk to the Deck Supervisor about the best way to manage your child
- When your child graduates from Tiny Tot's, take them over to where the Lil' Dippa's classes are held, say hello to the teachers, one of these may be their teacher next week.



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Practice and Consistency

Your child only does one half hour lesson a week, so it's important to practice their new skills between lessons. You can help them practice in the bath, shower, at a public pool, or even sitting on the couch – and remember, make it fun!

Crying often happens in the first few lessons, so it's important to be consistent and not to miss any. Delaying or missing lessons will accentuate problems and delay your child's progress. If your child is having any problems, please remember to speak to your deck supervisor.

It's not a maybe, it's a must!

Think of learning to swim like wearing a seatbelt or holding hands when crossing the road – It's something that must be done and it's simply not negotiable! Children don't understand the risk around water, so it's up to you to give them the lifelong gift of water safety by making swimming a priority.



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The importance of confidence

It is important that you have confidence and trust in your child, their teacher and the learning process. Confidence builds confidence. If you show your child you believe in what the teacher is doing, they will be more likely to try it.

If you have any doubts at all, please talk to the deck supervisors, they will explain why we do what we do, and you can pass that on to your child.

Always talk to your child in a positive way about the next step, here are some examples:

- ✓ **“Wow! You're really a big kid now!”**
- ✓ **“You're so lucky, you are going to have your own special teacher”**
- ✓ **“Isn't this exciting? You must be so proud of yourself”**
- ✓ **“I'm so proud of you – going to lessons without me in the pool too”**
- ✓ **“I can't wait to sit with the other mums and dads and see how well you do”**

Try to avoid saying anything that might reinforce any fears they might have;

- ✗ **“I know you're scared but it will be ok”**
- ✗ **“I'll miss you, I'm sad I'm not in the pool with you”**