



**FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

DIVE ON IN

Competitive Swimming Program Guidelines YMCA OF CENTRAL OHIO

Revised: April 2019



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OUR CAUSE

Strengthening Community

At the Y, strengthening community is our cause. Every day, we work side-by-side with our neighbors to make sure that everyone, regardless of age, income or ability, has the opportunity to learn, grow and thrive.

We are a leading nonprofit that achieves our cause by being...

- **FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Nurturing the potential of every child and teen.

- **FOR HEALTHY LIVING**

Improving the nation's health and well-being.

- **FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

Giving back and providing support to our neighbors.

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OUR FOCUS

For Youth Development

We believe in the potential of every child and teen and that all kids deserve the opportunity to discover who they are and what they can achieve.

For Healthy Living

We believe in our ability to support the health and well-being of the adults and families in our community and that fostering healthy skills, relationships and environments is critical to our success.

For Social Responsibility

We believe that everyone deserves a Y experience and that our role is to create opportunities for all people to participate, belong, give, volunteer and advocate.

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Caring

To demonstrate a sincere concern for the well-being of other people; to look after one another.

Honesty

To tell the truth; to demonstrate reliability and trustworthiness; to think, speak and act in ways that reflect our stated beliefs and principles.

Respect

To treat others as they themselves would like to be treated; to value the worth of every person.

Responsibility

To do what is right; to be accountable for our thoughts, words and actions; to keep our promises.

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YMCA Competitive Swimming

- We believe swim team should exemplify the Y's commitment to youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.
- We believe competitive swimming should develop the whole person - building healthy, confident, values-centered individuals.
- We believe in the process of working towards and achieving personal and group goals while empowering our youth to discover who they are and what they can achieve.
- We believe in teaching, promoting and embracing positive values and fair play in competitive swimming.
- We believe in the importance of young children having time to try out many sports and activities so that they are more likely to enjoy a lifetime of physical activity and play.
- We believe swim team can improve personal and family relationships where our swimmers learn to care, communicate and cooperate with family and friends.
- We believe in welcoming everyone in our communities who wishes to participate in YMCA swimming and in working to ensure that they have opportunities to do so.
- We believe our staff, parents and the swimmers themselves should serve as role models for our youth, advocates for the program and ambassadors for the Y.
- We believe competitive swimming can and should be FUN!

YMCA Youth Sports Programs

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YMCA Youth Sports Programs

The following is a statement of the YMCA Medical Advisory Committee, a group of volunteer professionals and YMCA of the USA staff that meets twice each year to review best practices with the safety and healthy development of children and adults in mind.

"Organized sports programs for children should be developmentally appropriate, responsive to the physical, emotional, social and cognitive stages of childhood, determined by both age and individual readiness. Leaders and coaches should be aware of appropriate behaviors and activities for specific age groups, and familiar with methods of accommodating children with special needs. Although each child's preferences, abilities, patterns of growth, and experiences will vary, the YMCA's ultimate goal should be to make every child feel important and welcome in these programs.

"YMCA sports programs should avoid treating children as if they are miniature adults. Coaches should avoid placing undue stress on children by pushing them beyond their abilities. Programs should be progressive in design, fun and enjoyable, supporting and enhancing each stage of growth, building on what has been learned in earlier stages. The YMCA agrees with the American Academy of Pediatrics, which states that game rules should be modified to accommodate the child's need to learn or be adapted to age-appropriate skills or fitness, and if possible, participants be grouped according to size, skill, and maturation level rather than age."

To view the entire two-page set of recommendations, please [CLICK HERE](#).

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OUR GOALS

Be Healthy

- Youth will develop skills, attitudes and behaviors that build and sustain healthy habits.

Accomplish

- Youth will develop and improve their skills resulting in personal bests, increased confidence and greater self-esteem.

Experience Belonging

- Youth will be connected to and supported by their teammates and the entire competitive swimming community.

Develop Relationships

- Youth will make friends and be supported by positive adult role models.

Find Meaning

- Youths' sense of direction and purpose will be reinforced by their swim team experience.

Ensure Safety

- Youth will be physically and emotionally safe while participating in the program.

Build Character

- Youth will accept and demonstrate the values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility.

Give Back

- Youth will have opportunities to give back and be of service to others.

Inspire

- Youth will be inspired to try new things, work hard and improve.

Have Fun

- Youth will enjoy swimming at the Y.

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VIDEOS



[CLICK HERE](#) to view a short video of Pickaway County Family YMCA Piranhas swim parent Jason Harrell talking about the impact of Y swimming.



[CLICK HERE](#) to view a short video of Hilliard/Ray Patch FamilyYMCA Hurricanes swim team parent and volunteer, Steve Brooks talking about the impact of Y swimming.

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FOR Y LEADERS

With respect to the YMCA of Central Ohio competitive swimming program, the management staff of each YMCA center has the following responsibilities and obligations:

- Assuming ultimate responsibility for participant physical and emotional safety including placing the emotional and physical well-being of young athletes ahead of anyone's desires to win.
- Assuming ultimate responsibility for total program alignment with the YMCA cause, values, beliefs and goals.
- Hiring, supervising, evaluating and providing training and mentoring opportunities for coaches. Responsible for the final say in all decisions to hire, discipline or dismiss employees.
- Respectfully monitoring and controlling the behavior of swimmers and parents within the YMCA, including asking people to leave who are unwilling to contribute to a positive atmosphere that upholds our cause, values, beliefs and goals.
- Attending all swim team parent meetings and supporting the efforts of the parent committees while being the voice of program and organizational consistency.
- Ensuring that all forms of program or team income (program fees, fundraising revenue and donations) are handled in accordance with established YMCA of Central Ohio financial practices.
- Ensuring that purchases, contracts and vendor licensing agreements are completed correctly.
- Ensuring that Y facilities are clean and in good working order for the use of swimmers and their families while balancing facility usage so as to meet the needs of the swim team program and the general membership of the Y.
- Promoting and protecting the use of the Y brand while acting as a go-between and liaison for the parent committees and the YMCA of Central Ohio Marketing Department.
- Representing the local Y on the Southeast Ohio West Virginia Swim League Governing Board and casting team votes.

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FOR Y COACHES

- With respect to the YMCA of Central Ohio competitive swimming program, the coaching staff are paid employees of the YMCA and have the following responsibilities and obligations:
 - Assuming immediate responsibility for participant safety including placing the emotional and physical well-being of young athletes ahead of anyone's desires to win.
 - Assessing individual swimmer needs and abilities and designing an approach to practices and meets that is age and ability appropriate while ensuring that everyone participates.
 - Leading by example while adhering to the YMCA employee code of conduct and being a role model both on and off the pool deck.
 - Building effective, authentic relationships with swimmers and their parents while upholding the cause, values, beliefs and goals of the program; helping to build community while identifying volunteers and encouraging positive parent involvement.
 - Remaining current in knowledge of, and operating within league and association rules and regulations pertaining to the program.
 - Working with the management staff to balance facility usage so as to meet the needs of the swim team program and the general membership of the Y.
 - Conveying information about swim team programs and schedules to swimmers and parents in a timely and effective manner.
 - Maintaining meet and team records and submitting accurate results as required.
 - Coordinating with the management staff to secure the appropriate supplies and materials for conducting swim team operations.

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FOR OFFICIALS

With respect to the YMCA of Central Ohio competitive swimming program, the officials are typically parent-volunteers of the YMCA and have the following responsibilities and obligations:

- To be knowledgeable in all YMCA Swimming Rules.
- To be punctual and to dress appropriately for the role.
- To be consistent in the application of the rules at all times and at all levels of competition; to enforce all rules equitably and fairly.
- To make timely and decisive judgments.
- To call only observed violations and to not guess about or anticipate violations.
- To give undivided attention to one's duties.
- To never coach the swimmers.
- To be respectful and polite when explaining the rule and the violation to competitors and/or coaches.
- To remain cool and professional at all times.
- To never publicly criticize another official or their decision, but to report all concerns to the meet referee.
- To mentor less experienced officials so long as it is not a distraction during a meet.
- To act professionally towards all who enter the Y.
- To maintain control of the meet and to remember that all participants want to do their best while having a fun and enjoyable experience.

In accordance with YMCA of Central Ohio child abuse prevention policies, all volunteer officials must undergo an annual background check at the YMCA's expense.

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FOR PARENTS

With respect to the YMCA of Central Ohio competitive swimming program, the parents and guardians of the young athletes in the program are invited to participate as vital stakeholders in the following ways:

- By requiring my young athlete to treat other swimmers, coaches, fans and officials with respect and without regard to gender, race, religion, culture or ability.
- By encouraging and demonstrating individual character and good sportsmanship while giving positive verbal support to all swimmers, coaches, volunteers and officials at every practice, meet or other event.
- By supporting and assisting the swim team experience however I can by volunteering to serve on a parent committee, by helping with meet/event set-up and clean-up and by providing transportation to and from events.
- By supporting coaches and officials by monitoring the behavior of my child in order to encourage a positive and enjoyable experience for all.
- By understanding that coaching decisions are in the best interest of the team and athlete and should therefore be supported.
- By being a parent and not trying to be a coach to my child or any other, perhaps by limiting my comments before practices and meets to something like the following:
 - "I love you, have fun, I am looking forward to watching you swim."

And after a practice or meet:

- "I sure enjoyed watching you swim, I love you, where do you want to go and eat?"
- By keeping in mind always that the program exists for the benefit of all of the kids and families involved and that every effort is being made to align the program to an established set of values, beliefs and goals.
- By monitoring the behavior of the coaching staff and bringing any inconsistencies with the coach's Rules of Play to the attention of YMCA leaders.
- By refraining from the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs at all swim practices and events while encouraging others to do so as well.

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FOR SWIMMERS

Part One: Eligibility

In order to participate on a YMCA of Central Ohio competitive swimming program, a swimmer must meet the following requirements:

- The ability to pass the YMCA's "Deep Water-Safe" swim test.
 - Able to swim 50 yards without stopping and in good form.
 - Able to take a deep water plunge, followed by 45 seconds of treading water before returning to the pool wall.
- The ability to swim freestyle while breathing to the side (rotary breathing)
- The ability to demonstrate basic knowledge of one other competitive stroke (breast stroke, back stroke, or butterfly)
- All Y swimmers must be full members of the YMCA that they represent, as established by the "Rules that Govern YMCA Competitive Sports." According to these rules, a YMCA member is a person, who, after due application, is enrolled by the association, entitled to full privileges, activities, and services of the association. Further definition available through your Aquatics Director.
- YMCA members who wish to compete at Champs, Zones, and National Competition, must have maintained YMCA membership in good standing for at least 30 days prior to the competition.
- A swimmer is eligible for Champs, Zones and National Competition provided they have not represented or competed for another YMCA during the previous four months.
- Swimmers may immediately transfer from Y team to Y team so long as a "transfer by consent" form has been submitted and both teams agree to the transfer. Once the transfer is complete, that swimmer cannot transfer back to the first team for one year from the date of the original transfer.
- A valid "transfer by consent" does not negate the previous four month eligibility rule which still must be met in order for a swimmer to be eligible to qualify for Champs, Zones or Nationals.

PART TWO

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Part Two: Behavior

With respect to the YMCA of Central Ohio competitive swimming program, the young athletes involved have the following responsibilities as appropriate to their age and maturity levels:

- To have fun.
- To be caring, honest, respectful and responsible in all that I do and say and with everyone that I come in contact with both on and off of the pool deck.
- To represent myself, family, team and Y in such a way as that all can be proud.
- To pay attention and listen to my coach.
- To abide by team and YMCA rules and regulations.
- To work hard to improve my skills, to compete to the very best of my abilities and to strive to achieve personal bests.
- To support my team and celebrate the accomplishments of others, even when they are my opponents.
- To accept the rulings of officials and to leave any disputes regarding rulings to the determination of meet officials and my coach.
- To realize that my online behavior using social media is just as important as my behavior in or around the pool.
- To refrain at all times from the use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs and to encourage others to do the same.
- To thank my parents, my coaches and all of the many volunteers for making it possible for there to be a swim team at my Y and for the privilege I have of being a member of it.

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NATIONAL

YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving is a program that is supported by the YMCA of the USA (Y-USA) and delivered by local Ys.

The program's focus, first and foremost, is upon the development of healthy, confident, values-centered individuals. Training and competition are the vehicles by which this development occurs.

Everyone involved in the delivery of the program plays a critical role in this process. Coaches, Y leaders and volunteers assist individuals in their development by building positive relationships, acting with integrity and leading by example.

- All YMCA competitive sports, including swimming, must comply with the Rules that Govern YMCA Competitive Sports. This document is published by Y-USA and does not change yearly. It is posted on [the YMCA Competitive Swimming and Diving website](#)
- Y-USA additionally lays out guidelines for swimming in the "Competitive Swimming Black Book" and the "Technical Assistance Paper for YMCA Competitive Swimming Programs."
- Y-USA sets national time standards, along with recommending general operating principles for Ys.
- At the end of the season, Y-USA hosts the National Meets where swimmers 12 years of age and up who have met the time standards get a chance to compete with the best in the country in their events.

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REGIONAL

- The YMCA of Central Ohio participates in the YMCA of Central Ohio Swim League which has 9 current teams.
- The teams compete in dual meets, invitationals, YMCA of Central Ohio Swim League Champs, Great Lakes Zones Championships and YMCA National Championships.
- Our league sponsors a championship meet at the end of each season. All teams and volunteers participate and assist in the running of the meet.
- All of the YMCAs that participate in the YMCA of Central Ohio Swim League are required to meet national Y-USA brand, visual system and voice guidelines by 2015. They will do so on timelines determined by their local staff and boards of directors to best meet the needs of each Y.
- Additional information as well as how you can be involved in the league decisions and guidelines coming soon.

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Overview

The YMCA of Central Ohio is a fast-growing association that now has thirteen full-facility centers that span the Central Ohio region, including locations in Pickaway, Logan, Franklin and Delaware counties. Nine of the facilities have organized competitive swim programs, some of which have been in place for decades.

When all is said and done, more than 1,000 young athletes will swim for YMCA of Central Ohio teams each fall/winter and summer season.

With such large numbers of teams, swimmers and families all operating within one organization, it has become increasingly important that the Y works actively to manage the program in order to ensure the highest quality and levels of fairness possible.

Volunteer leaders and professional staff of the YMCA of Central Ohio work together to align the culture, programs, policies, practices and people with our cause of strengthening community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. It has become increasingly important for the staff and volunteers to work in partnership with the coaches, parents and swimmers to ensure that the competitive program we are offering makes the impact that we strive for in every Y program and that in the push for better times and more individual and team success, we do not lose sight of our organizational goals and community-wide perspective.

This section is meant to provide an overview of swimming in Central Ohio Ys.

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Teams

Each Swim Team has an identified icon and team name. As an important part of the larger YMCA set of programs, events and offerings, it is vital that teams adopt and conform to the existing set of visual guidelines that help us to connect the swimming programs to our cause of strengthening community and our identity as a YMCA.



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YMCA BRANCHES

1. Delaware Community Center YMCA (DRY)
2. Liberty Township/Powell YMCA (LTPY)
3. North YMCA (CNYW)
4. Gahanna/John E. Bickley YMCA (GYG)
5. Jerry L. Garver YMCA & Eldon & Elsie Ward Family YMCA (EAST)
6. Pickaway County Family YMCA (PICY)
7. Grove City YMCA (GCY)
8. Hilltop YMCA (CHY)
9. Hilliard/Ray Patch Family YMCA (HURY)
10. Don M. & Margaret Hilliker YMCA (HEAT)

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Coaching Update coming soon.



Nicholas Gardner was born and raised in Indianapolis Indiana but swam for the Hilltop YMCA prior to the opening of the Hilliard facility where he swam until graduating from Hilliard Darby HS. After graduating from OSU, Nick has coached the high school and later the Hilliard Y team as well.



Jenn has over 15 years of coaching experience, including summer leagues in the Houston TX area, US Swimming teams, and special Olympics programs. Her swimming career began at age 4, receiving All District, All Region, and All American awards in swimming and water polo and competing for the University of North Texas club team.



More Head Coaches

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Mel Meyers began swimming at a very young age and in her youth and teen years swam for the Hilltop and Pickaway YMCA's. She continued her career at Baldwin Wallace College's team. She focuses on setting obtainable goals with her swimmers and then helping them meet those goals as both athletes and people.



Josh Dorsett – Bio coming soon.



Brittany Harwood has been coaching with the Hilltop Poseidons over the past 3 seasons. She brings with her a positive attitude and a belief that all of our swimmers can be successful whether it is their first season or 15th!

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Jeff was born and raised in Canton, Ohio. Jeff has coached 44 Ohio State meet qualifiers, 41 All-Americans and was voted the 2007 Central District Women's Swim Coach of the year. He swam for Eastern Michigan University for four years. Jeff resides in New Albany with his wife, and three sons.



Chris Promenschenkel has served as coach of the Liberty Township/Powell YMCA Penguins for over ten years. She previously coached the Alliance YMCA Flyers for ten years. An enthusiastic and dedicated coach, Chris believes her greatest accomplishment is that her swimmers enjoy swim team and always have fun.



Jerry Peters spent his first season as the Piranhas head coach in the 2018/2019 winter season. Jerry is new to the sport of swimming but not new to competition. He has spent several years officiating football throughout the country and looks forward to jumping into working with the swimmers at Pickaway!



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Part of being on any successful team is the feeling of belonging that occurs when you are a part of a unique culture that is reinforced by the coaching staff, the swimmers and the parents. Teams rally around and find motivation in their own unique totems, slogans and phrases that are born of and evolve out of the hours of time that they spend together in and around the pool.

While supporting and recognizing these elements as essential to the magic of belonging on a team, we do ask that coaches, swimmers and parents tread carefully the fine line between positive team spirit and motivation at the expense of no longer being respectful of other teams and their young athletes. The latter too often can be interpreted as "trash talking" and is neither aligned with our values nor our program goals.

We rely upon the vigilance, maturity and good judgement of our staff, volunteers and parents in this matter.

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AT THE Y

- Every swimmer is a Y member. As such, it is the parent's responsibility to review YMCA facility guidelines with their children and to be familiar with those guidelines themselves.

- Swimmers are considered to be under the direct supervision of the swim team coaches during their practice time. Once they are released from the pool, they are the direct responsibility of the parent/guardian and should abide by all YMCA policies, including age limitations. (i.e. an 8 year old swimmer, upon release from practice, should be immediately supervised by a parent/guardian for the remainder of the time that they are at the Y.)

While coaches are present during all meets, they are not actively supervising swimmers at all times during any meets. Therefore, it is imperative that parents/guardians take an active role in supervision.

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ON THE ROAD

In order to compete at other Ys and in regional and national meets, swim teams travel, sometimes long distances. The following guidelines have been established in order to ensure the safety of the kids, the families and the staff.

- The YMCA does not provide transportation to and from meets, nor do YMCA staff.
- Upon arrival, please familiarize yourself with out-of-town pools, and show your young swimmers where locker rooms and pool entrances are located.
- While coaches are present during all meets, they are not actively supervising swimmers at all times during any meet. Therefore, it is imperative that parents/guardians take an active role in supervision throughout the meet.
- During or preceding inclement weather, the Y may restrict or cancel swim meets for the safety of all swimmers, families and coaches.
- Swim meets can get very crowded at times. Swimmers and their families should "set up camp" in a known part of the facility they are visiting and have a clear emergency plan to meet there should they lose track of each other during the meet.
- Coaches attending away meets should remove their teams from competition in other YMCA facilities if YMCA of Central Ohio safety standards are not being met. (i.e. no lifeguard on duty, pool not up to chemical standards, etc.)

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Lifeguards

- Lifeguards are provided at all times for all YMCA pools. Lifeguard numbers must be adjusted to maintain an appropriate swimmer: guard ratio.
- All lifeguards are certified in American Red Cross or YMCA Lifeguarding, First Aid, CPR/AED, and Oxygen Administration. They also participate in a minimum of two hours of monthly in-service training.
- A lifeguard's primary responsibility is to guard the pool. Coaches with lifeguard certifications may not also act as lifeguards while on deck coaching.
- Swim coaches are required to be certified in the American Red Cross's Safety Training for Swim Coaches or to have a current Lifeguarding certification along with proof of successful completion of the online Safety Training for Coaches written test available on the USA Swimming's website, www.usaswimming.org. Coaches are also required to take the YMCA's online concussion training standards course.
- Lifeguards are tested frequently and in real time. We appreciate your assistance and understanding if we happen to run a drill during swim team practice. We are constantly checking our guards to ensure vigilance during any and all on-the-job situations in order to provide the safest environment for all of our swimmers, members and guests.
- In the event that you witness a lifeguard not attending to their duties as you understand them, please immediately notify the head swim coach, Aquatics Director or manager on duty.

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IN THE POOL

Safe Swimming

- In order to join swim team, **each swimmer must pass** the YMCA's "Deep Water Safe" test which includes the following:
 - Swim 50 yards without stopping and in good form.
 - Take a deep water plunge, followed by 45 seconds of treading water before returning to the pool wall.
- Each YMCA has **pool rules** that are posted in the facility. These same rules are in effect during swim team practice.
- **Swimmer to Coach Ratios** – The YMCA of Central Ohio will do everything possible to maintain safe coach to swimmer ratios. The following is a list of the recommended ratios for YMCA practices:
 - Novice (ages 6 - 9); a coach for every 8 - 11 swimmers
 - Competitive (ages 7 - 10); a coach for every 12 - 16 swimmers
 - Advanced (12 and under); a coach for every 12 - 16 swimmers
 - Novice (ages 10 - 18); a coach for every 10 - 14 swimmers
 - Competitive (ages 10 - 18); a coach for every 12 - 16 swimmers
 - Advanced (ages 12 and up); a coach for every 18 - 22 swimmers

[More Safe Swimming](#)

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- **Diving blocks** may only be used for swim team practice under the direct supervision of Y staff. Swimmers should be taught starts from the deck long before they move up to diving off the blocks. There should be a clear plan of progression moving up to racing starts.
- Y swimmers should never perform **racing dives**, in practice or competition, in pools with less than 5' of water at the end of the pool where the dive starts will be performed. If the water depth at the starting end is less than 5', races should be started with swimmers in the water, performing a push start.
- Children should **hydrate frequently** while swimming, and we encourage swimmers to have and use a water bottle. No additional drinks are allowed on the pool decks.
- Chlorine and bromine are common chemicals used in swimming pools. Different people may have different reactions to swimming pools, and we encourage you to **shower both before and after practice and meets**.
- Please encourage swimmers to **dry off** after each swim meet event and immediately after practice. This prevents a large amount of water from being carried into Y locker rooms and waiting areas and contributing to an increased number of slips and falls.

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Injury Prevention

As with any sport, injuries occur in swimming. Most injuries associated with swimming are **overuse injuries** because the training involved requires repetitive motions of the arms and legs. More shoulder injuries are reported among swimmers than among pitchers in baseball, therefore it is important that swimmers take extra care and pay special attention to shoulder injury and pain.

To prevent injury, swimmers should participate in [age and ability-appropriate amounts of conditioning](#). Before doing so, it is important to have sufficient warm-up, cool-down, and stretching to keep core muscles strong.

Swimmers need to communicate with coaches about any injury or suspected injury, seek help from a medical professional if pain is not eliminated with ordinary treatment, and follow prescribed regimens for rehabilitation. Often, coaches can modify a swimmer's training plan to allow the swimmer to complete the season successfully. The most important thing is to remember that pain is your body's way to tell you something is wrong. Don't ignore it!

It is especially important for swimmers to avoid any motion which causes pain. For older swimmers, it is important to distinguish between muscle soreness (which will naturally occur in athletes training intensely) and joint pain. Joint pain generally indicates that there is an injury or impending injury.

Have a coach evaluate your stroke if there is chronic pain in any area, especially the neck and shoulders. Faulty stroke technique can agitate existing injuries or create stress in another area of the body.

Y staff should err on the side of safety before any swimmer is allowed back in the pool after an injury, and we recommend a doctor's clearance to return to practice.

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All fundraising activities should align with the YMCA of Central Ohio's mission to support Youth Development, Healthy Living, and Social Responsibility. Please follow these guidelines for submitting art for consideration and use.

Suggested fundraising activities:

- Offer recognition and acknowledgement in printed materials (Heat Sheets, Program Ads).
- Offer recognition and acknowledgement on hung banners hung during Meets and Invitationals.
- Offer recognition and acknowledgement through company provided giveaways / temporary promotional items that can be distributed during Meets and Invitationals (T-shirts, etc.)
- Invite swim gear vendors to sell products only during Meets and Invitationals **AS LONG AS the vendor does not solicit general YMCA Members during that time AND the vendor is approved by the YMCA of Central Ohio.**
- When selling concessions during Meets and Invitationals which align with the YMCA's mission to promote Healthy Living (fresh fruits and veggies, water, juice, and other non-sugary and carbonated drinks, etc.) please provide messaging that explains that a portion of the proceeds help support the Swim Team and thank them for their purchase.
- Restaurant Nights have been a way that funds have been raised to support Swim Team. In coordinating these with restaurants look for the best return 15% to 20% on all sales for that day is ideal. Please coordinate with the Executive Director prior to committing.
- Register grocery store cards to benefit the Swim Team.

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• Please avoid the following types of fundraising activities as it could place the YMCA in a undesirable situation.

- Selling permanent ad space or signage within YMCA of Central Ohio facilities.
- Activity that puts children at risk, such as giving away or publicly publishing personal information.
- Inviting vendors, other than approved swim gear vendors or businesses to solicit on YMCA of Central Ohio property.
- Product sales ("Pampered Chef" type sales, child-driven candy sales, etc.)
- Enter into any agreements on behalf of the YMCA of Central Ohio (example: involving the use or display of the YMCA brand, trademarks, or service marks, or any other item which endorses specific products or companies.)

For assistance with Swim Teams fundraising efforts please contact Michael Oldham, Regional Aquatics Director michael.oldham@ymcacolumbus.org

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GOVERNANCE

- As a volunteer-driven non-profit organization, the YMCA of Central Ohio is led by a governing board of volunteers that holds the ultimate responsibility and ownership of the YMCA of Central Ohio.

- The Metropolitan Board of Directors has primary fiduciary responsibility for the organization. The Board is also responsible for hiring and evaluating the CEO and for assisting with and advising him/her on how to move the organization forward through policy, partnerships and programs. The Metropolitan Board is the only such governing body that can exist in the organization.

Each YMCA center has an advisory board that is made up of volunteers who advise the staff that the CEO hires to run the local Y center. Advisory boards offer valuable input and advice, establish and maintain valuable community connections for the Y and raise critical dollars in support of the Y's charitable mission to serve everyone in that particular community

All other groups of policy volunteers work through structured committees that provide support to Y programs, initiatives and events. Committees typically have a chair-person, a staff liaison and committee members. Committees that work year to year may also have an established committee recruitment and leadership succession structure in place.

Committees benefit from a committee charter that explicitly describes the goals, duties and chart of work (annual or otherwise). Ideally, committee members are provided with volunteer job descriptions that describe their role and provide an accurate estimate of the amount of time required to meet the responsibilities described.

Given YMCA organizational structure, the valuable work of swim team parent volunteers appropriately takes place at the committee level. YMCA swim team parents should be organized into committees that each have a responsibility for some aspect of the program that does not include staff responsibilities such as hiring staff, purchasing supplies or services, or creating organizational or program policy.

The chairs of the various swim team committees should each sit as members of a swim team executive committee chaired by a seasoned volunteer who works closely with the head coach and the Aquatics Director at the local Y. The local Y advisory board may also decide that it is a good idea to extend an invitation to the swim team executive committee chair to serve on the YMCA 's Advisory Board.

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COMMITTEES

- Committees are working groups of volunteers and staff that assemble in order to accomplish a set of specific objectives or to provide advice and counsel to Y leaders.
- Committees members should have a job description that outlines the volunteer commitment and includes an estimation of the number of hours of service to which a volunteer is being asked to commit.
- Committees should have a Chart of Work that describes the work that a group is coming together to do and the organizational parameters that must be met, including a set of goals and objectives.
- Each committee should establish a meeting calendar with meeting dates, starting and ending times that are adhered to.
- Each committee should be chaired by a volunteer who works closely with the staff to develop and oversee the chart of work, the recruitment of other volunteers and the setting of a meeting calendar.
- Committees that are advisory in nature should keep and submit detailed minutes for the benefit of the staff and future committee members.
- Some typical Swim team parent committees include but are not limited to the following:
 - Concessions
 - Meets
 - Invitational
 - Spirit
 - Social
 - Awards/Banquet
 - Fundraising
- In cases when there are multiple committees with inter-related functions and tasks, it is a good idea for an executive committee to be formed so that the chairs can assemble and coordinate work and communications. Minutes should be kept at all executive committee meetings.

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- The Y has a strong and comprehensive platform for communicating the value and impact of our cause and all of our programs, including competitive swimming.
- The YMCA of Central Ohio swim team program exists because it helps us to pursue the association's purpose and goals. Team values, beliefs, goals, identities and the design of all communications and collateral each reinforces and supports our cause of strengthening community through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

The understanding, appreciation and effort of Y staff, coaches and volunteers enable us collectively to present and celebrate the Y as a unified cause with shared values and common goals, regardless of location, community or demographics.

Establishing Third Party License Agreements for Vendors

To protect the reputation of the YMCA and its intellectual property, a Sub-License Agreement is required in all vendor relationships when a vendor is providing tangible goods. This agreement will be made by the YMCA of Central Ohio's Marketing Department, in alignment with the YMCA of the USA legal requirements.

Anytime the Y logo, branch name, team name, or mascot are used on any apparel, awards, signage, etc. it must be approved by the YMCA of Central Ohio Marketing Department. ***Without exception, any and all designs representing a team, invitational or special event are to be created by and subsequently approved by the YMCA of Central Ohio's Marketing & Communications Department prior to production of said items.***

With all vendors, Aquatics Directors must confirm that an agreement is in place by contacting the Sr. Vice President of Marketing. If a new vendor is being used, the Aquatics Directors are responsible for submitting the company name, owner/signer name, address, telephone number and owner/signer email address to Marketing. All agreements will be signed electronically.

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Web Pages

Informational and community web pages have been designed and built for each Y team. Each unique set of pages is connected to and functions as part of the YMCA of Central Ohio's main website (ymcacolumbus.org). Teams may not independently purchase or maintain domain names or sites that use the YMCA or team names and icons. Any existing, independent sites are not permitted. Teams may continue to link to online team and meet management software via their respective website pages.

Team sites feature the team mascot and other appropriate information specific to that team, including but not limited their YMCA name, staff contacts, including coaches and other items that will be consistent from team to team. The team web masters are given usernames and passwords to access the site. Training is available on the site's functions.

The YMCA of Central Ohio Marketing and IT Departments will continue to work with coaches, Aquatics Directors and parent volunteers to add features and build additional functionality to the team pages for the sharing of information, stories, videos, photos and results. Please speak with your Aquatics Director if you would like to add features to your page that are not currently built.

The YMCA of Central Ohio has access to moderate and edit content as necessary to conform to organizational guidelines.

Click on team icons to visit existing pages.



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In order to ensure that we are uniformly promoting our cause and programs, all volunteer committees must work within cooperation with the Aquatic's Director and are responsible for ensuring the proper use and adherence of the Y's visual system.

Without exception, any and all designs representing a team, invitational or special event are to be created by and subsequently approved by the YMCA of Central Ohio's Marketing & Communications Department prior to the production of said items. This includes any and all reorders.

Requests are submitted by the aquatic's director to the Marketing Department. The Marketing Department will design and provide art files to vendors directly. Vendors are required to submit a proof of all items to the YMCA of Central Ohio's Marketing & Communications Department for approval before moving into production. No one outside of the Marketing & Communications Department at the YMCA of Central Ohio may approve production for said item.

While Marketing will continue to review promotional and communication needs that arise, the goal is to standardize materials, forms and templates whenever possible in order to maximize the value of the limited design time and attention that can be reasonably given by association staff to just one of the Y's many programs.

Initial standardized collateral will include:

- General team promotion
- Team photos
- Team/event banners, signage, etc
- Standard YMCA awards

Quick turnaround materials such as heat sheets or fundraiser flyers should be sent to the Marketing Department and please allow two business days for review, feedback and approval.

Team photographers need to be approved by the YMCA Marketing Department, in order to adhere to proper branding standards. See page 39 form more information on this process.

If your team would like to request printed materials, please contact your Aquatics Director. After initial review and approval, the Aquatics Director will submit your request to Marketing. We cannot accept direct requests from parent committee members.

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Using Swimmer Artwork

Swimmer art may be used on swim team special event apparel one time per calendar year.

Please follow these guidelines for submitting art for consideration and use:

- The artist must be a member of the swim team and 18 years of age or younger.
- **All drawings must be done with a black marker tip for optimal print outcomes. No pencil drawings or computer generated pictures or text may be included.**
- If color is to be used on the artwork, make a copy of the line drawing and ask the artist to fill in the color areas, leaving the black lines visible. **Submit both pieces.** Keep in mind that each color used will add to the overall cost of producing the items.
- Refrain from using anything related to movies, games, television shows, etc. as these are trademarked and cannot be used.
- **Text cannot be incorporated to the art.**
- Drawing files are to be submitted electronically in one of the following file formats: .jpg, .tif, .eps, or .pdf Aquatic's Director will submit art file(s) to the Marketing Department with the Project Request Form.
- Include the artist's name, team and age

If a submitted piece of artwork does not meet the above criteria, there is a chance it may not be usable for the intended purpose, and will be returned to the Aquatics Director. Before notifying a swimmer that their artwork has been chosen, please submit the drawing for technical review to make sure that it can be successfully produced. The YMCA Marketing Department reserves the right to adjust swimmer artwork as needed for production purposes.

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Team Uniforms or Spirit Wear are ordered utilizing the online team stores. Swim suits may be ordered by individual teams from specialized swim suit apparel companies. All uniform items and standards have been created by the Marketing Department of the YMCA in accordance with brand guidelines.

- All swimmers must wear their approved uniform to YMCA swim meets
- Team stores are open for the winter season only. Dates for stores are communicated to families from the teams.
- All officials must meet the YMCA of the USA apparel standards. Details about how to order a swim officials uniform can be found out by contacting the Aquatic's Director for each individual team.

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Special Events

To assist teams with a more efficient approach to apparel and other items associated with a special events and/or invitationals, items will be designed according to the event theme by the Marketing Department.

Each team should work with their respective Aquatics Director to prepare a comprehensive calendar of events for the upcoming season. After review and approval, the Aquatics Director may also request additional items such as banners or flags for special events, through the Y's internal Project Request Form.

We cannot accept requests from parent committee members only Aquatics Directors after review and final approval from Michael Oldham, Association Aquatics Director. Parents are not permitted to order items outside of the YMCA system.

All items created for a special event and/or invitational must include all of the following elements:

- Y logo or Formal Branch Name
- Official team name
- Team Mascot (optional)

The Aquatics Director and the volunteers are responsible for working together to place the order (sizes and quantities ONLY) and arrange for delivery. Payment will be processed by the Aquatics Director. (See [Third Party License Agreements](#))

IMPORTANT:

Text statements for inclusion on apparel must be approved by the Aquatics Director and the Marketing Department and must be appropriately aligned with YMCA voice standards. Throughout the rebranding of our youth sports programs, the YMCA of Central Ohio has created an extensive list of local vendors that we have consistently worked with and have Third Party License Agreements in place with YMCA of the USA. These vendors are required to deliver superior service, cooperate in the proofing process and provide best pricing and high quality materials. We have the ability to order anything your team may need from one of these vendors and therefore discourage teams from looking for additional sources.

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The Y's visual system must be applied to all items related to team recognition including, but not limited to: awards, medals, trophies, qualification apparel, ribbons, lanyards, pennants, banners, etc.

Industry-created resin trophies and medals are acceptable. Customizable areas such as the trophy plaques, ribbons and medal stickers must follow YMCA visual system requirements. If creating ribbon stickers, Microsoft font Verdana must be used.

Aquatics Director must submit a Project Request Form for all awards or reorders of awards. By doing so, we ensure proper branding procedures while allowing for personalization.

All items created for a special event and/or invitational must include all of the following elements:

- Y logo or Formal Branch Name
- Official team name
- Team Mascot (optional)

The Aquatics Director and the volunteers are responsible for working together to place the order, quantities and delivery.

Payment will be processed by the Aquatics Director.
(See [Third Party License Agreements](#))

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Frequency, Duration and Rest

- The following set of guidelines apply to Fall/Winter swimming and have been set to align with the beliefs and goals of the YMCA of Central Ohio's competitive swim program, to ensure greater consistency and fairness among the YMCA of Central Ohio swim teams and to support healthy swimmer progression through the program as swimmers both emotionally and physically mature and improve in their abilities. This schedule is applicable to our summer season so long as local schools are still in session.

To ensure that young athletes have the opportunity to explore other sports and activities without over-scheduling, pre-adolescent swimmers have clearly defined caps on the amount of time they may spend at practice and in conditioning. A practice is any time that the team gathers to condition or train in the pool or on dry land. The variability of swimmer ability, does require a flexible approach, but it is not a reason to ignore the other developmental needs of young children including having time for other activities and to play freely.

6, 7 and 8 years old

- No less than one and no more than three practices per week.
- No more than two hours in the pool conditioning per week.

9 and 10 years old

- No less than one and no more than four practices per week.
- No more than four hours in the pool conditioning per week.

11 and 12 years old

- No less than two and no more than four practices per week.
- No more than six hours in the pool conditioning per week.

13 and 14 years old

- No less than two and no more than five practices per week.
- No more than ten hours in the pool conditioning per week.

- One mandatory day of rest per week. No practice or competition.

15 and Up

- One mandatory day of rest per week. No practice or competition.

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Swimming Up

- A coach may, at their professional discretion and with the permission of a swimmer's parents, invite select swimmers in each age group to practice and condition under the [Frequency, Duration and Rest guidelines](#) set forth for the next age group.
- This invitation **may only be extended to swimmers who are 8, 10, 12 or 14** years of age, and should be used sparingly to meet the needs of the most advanced, eager and physically gifted young swimmers.

In all cases, a standardized permission waiver signed by the coach and a parent must be completed and submitted to the Metropolitan Aquatics Director before a swimmer may begin practicing with the older age group. This permission waiver must be completed each season.

When young swimmers are practicing under an older age-group's guidelines, extra attention should be paid to staying on top of symptoms of overuse and injury.

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Team Guidelines

- **The first day that swimmers may get in the water or gather to train on dry land with a coach prior to the Fall/Winter season is the Tuesday after Labor Day.** Without exception, there should be no organized, coach-led swimming, conditioning or stroke clinics during the months of April, August or in September prior to Labor Day. Swimmer "try-outs" may take place late August, if necessary, for group placement.
- **Frequency, duration and rest guidelines** must be in effect the first week of practice and must continue to be upheld throughout the entire swim season up to and including Y Nationals.
- During the five scheduled "**weekends off**" that take place every Fall/Winter season, no practice or competition may take place from 12 AM Saturday until 3 PM on Sunday. Organized team community service projects, non-swimming fundraisers and family events are permissible but must be communicated as optional to participants if taking place on a "weekend off."
- The biggest obstacle facing Y swim teams is the competition for **pool time**. Every Y has multiple offerings and must balance the needs of many user groups with available pool time and space. Due to space/time limitations, the Y may not be able to provide enough pool time to meet the **maximum allowed practice times**.
- The availability of pool time does, on occasion, require practices to be held in the evening during the week. Coaches should provide swimmers with **early dismissal opportunities** to allay parent concerns about their swimmers getting enough rest on school nights.
- Each Y, at a minimum, will provide and maintain **basic training supplies** for their swim team including practice lane lines and a reasonable number of kick boards and pull buoys. Swim teams are responsible for raising the funds to purchase any and all desired additional training or competition equipment such as fins, stopwatches, hand paddles, lap counters, timing equipment, etc. All purchases become the property of the YMCA. Any use of the equipment outside of swim team will be done with thoughtful consideration and respect.

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Swim Meet Frequency and Type

- Dual team meets and Invitationals begin in late September and continue through early March when our league's Championship meet takes place. Swimmers who have qualified to compete at Zones and Nationals continue on from there.
- Typically, Fall/Winter meets take place on Saturdays. Dual meets usually last from three to four hours and Invitationals typically last a full day depending upon the number of events each youngster has entered.

Because it is a long season and we believe in the importance of taking time for family (including our coaching and aquatics staff at the Y), a monthly **"weekend off"** is scheduled from October through February. During November and December, the weekends off will fall upon the major holiday weekends. Please check the calendar for additional dates, and please note the ["weekend off" guidelines listed under Practicing](#).

Dual meets are included in the established Swim Team program fees at each YMCA.

Invitational meet fees are the additional responsibility of each swim family.

"Last Ditch" meets historically fall at the very end of a season in order to give swimmers who are within a second or two of meeting a time standard the chance to qualify for the next level of competition. While we feel it is important to encourage additional opportunities to compete and achieve success, we also believe that just one "Last Ditch" meet is enough for all of our swimmers. Therefore, YMCA of Central Ohio swimmers may only attend one pre-assigned "Last Ditch" meet per season.

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Meets and YMCA Building Usage

- YMCAs are busy places and have many members and member groups who utilize our facilities. Our staff and volunteers work hard to meet the competing demands of all groups to the best of our ability.
- Swim teams share the spaces we provide with those stakeholders and groups, many of whom feel that their program or activity is just as important as swim team is to our swim families.

We ask that all of our members and participants treat one another with an appropriate amount of understanding and respect to ensure that everyone is able to meet their goals. Sometimes, this will require compromise on behalf of all parties.

- For all locally run dual meets and invitationals, the Y provides teams with the necessary space for holding competitions. Sometimes space availability does become an issue. When that happens, we work within our local association to find another YMCA location for holding the meet.
- During meets, swimmers and their families are invited to utilize YMCA locker rooms to store belongings. Participants must provide their own locks for securing belongings. The Y does not take responsibility for lost or stolen items.
- The Y provides spaces for swimmers to wait between events.
- All YMCA of Central Ohio swimmers are full members of the Y and therefore have all age appropriate access to YMCA of Central Ohio facilities during normal operating hours.
- During swim teams and practices, YMCA age policies are in full effect:
 - Children under age 9 must have a parent/guardian in the building at all times.
 - Children between the ages of 9 and 17 are welcome to be at the Y unaccompanied by an adult for up to 2.5 hours per day.

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USA Swimming

- YMCA of Central Ohio swim teams may choose to also compete in USA Swimming events. This is a team-by-team decision.
- Although discouraged from doing so, sometimes teams have swimmers competing at multiple events on the same weekend. When this does occur, the head coach is required to be on deck at the YMCA sponsored and sanctioned event. An assistant coach may attend the USA Swimming event with swimmers so long as doing so does not take away from the safety or experience being provided for the team at the Y event.

Each Y team may hold only one USA Swimming Team Membership. A Y team may not be part of more than one USA Swimming Team Membership (i.e. cannot be comprised of swimmers of more than one USA Swimming team). Y teams MUST have their official YMCA name (as listed in the national YMCA directory) on their USA Swimming Certificate of Insurance.

Each Y team that participates in USA Swimming may schedule USA swim meets, and each swimmer may participate in up to 3 non Championship USA meets per month. This is done at the discretion of the Coach in partnership with the Aquatics Director.

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Championship Meets

- The YMCA of Central Ohio Swim League Championships (Champs) signify a celebratory end to the individual achievements of a great swim season. For many of our swimmers, Champs is the last meet of the season.
- Our league offers one Champs meet and the format for this meet is currently being worked on, though it will be a multi-day meet hosting all swimmers.

To be eligible for the Champs, swimmers must participate in at least two closed meets that take place between only YMCA teams.

A formal closed meet consists of the following:

- At least two YMCA teams and a minimum of at least six swimmers from each team.
- The meet must consist of at least six events with one being a four-person relay (four boys or four girls, not mixed).
- Certified coaches for each team must be present.
- At least two certified YMCA officials (one of whom must be the Referee) must be present. There also must be a certified Administrative Official for each meet.

Closed meets are limited to YMCAs and if a team from another organization takes part, it is no longer considered a closed YMCA meet and may not be used to meet the Champs or Nationals eligibility requirement.

The YMCA of Central Ohio Swim League will various items commemorating the accomplishments of our swimmers.

[More Competing](#)

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Zones and Nationals

Swimmers who meet the age and time standards for Zones and/or Nationals have the opportunity to continue swimming beyond Champs.

Zones is the name given to the championship meet at which the entire Great Lakes Zone gathers to compete at the end of each season. Each YMCA of Central Ohio team that sends swimmers to Zones will have the opportunity to have a coach represent them at the competition.

Beyond Zones, YMCA of the USA (Y-USA) hosts two Youth National Championships events every year (for swimmers ages 12 - 21 years of age). Approximately 1,200 Ys offer swim team programs, so the qualification standards are competitive.

An athlete must achieve the minimum qualifying time standard for each National Championship Meet event in which he/she enters. Coaches must be prepared to show proof of this achievement (and that it was made during the current qualifying period) at meet registration. The qualification period for the Short Course National Championship Meet is March 1 of the preceding year through the entry deadline for the current year's meet. The qualification period for the Long Course National Championship Meet is July 1 of the preceding year through the entry deadline for the current year's meet.

In order for an athlete to be eligible to compete in the YMCA National Championship meets, he/she must have competed in three Y-USA sanctioned closed YMCA of Central Ohio meets plus one sanctioned YMCA championship meet since September 1 of the current season. Any time achieved at a sanctioned closed or championship meet in which the swimmer competed is acceptable. USA Swimming times and high school times are also accepted.

At Nationals, swimmers represent the YMCA of Central Ohio. The YMCA maintains an 8 swimmer:1 coach ratio. In cases when multiple Central Ohio teams send swimmers to Nationals, the coach with the most swimmers is invited to represent all of the teams and coach the YMCA of Central Ohio contingent (and so on until the swimmer:coach ratio is met). Additional coaches may be sent at the discretion of the YMCA of Central Ohio.

All costs associated with Nationals are split between the Y and the parent committees.

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CALENDAR

Swim Meet Schedule coming soon! For more information about your team's season long schedule be sure to check out your schedule thus far.

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TEAM ACCOUNTS

Each YMCA of Central Ohio swim team has a unique swim team holding account maintained and managed by the Y. These accounts are for the use of saving money to purchase team-related resources and for managing the payment of meet expenses not covered by the Y's operating budget.

Parent committees support and hold events that raise funds used by the Y. With parent support, the Y uses team funds to purchase equipment and supplies that enrich and improve the swim team program experience. These funds can be held in team accounts from year to year.

Swim team funds may also be used to support [the GIVING goal](#) of the program. Funds may be used to underwrite team service projects, support the Y's charitable efforts to provide reduced fees and memberships to deserving children and families. Funds may also be used to support the efforts of other Y teams located in communities with fewer resources for supporting and nurturing team swimming.

Money raised in support of a team should be reinvested in the team as quickly as possible. When a team is saving money over a period of multiple seasons in order to make a large purchase, the plan should be communicated to the executive director of the local Y center. The holding of large account balances (more than \$10,000) from year-to-year without a parent committee and executive director approved reinvestment plan is discouraged.

Expenditures from team accounts should be made in accordance with YMCA of Central Ohio financial controls and procedures. By necessity this involves ongoing communication between the parent committees, the Aquatics Director and the executive director. When a large equipment purchase (over \$1,000) is being considered, the executive director of the local Y center must be closely involved.

Aquatic directors are responsible for providing monthly swim team account statements to the appropriate parent committee.

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- At the Y, we are for **Healthy Living**. We recognize that a big part of supporting the health and well-being of youth, families and adults is providing a healthy environment for programs and activities.

In line with this philosophy, the YMCA of Central Ohio is undertaking comprehensive efforts to align the food, beverages and snacks that we provide in vending machines, meetings, concession stands, dining halls and the food served in programs and sold as fundraisers to a set of nutritional guidelines.

The YMCA will continue to work with parent concessions committees to develop additional ideas, tools and best practices for providing healthy food, beverage and snack options that sell. Currently, a list of approved snacks, meals and beverages exists. The list is meant to support consistency and alignment with organizational policy and the swim program's beliefs and goals. It is offered as a guide that volunteers can use when planning team concessions .

While this is a long list, it is by no means comprehensive of all of the possibilities that exist for serving and creating demand for tasty, healthier foods in our Y environments.

We welcome creative menu choices that meet the nutritional guidelines of the YMCA of Central Ohio. Any parent committee wishing to add items to the approved list of menu choices should submit those to the Aquatics Director for approval and addition to the list.

Some examples of items on the list:

Beverages:

- Water, G2, milk, chocolate milk, 100% fruit juices ...

Snacks:

- Fruits, veggies, baked chips, low fat yogurts, trail mix, low-fat crackers, hummus, skinny cow ice cream sandwiches, low-fat string cheese ...

Meals:

- Pulled chicken sandwiches, gyros, veggie pizza, turkey dogs, whole wheat products

A portion of the proceeds will go to benefit future swimmers of the YMCA, through funding of the YMCA Safety Around Water campaign.

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INVITATIONALS

- The main fundraiser for most of the YMCA of Central Ohio swim teams is the annual invitational that most teams host.
- Invitationals provide swimmers with opportunities to swim in larger meets with more swimmers from regional Ys, to compete against multiple swim teams at one time and to provide a greater variety of ability levels for all swimmers.
- All other participation in invitational swim meets is encouraged to take place in support of other YMCA of Central Ohio teams.
- Invitationals usually carry a \$3-\$5 per swimmer per event fee that is paid directly by families and is in addition to the annual swim team program fees as well as a swimmer surcharge to help support league wide initiatives.
- Teams hosting invitationals should begin planning their event at an early date and work through the Aquatics Director of their Y to engage with the Y's Marketing Department to ensure a timely delivery of designs and materials. [CLICK HERE](#) for more information about marketing.

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- When deciding to change the way in which the swim team program is managed or operated, all parties are encouraged to use the following four sets of questions as filters and guides for decision-making:

Kids

- Will this decision benefit all of the kids in our program? How? If it only benefits some, is there a price that other kids must pay? If yes, what is it? Is that a fair thing to impose upon them or ask of them?

Families

- Will this decision benefit all of the families in our program? How? If it only benefits some, is there a price that other families must pay? If yes, what is it? Is that a fair thing to impose upon them or ask of them?

Goals

- Will this decision help us to reach [our program's goals](#)? Which goals? Will it negatively affect our ability to meet our other goals? Why or why not?

When it comes to staff decisions pertaining to the program, the following question will also be asked because staff are stewards of the entire YMCA of Central Ohio organization.

Organization

- Will this decision benefit the YMCA of Central Ohio? If so, how? If it does not benefit the Y directly, should we do it anyway? What is the rationale?

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- BULLPEN - the area where swimmers report before each event to check-in and pick up their lane assignment.
- CLOSED MEET - a meet involving only YMCA of Central Ohio teams.
- DECK - the area immediately adjacent to the pool. Please note that parents are to remain off of the deck during practices unless told otherwise.
- DQ - a disqualification resulting from a technically incorrect stroke, kick, turn or start.
- DUAL MEET - two teams competing at one location.
- EVENT - the specific type of race in which a swimmer participates
- FALSE START - when a swimmer leaves the blocks before the sound of the starter's signal
- HEAT - a race within a single event
- HEAT SHEET - a list of all swimmers by heat and lane assignment that seeds swimmers according to submitted times. These may be purchased before at each meet.
- INVITATIONAL - large swim meets involving four or more teams that are typically hosted by and used as fundraisers for individual teams.
- PBs - personal bests or when a swimmer establishes a never-before-achieved time standard for themselves in a particular event.
- REFEREE - the head official at a meet.
- SCRATCH - when a swimmer who is scheduled for an event is removed by the coach from competition prior to the event.
- SEED - the placement of a swimmer within an event according to a previously established and submitted time.
- SEED TIMES - the time used by a swimmer to enter a meet
- STARTER - the official responsible for the start of each heat and for calling the swimmers to the blocks.

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COMMON PARENT QUESTIONS

Q: Swim team is a big financial undertaking. Is there assistance available?

A: Yes, we strive to run a program in which all members of our community can take part. We provide assistance for Y programs and membership based on established financial need. Please contact the Aquatics Director at your local Y for more information.

Q: How do I find out about volunteering to help out?

A: Parent volunteers are a vital component of a successful swim team program. Check with your local Y's Aquatics Director to learn what parent committees exist and/or how you might volunteer in some other capacity to support your child's team.

Q: Is my child expected to attend every meet and practice?

A: No, it is not the Y's expectation that all swimmers attend every meet or practice. Please attend the meets and practices that fit your family's schedule.

Q: What should my child bring to a swim meet?

- A: Your child should bring the following:
- a blanket or sleeping bag to sit upon.
 - at least two towels
 - at least two sets of goggles and a cap
 - a light, healthy snack

Q: What other things should I remember for meets?

A: remember that during the winter you will be moving from freezing temperatures outside to tropical temps and humidity indoors, so layer appropriately. You might also want to bring:

- a seat cushion to soften bleacher seating
- a folding lawn chair in the event that there are no bleachers
- a stopwatch and notebook for recording times.
- we strive to provide healthy concessions options, but you are also welcome to provide food for your swimmer and family.



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DIVE ON IN

Competitive Swimming Program Guidelines YMCA OF CENTRAL OHIO

Revised: August 2018

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