



**autism anxiety sensory motor discomfort physical delay trauma**

# Swim Whisperers

## **Adaptive Aquatic Basic Tips**

### **S- Safety**

- Watch & share the lifeguard webinar so all staff at your pool can improve safety and successful saves in the event of an emergency.

### **W- Water Properties**

- A great tool to overcome buoyancy is to wear a long sleeve cotton shirt in the water. Even add pants or socks for more weight!

### **I- Interpreting Touch**

- Respond and react by giving them something else to touch
- Prepare them by saying, "I'm going to touch your shoulder"

### **M- Managing Successful Submerging**

- "Eyes, nose, mouth, under"
- Move backwards while going under to promote flexion.

### **W- Ways of Processing**

- Allow time for students to process directions – wait 15, 30 or 45 seconds for a response and then you will learn how they are processing what you say.

### **H- Having Body and Breath Control**

- Have swimmers move from sit to stand at the steps. This helps to pair inhalation with standing and exhalation/bubbles with sitting. Time the breath with the sit to stand.

### **I- Inability to Go on Back**

- Moro Reflex (startle reflex) happens when a child's head goes back past their shoulders.
- Have the child practice moving their head back and forth in a flexed (blast off) position.



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## Adaptive Aquatic Basic Tips

### S- Seeking Sensory Input

- Allow a structured sensory break into your lesson.
- Watch what a swimmer is doing to know what they need.

### P- Problems Following a Plan

- Flexibility is key, follow your intuition.
- Decrease rigidity of your plan especially if you have been teaching for a long time.

### E- Engagement and Interaction

- Novelty is extra important when working with the special need's population.
- Talk to all swimmers even if they do not speak, ask parents about communication.

### R- Reactive (over or under)

- Provide heavy work activities to calm the body, such as swimming over a deflated beach ball to improve comfort and attention.
- Humor is a great tool because it often distracts a swimmer from anxiety.

### E- Excessive Drinking

- Suck on ice chips or wear a mouth guard as strategies to decrease drinking

### R- Rigidity

- Rigid swimmers can sometimes benefit from a PECS schedule. They get to choose the order of the pictures and mark them off when done.

### S- Stroke Performance

- Front crawl and back strokes allow you to break the surface tension to get sensory input.



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