



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

# Parents

## Tips for Safety and Swim Success

### P - Properties of the Water

- Surface Tension
  - Breaking elastic band at surface of water
  - Gives a large amount of sensory input
- Buoyancy
  - Can help physically impaired swimmers to float & move
  - Can also cause anxiety due to lack of gravity and decreased stability of the water
- Hydrostatic Pressure
  - Pressure acts like a big calming hug, the deeper you go the more pressure there is

### A- Awareness

- Get comfortable with a rescue tube by: discussing videos, showing photos or practice with a real rescue tube
- Identify and learn (shallow/ deep). "I stand in the shallow, I swim in the deep."

### R- Routines

- Create a routine of asking to get into any body of water, asking even for bath time.
- Practice and plan transition times

### E- Equipment

- Use equipment when needed (like a lifejacket) but be sure to have structured swim time without floats
- Use equipment as a tool, not a permanent solution



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### N- Never Give Up

- Every swimmer has the potential to swim, be creative with time, space and location
- Every swimmer has the ability to propel independently with or without floats/assistance.

### T- Time, Temperature, and Training

- Time of day and temperature of the pool can make a huge difference in a swimmers comfort level! Look at the daily schedule and when they are the happiest.
- Feel empowered to ask about the training of the staff at your facility. Specifically ask "how long is the training?", "Can I see an outline of the training?", "Is there a specific systematic approach that is taught?" and "Does it address all abilities?"

### S- Swim Ideas

- Take side
  - Have your swimmer hold the wall, while repeating the sentence "the side is safe"
- Underwater
  - Identify facial parts "mouth, nose, eyes, hair, under"
- Reducing anxiety
  - Wearing cotton shirts/ pants/ converse shoes in the pool to add extra weight and help counteract buoyancy and increase comfort.

### How can we work together to improve safety?

- **Share** with special needs parent groups and healthcare professionals
- **Follow** us on Instagram and Facebook, like and share helpful tips
- **Advocate.** Please share the lifeguard online training video with your swim centers or anywhere you swim, whether it's a pool, lake or ocean. It is important for lifeguards to understand soft signs to approach differently in the unlikely event of an emergency.

