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Learning to Swim Year Round is Best!

At times recreational swimming lessons can be seen as a seasonal activity, especially as the weather outside grows cooler and other activities compete for your child's time and your family's income. There are compelling reasons, however, to continue with swimming lessons year round and to make swimming a top priority for your child and your family's budget. Following are some important reasons for you to consider.

Many parents start swimming lessons out of concern for their child's water safety. Although swimming lessons are never a substitute for parental supervision, they play a crucial part in building layers of protection for young children. The skills and behaviours that are taught in lessons need constant reinforcement throughout the year. The risks posed by drowning don't go away in the cooler parts of the year, so neither should the lessons – they are one of the most proactive things a parent can do for their child.

In addition to safety issues, continuing lessons is important to build and reinforce existing skills. This is particularly true with children under 5 years whose long-term skill retention and muscle memory are just beginning to develop. A break in lessons that stretches over many months will often result in a loss of skills. Even when parents can't see substantial progress every week, the child is at least maintaining the current ability level, and that is progress in itself. Don't let all the time and money spent on lessons go to waste, keep up their skills.

In our society of increasingly sedentary lifestyles, it is important for children to be involved in physical activities that establish a routine of fitness. Swimming offers one of the best activities for good health with minimal risk of sport related injury. In fact, swimming is a great activity that can last a lifetime. People of almost all ages and physical ability enjoy exercise, recreation and sport in the water. And, with infants there is the added benefit of enhancing and stimulating their general development. For parents involved in the water with their children, the close physical contact and quality time helps strengthen the natural bond like no other environment.

Physical activities like swimming have been shown to improve many areas of a child's development including academic performance, language, maths, fine and gross motor skills, confidence and coordination. Getting a good start can make a big difference later on. In the United States, studies demonstrated the highest grade point averages of all scholar/athletes tended to be with members of the swimming and water polo teams.

Swimming lessons offer a unique combination of social and physical interactions with the teacher, classmates and the aquatic environment. For some children, before starting school, these relationships can become their primary social bonds outside the home and immediate family. It can be important to maintain these relationships with regular attendance.

Ultimately, the learning experience should be an enjoyable one. If children have a great time at the pool they will continue learning in their lessons because they are so much fun!

Most pools are maintained at constant temperatures throughout the year, so even when it is cooler outside, it can still be comfortable, year-round, summer experience in the water. With a little extra attention, such as keeping children warm and drying them off well when they leave the pool, swimming will stay comfortable and beneficial all year.

Keep these ideas in mind as you continue with your lessons. Swimming is one of the best activities for children and it's a shame if it only happens in summer. Whenever possible, enjoy your swimming all year through!

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AFFILIATIONS

