



Parent Handbook  
2009-2010





## **MISSION**

The mission of the Kankakee Area YMCA is to put Christian principles into practice through programs building healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

## **CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT**

We help to achieve our mission by including character development into each of our programs. Our coaching staff is expected to demonstrate and teach the values of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. These four core values apply to program participants, peers, and everyone that we interact with at any level.

## **TEAM PHILOSOPHY**

The philosophy of the Kankakee Area YMCA Stingrays is to make swimming enjoyable for all participants regardless of ability. To meet that end, we will provide an environment where our children have the opportunity to become better swimmers by becoming more educated in proper stroke technique and practicing that technique during practice and at swim meets. The successful swimmer in our program will be the swimmer who strives to the best of his or her ability to improve his or her stroke technique and supports the efforts of other members of the team. Our athletes, coaches, parents and board members support this philosophy.

## **TEAM OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide an opportunity for young people to engage in a wholesome sport and a recreational activity.
2. To foster the development of high self-esteem and help cultivate healthy self-images.
3. To offer a comprehensive skill development program that will give each child an opportunity to improve all four competitive strokes so that each child is more efficient and confident in the water.
4. To provide opportunities for healthy social, emotional, and educational development.
5. To provide an opportunity to learn sportsmanship and make swimmers aware of team competition.
6. To have FUN!

## VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENT

Swim team parents are required to volunteer for at least 4 jobs per year. Possible opportunities include:

1. Swim Meet Duties
  - Timer
  - Official
  - Referee
  - Starter
  - Runner
  - Computer Person
  - Bull Pen Marshall
  - Event Writer
  - Concessions
  - Set-Up
2. Fundraising Activities
3. Team Party Planning
4. Ribbon and Team Picture Distribution
5. Other Equipment Distribution (shirts, caps, sweats, bags, etc)

## TEAM REQUIREMENTS

Each swimmer must be able to swim 50 yards (2 lengths) of the pool front crawl, unassisted.

## STROKE CLINIC

The stroke clinic is highly recommended for all swim team members. It begins on August 31<sup>st</sup> and runs through September 11<sup>th</sup>. (*Regular season practice will begin the week of September 14<sup>th</sup>.*) Two days will be spent on each of the four competitive strokes. The fee for the stroke clinic is \$25. If you register for the stroke clinic at the same time as the swim team, you will receive a \$10 discount.

## SWIM TEAM FEES

There is a \$45 swim team registration fee. Monthly fees depend on the number of practices that your swimmer registers for. The practice fee is \$25 per month for one practice per week, \$35 per month for 2 practices per week, or \$45 per month for 3 or more practices per week. An automated draft from either a credit card or bank account is required. Swimmers in the Black Division may elect to participate in dry land training 2 days per week for an additional \$20 per month. The holiday party will cost \$5 per swimmer, and the end of season banquet will cost \$10 per family.

**Fees are inclusive of all YMCA swim meet entry fees, team t-shirt and team swim cap. If your swimmer would like to participate in USA meets, you will be required to pay the USA annual registration fee as well as all USA entry fees.**

## **SEASON DATES**

Stroke Clinic begins August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2009. Regular season practice begins the week of September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009 and will continue through February and may continue into April depending on qualifying times. Holiday practice updates will be given throughout the season. Swimmers that qualify for the district, area/state meet and nationals will continue to practice through the meet dates.

## **SWIMSUITS/CAPS/T-SHIRTS**

Each swimmer is encouraged to purchase a team suit. The team swimsuit is a Speedo suit and is available for order through the Swim Team Director. Your child will be given a team t-shirt and cap. If you would like additional spirit wear, it is available for purchase at the Kankakee Area YMCA or through the Kiefer Store located in Orland Park.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AT A TYPICAL SWIM PRACTICE**

Swim practices are held five days a week at a variety of times. Please be aware of what time and day you have registered for. If you have any questions regarding your registration, please contact the Swim Team Director at 815-933-1741 ext. 227.

Our goal at swim practice is to concentrate on skill development and endurance. The coaches will assess swimmer skill levels at the beginning of the season and work with your children to improve their skills. The children will be grouped together by skill level and by age.

Here are some guidelines to ensure that everyone gets the most out of practice –

- ◆ Swimmers should arrive with enough time to be on deck and in their suit at least 5 minutes prior to the start of your practice time.
- ◆ If you have a scheduling conflict that will cause the swimmer to arrive late on a regular basis, please send a note to the coach explaining the situation. If your swimmer must leave early, please advise the coach prior to the start of practice.

## **MAKE-UP SWIM PRACTICES**

Due to the number of swimmers on our team, and the facility limit, make-up swim practices are not guaranteed. If you have any questions, or need to schedule a make-up practice, please contact the Swim Team Director at 815-933-1741 ext. 227.

## SWIM MEETS

All meets will be held on a Saturday or Sunday. We will be competing in intra-squad meets, dual meets, and invitationals. Your swimmer must swim in at least 3 YMCA sanctioned dual meets or invitational meets in order to compete at the YMCA District Meet.

Please read the team website weekly for team news and updates to swim meets. If you sign up for a meet and you cannot attend, **CALL THE YMCA TO CANCEL**. If your child simply “no-shows” for a meet, they can disqualify an entire relay. If you “no show” for a meet, you will be billed for the lost entry fees.

1. **Intra-Squad Meet** – This meet does not count towards the three meet requirement to compete at the district meet. In an inter-squad meet, swimmers will race against other children on our team within their age group. This is a great opportunity to experience your first swim meet. Inter-Squad meets will be held at the Kankakee Area YMCA, and will generally run from 12:15pm-3pm.
2. **Dual Meets** – Dual meets are a swim meet where we swim against one other team. The meets are held on a Saturday or Sunday and are usually 3-4 hours in length. This is a shorter meet than an invitational.
3. **Invitational Meets** – An invitational meet is a meet that is comprised of several teams. The meets are held on a Saturday or Sunday and are usually from 7am-5pm.
4. **YMCA District Meet** – This meet is the culmination of the swim season. It is traditionally held in February and consists of all of the teams in our district. The girls will generally swim on one day and the boys on the other. **Your swimmer must compete in 3 YMCA sanctioned dual meets or invitational meets in order to qualify for this meet.**

## AWARDS BANQUET

The Awards Banquet is held at the end of the season. This event will be publicized through email. You will receive a save-the-date announcement by the end of October. The fee for the banquet is \$10 per family.

## TEAM PICTURES

Team pictures and individual pictures this year are scheduled for Friday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, at 6pm. Various packages are available for purchase. More information on pictures will be sent home through your swimmer’s mailbox.

## **2009-2010 INDIVIDUAL SWIM GOALS PROGRAM**

The objective of the goals program is to motivate swimmers to swim their personal best and add some fun to the swim season! Swimmers' base times for each event are established at time trials or the first time the swimmer swims the event at a meet. A point is earned each time the swimmer legally completes the event and has a time drop from the lowest time recorded for the event. A time drop board will be maintained at the Kankakee Area YMCA on the pool deck. Prizes will be awarded. Specific information to follow.

## **MAILBOXES/ELECTRONIC NEWSLETTER**

Each swimmer is assigned a "mailbox" which is a hanging file in a file box. Communications from the swim team and ribbons will be placed in the boxes. Swimmers should check their box the Monday after a swim meet. A monthly newsletter will be distributed to each swimmer via e-mail.

## PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Bring your swimmer to practices and meets at appropriate times.
2. Pick up your swimmers promptly from practices.
3. Swimmers **only** on deck during practices so that the coaches can focus their attention on the swimmers. Parents may observe practices in the large pool viewing area.
4. If your swimmer is unable to attend a meet, contact the coaching staff immediately.
5. Meet line-ups are prepared at the discretion of the coaching staff. Please do not ask for your swimmer to be switched or added; last minute cancellations of swimmers may alter your child's assignments. Be sure to confirm line-up at swim meet check-in.
6. Be sure your child has checked in and knows his/her events for each meet.
7. Print with ballpoint pen or permanent marker the event number and stroke on younger swimmers' hands to help them keep track of where they need to be and when.
8. Remind your swimmer that they must stay on deck or in the team area for the duration of the swim meet.
9. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns about the swim team program, please direct them to the Swim Team Director at 815-933-1741 ext. 227.
10. Parents are asked to volunteer for set-up, timing, ribbons, and take down of all intra-squad meets. Please help if you can.
11. Have a kind word for all of the swimmers, including your own – **swimming should be fun!!**

## SWIMMER CODE OF CONDUCT

Swimmers are expected to act in accordance with the values of the YMCA.

- Honesty – Swimmers are expected to swim their complete workout.
- Caring – Swimmers are expected to be supportive of one another.
- Responsibility – Swimmers are expected to arrive on the pool deck prior to the start of practice. They are also expected to follow all swim meet expectations, including check-in.
- Respect – Swimmers are to treat coaches, each other, and opposing teams with respect. This includes respecting host locations by keeping our team area clean.

Coaches are responsible for dealing with swimmers' behavior both at practices and at meets. In the event of misconduct on behalf of a swimmer, coaches will follow the following guidelines:

<b>First Offense:</b>	Verbal Warning
<b>Second Offense:</b>	Removal from practice or meet. Parent will be notified.
<b>Third Offense:</b>	A parent conference will be held. Discipline up to and including removal from the team may be warranted.

## **WHAT TO EXPECT AT A TYPICAL MEET**

### **ARRIVAL AT A MEET**

Swimmers must arrive at or before the assigned check-in time. To find time information please check the team website. It will be continually updated throughout the season. It is important to be on time so relays can be confirmed. Also, write event numbers and stroke on younger swimmers' hands in ballpoint pen or permanent marker.

### **WHAT TO BRING TO A MEET**

Most swimmers like to have a blanket or sleeping bag to sit on between events. Bring at least two towels and warm, dry clothing. Bring baby powder to put in swim caps to make putting them on easier. Pack some entertainment - playing cards, books, gameboy, etc. Pack snacks or take advantage of concessions.

### **HOW LONG WILL THE MEET LAST?**

Intra-squad meets *should* last no more than 2.5 hours. Dual meets *should* last no more than 4 hours. Invitational meets may last *upwards* of 10 hours. Please be prepared and pack accordingly. You have the option of leaving after your swimmer completes his/her individual events IF they are not scheduled for the free relay at the end of the meet. The swimmer must notify the coach if they plan to leave - they might be needed to fill in for the relay. It is fun to stay until the end to cheer on the team.

### **CONCESSIONS**

Concessions are generally available at all invitational meets and occasionally at dual meets. We will not have concessions available at intra-squad meets.

### **SWIMMING EVENTS**

When you look at the line up, it will indicate events your swimmer is in with the lane number and then the heat number.

### **TEAM AREA**

A team area is designated for each team at each swim meet. Swimmers are encouraged to remain in the designated team area between events unless they are going to concessions or to the washroom.

### **RIBBONS**

Ribbons and medals are awarded at all meets. They are distributed to the swimmers via their mailboxes, usually the following Monday.

## **STROKE INFORMATION**

The stroke information below can be found at [www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org).

**Freestyle:** Technically, in a freestyle event, a swimmer must get from one end of the pool to the other without walking on the bottom or pulling on the lane line. This means that during a freestyle event, a swimmer can swim any stroke that they would like. In competitive swimming, front crawl is the stroke used during freestyle events. The front crawl combines alternating strokes of the arms over the surface of the water and an up and down flutter kick. In order to compete in a freestyle event, swimmers must touch the wall at the end of the race and on any turns. Failure to touch the wall at the end of the race or on any turns, or walking on the bottom or pulling on the lane line will result in disqualification.

**Backstroke:** As with front crawl, backstroke combines alternating strokes of the arms over the surface of the water and an up and down flutter kick. For backstroke, this is done while the swimmer is on their back. A flip-turn may be used for a backstroke turn. Again, pulling on the lane line or walking on the bottom is grounds for disqualification. In addition, a swimmer must finish the race on their back, or they will be disqualified.

**Breaststroke:** The breaststroke is a symmetrical stroke, requiring simultaneous movements of the arms on the same horizontal plane. Arms are pressed out from the chest in a heart shaped pattern and recovered under or on the surface of the water. The kick also requires simultaneous movements of the legs on the same plane, and is often referred to as a frog kick. Again, pulling on the lane line or walking on the bottom is grounds for disqualification. In addition, a swimmer must finish the race and complete any turns with a simultaneous two hand touch on the wall.

**Butterfly:** The butterfly is another symmetrical stroke, requiring simultaneous movements of the arms over the water, combined with a dolphin kick. The dolphin kick requires swimmers to keep both legs together on the same plane. Again, pulling on the lane line or walking on the bottom is grounds for disqualification. In addition, a swimmer must finish the race and complete any turns with a simultaneous two hand touch on the wall.

**Individual Medley (IM):** The individual medley features all four strokes. Equal distances of butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle are swum, in that order.

**Medley Relay:** As with the individual medley, all four strokes are swum. The first swimmer in the relay swims backstroke, the second breaststroke, the third butterfly, and the fourth freestyle. With relays, if the next swimmer leaves the starting block or side before the prior swimmer touches the wall, the entire relay team will be disqualified.

**Freestyle Relay:** The freestyle relay consists of four swimmers, each swimming equal distances of freestyle, one quarter of the total event length. With relays, if the next swimmer leaves the starting block or side before the prior swimmer touches the wall, the entire relay team will be disqualified.