



Safety & Character Topics

1 / Water Acclimation

At every swim lesson, we cover one safety or character topic. To reinforce what your child is learning, ask the following questions at home or in the car:

TOPIC 1.1: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

What is your instructor's name?

What are the names of the students in your swim lessons program?

If you can't remember, you can ask next lesson.

Why is it important to learn and use names?

Using names is the first step to getting to know others and making friends.

TOPIC 1.2: THE Y's CORE VALUES

What are the Y's core values?

- Caring
- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility

How have you demonstrated each core value at home?

How have you demonstrated each core value at swim lessons?

TOPIC 1.3: LIFEGUARDS

What is the lifeguard's job in the pool area?

- Watches the pool area to make sure everyone is safe while they are swimming
- Makes sure everyone follows the rules and maintains a safe environment

How does a lifeguard keep the pool area safe?

- Constantly scans the pool and responds to unsafe situations
- Is trained to help people when injuries happen

What can you go to the lifeguard for?

- If you are hurt, can't find me or another family member, have a question, or are being bullied

TOPIC 1.4: BENCHMARK SKILLS

What two skills can help you get to the side of the pool if you are in trouble and why are each of them important?

- **Jump, push, turn, grab** helps you safely exit the pool by pushing off the bottom, grabbing the wall, and climbing out.
- **Swim, float, swim** helps you get to the side of the pool if you are not within reach by swimming on your front, rolling to your back to breathe when you get tired, grabbing the wall, and climbing out.

Of all the skills you are learning in swim lessons, what are you really good at? What do you need to improve?

Safety & Character Topics continued

TOPIC 1.5: SUPERVISION

Why is it important to have an adult present, supervising and watching you, when you are in the water?

An adult can make sure you are safe and help you if you are in trouble. Remember to always ask permission before going near any water.

If an adult is on the phone or reading a magazine, is he or she closely watching you?

No. The adult is distracted. Wait to enter the water until the adult can be attentive in case you need help quickly.

TOPIC 1.6: REACH OR THROW, DON'T GO

Why shouldn't you jump in to save a friend who is struggling in the water?

A panicked person in the water can grab you and pull you under.

What can you do to help your friend?

Use an object to reach out to your friend and pull him or her back to the shore, the bank, or the side of the pool. You can use anything long enough to extend your reach or help your friend float, such as a pool noodle.

TOPIC 1.7: LIFE JACKETS

When should life jackets be used?

Until you pass a swim test, you should wear a life jacket in the water. Everyone, even strong swimmers, should wear a life jacket when participating in water sports, boating, or watercraft activities. In case of an accident, a life jacket will help you float until help arrives.

What does a proper life jacket have?

A proper life jacket should have the United States Coast Guard's seal of approval on the inside of the jacket.

TOPIC 1.8: SAFE SWIM AREA

What could be dangerous in the pool?

- Broken glass
- Cloudy water
- Diving in shallow water
- Swimming without an adult present
- Pool drains

Remember, it's never safe to approach water without an adult with you. Always look before you leap.



Safety & Character Topics

2 / Water Movement

At every swim lesson, we cover one safety or character topic. To reinforce what your child is learning, ask the following questions at home or in the car:

TOPIC 2.1: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

What is your instructor's name?

What are the names of the students in your swim lessons program?

If you can't remember, you can ask next lesson.

Why is it important to learn and use names?

Using names is the first step to getting to know others and making friends.

TOPIC 2.2: THE Y's CORE VALUES

What are the Y's core values?

- Caring
- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility

How have you demonstrated each core value at home?

How have you demonstrated each core value at swim lessons?

TOPIC 2.3: FIND HELP

Who can help you in the pool area?

- Parents and other family members
- Lifeguards
- Swim Instructors

What can you go to that person for?

- If you are hurt
- If you can't find me or another family member
- If you have a question
- If you are being bullied
- If someone else is doing something unsafe

TOPIC 2.4: BENCHMARK SKILLS

What two skills can help you get to the side of the pool if you are in trouble and why are each of them important?

- **Jump, push, turn, grab** helps you safely exit the pool by pushing off the bottom, grabbing the wall, and climbing out.
- **Swim, float, swim** helps you get to the side of the pool if you are not within reach by swimming on your front, rolling to your back to breathe when you get tired, grabbing the wall, and climbing out.

Of all the skills you are learning in swim lessons, what are you really good at? What do you need to improve?

Safety & Character Topics continued

TOPIC 2.5: SUPERVISION

Why is it important to have an adult present, supervising and watching you, when you are in the water?

An adult can make sure you are safe and help you if you are in trouble. Remember to always ask permission before going near any water.

If an adult is on the phone or reading a magazine, is he or she closely watching you?

No. The adult is distracted. Wait to enter the water until the adult can be attentive in case you need help quickly.

TOPIC 2.6: LIFE JACKETS

When should life jackets be used?

Until you pass a swim test, you should wear a life jacket in the water. Everyone, even strong swimmers, should wear a life jacket when participating in water sports, boating, or watercraft activities. In case of an accident, a life jacket will help you float until help arrives.

What does a proper life jacket have?

A proper life jacket should have the United States Coast Guard's seal of approval on the inside of the jacket.

TOPIC 2.7: REACH OR THROW, DON'T GO

Why shouldn't you jump in to save a friend who is struggling in the water?

A panicked person in the water can grab you and pull you under.

What can you do to help your friend?

Use an object to reach out to your friend and pull him or her back to the shore, the bank, or the side of the pool. You can use anything long enough to extend your reach or help your friend float, such as a pool noodle.

TOPIC 2.8: BACKYARD POOLS

What are some things you can do to keep yourself safe in your, or a friend's, backyard pool?

- Don't swim without permission or without adult supervision.
- Ask an adult for help if you want something in or around the pool.
- Keep your hands, fingers, feet, and toes out of any openings in the pool, such as grates.
- Don't swim or play in hot tubs or whirlpools.



Safety & Character Topics

3 / Water Stamina

At every swim lesson, we cover one safety or character topic. To reinforce what your child is learning, ask the following questions at home or in the car:

TOPIC 3.1: BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

What is your instructor's name?

What are the names of the students in your swim lessons program?

If you can't remember, you can ask next lesson.

Why is it important to learn and use names?

Using names is the first step to getting to know others and making friends.

TOPIC 3.2: THE Y's CORE VALUES

What are the Y's core values?

- Caring
- Honesty
- Respect
- Responsibility

How have you demonstrated each core value at home?

How have you demonstrated each core value at swim lessons?

TOPIC 3.3: SUN SAFETY

What can happen if you are out in the sun too long (without any protection)?

- Sunburn
- Heatstroke
- Dehydration

What can provide protection from the sun?

- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Sunglasses
- T-shirt
- Drinking water
- Staying in the shade

TOPIC 3.4: BENCHMARK SKILLS

Why is swimming important?

It's a lifelong skill, it can save your life, and it's fun!

You've learned skills to help you get to the side of the pool if you are in trouble. What else do you need to do to become a strong swimmer?

Learn swimming strokes and swim long distances.

What can you do once you've become a strong swimmer?

Swim team or triathlons, synchronized swimming or diving, swim instruction and lifeguarding, and swimming for fun and physical activity

Safety & Character Topics continued

TOPIC 3.5: LIFE JACKETS

When should life jackets be used?

Until you pass a swim test, you should wear a life jacket in the water. Everyone, even strong swimmers, should wear a life jacket when participating in water sports, boating, or watercraft activities. In case of an accident, a life jacket will help you float until help arrives.

What does a proper life jacket have?

A proper life jacket should have the United States Coast Guard's seal of approval on the inside of the jacket.

TOPIC 3.6: SUPERVISION

Why is it important to have an adult present, supervising and watching you, when you are in the water?

An adult can make sure you are safe and help you if you are in trouble. Remember to always ask permission before going near any water.

If an adult is on the phone or reading a magazine, is he or she closely watching you?

No. The adult is distracted. Wait to enter the water until the adult can be attentive in case you need help quickly.

TOPIC 3.7: CALL 911

When should you call 911?

Call 911 if you think a person is in trouble and there is no adult nearby.

What do you tell the 911 operator?

- Your first and last name
- The address of your location
- The telephone number you're calling from
- What happened and how many people are hurt

TOPIC 3.8: POOL DRAINS

What do pool drains do?

Pool drains pull water into the filtration system so it can be cleaned and returned to the pool.

Why can pool drains be dangerous?

Swimmers can get stuck on a drain in deep water and not be able to get to the surface.

What two rules should you follow related to drains?

- Don't swim or play around pool drains.
- Don't swim in a pool that is missing drain covers.



Safety & Character Topics

4 / Stroke Introduction

At every swim lesson, we cover one safety or character topic. To reinforce what your child is learning, ask the following questions at home or in the car:

TOPIC 4.1: WEATHER

Why do we have to pay attention to weather if we are swimming?

Storms can come up fast and produce strong winds, heavy rain, and lightning.

What should we do in potentially dangerous weather?

- Monitor threatening weather.
- When thunder roars, go indoors.
- Postpone aquatic activities and get to a safer structure.
- The pool can be considered safe to reoccupy 30 minutes after the last lightning is seen or thunder is heard.

TOPIC 4.2: FIRST AID

What are the basic first aid steps you should take if someone is bleeding?

- Call for help.
- Get gloves and put them on.
- Cover the wound.
- Apply direct pressure.

TOPIC 4.3: HYPOXIC BLACKOUT

What is hypoxic blackout and how can it happen?

Holding your breath and swimming underwater for a long time can cause a person to black out or lose consciousness.

How can you prevent hypoxic blackout?

- Don't hold your breath and swim underwater for long distances.
- When swimming short distances underwater, always have a buddy.

TOPIC 4.4: OPEN WATER

What are some of the dangers of open water?

- Swimmers can get caught in currents.
- It's harder to supervise swimmers.
- Cold water can make swimming and floating more difficult.

What are some things you can do to keep yourself safe in open water?

- Know how to swim.
- Never swim alone.
- Always swim near a lifeguard.
- Don't float where you can't swim.
- Don't fight the current. If you get caught, just go with the flow.
- Don't dive in headfirst.

Safety & Character Topics continued

TOPIC 4.5: GOAL SETTING

Why are goals important?

Goals help you focus on something you are trying to do or achieve.

What is your personal swimming goal?

TOPIC 4.6: HEART RATE

What is a heart rate?

Your heart rate is the rate at which your heart beats. If someone is found unconscious, you can check his or her heart rate to determine what action to take.

How do you find your heart rate?

Place your index and middle fingers to your neck or wrist to find your pulse. Count the beats for 10 seconds. Multiply the number of beats by six to determine your heart rate.

You can also use heart rate to determine how hard you are exercising. The faster your heart rate, the harder your body is working.

TOPIC 4.7: NUTRITION

What can you eat or drink to keep your body and mind healthy?

Drink plenty of water and choose healthy foods like fruits, veggies, and whole grains.

What are the benefits of choosing water over sugary drinks?

Water is essential to life. It is the best for giving us energy and keeping us hydrated.

TOPIC 4.8: BOATING

What are some dangers of boating?

- The boat could capsize or collide with another boat.
- Drownings can occur when boaters do not wear life jackets.

What are some things you can do to keep yourself safe in a boat?

- Wear a United States Coast Guard–approved life jacket.
- Don't stand up in small boats.
- Don't overload the boat.
- Don't boat at night or in low-visibility conditions.



Safety & Character Topics

5 / Stroke Development

At every swim lesson, we cover one safety or character topic. To reinforce what your child is learning, ask the following questions at home or in the car:

TOPIC 5.1: HELP TECHNIQUE

What is the Heat Escape Lessening Position (HELP)?

If the water is cold, you will need to protect yourself from overexposure by getting into the HELP position: Cross your arms over your chest and hug your body. Cross your ankles, lean back slightly, and keep your head above water.

TOPIC 5.2: SHOCK

What does it mean if someone is in shock?

Shock is a medical condition that occurs when the body doesn't provide enough oxygenated blood to all tissues. Symptoms include pale skin, rapid pulse, rapid and shallow breathing, cold and sweaty skin, nausea, and vomiting.

How do you help someone in shock?

- Call 911.
- Treat any serious bleeding.
- Have the person rest comfortably.
- Conserve the person's body heat.
- Do not give the person anything to eat or drink.

TOPIC 5.3: HYPOXIC BLACKOUT

What is hypoxic blackout and how can it happen?

Holding your breath and swimming underwater for a long time can cause a person to black out or lose consciousness.

How can you prevent hypoxic blackout?

- Don't hold your breath and swim underwater for long distances.
- When swimming short distances underwater, always have a buddy.

TOPIC 5.4: HUDDLE POSITION

If there are multiple people in the water and you need to stay warm, what should you do?

Adopt the huddle position, which was developed to help a group of people preserve body heat by sharing heat if they are in the water for a long period of time.

Safety & Character Topics continued

TOPIC 5.5: GOAL SETTING

Why are goals important?

Goals help you focus on something you are trying to do or achieve.

What is your personal swimming goal?

TOPIC 5.7: REST & RELAXATION

What contributes to feeling rested and relaxed?

- Turning off screens, especially before bed, to allow your mind to rest
- Sleeping 8 to 10 hours a night
- Going to bed at the same time every night

Why is it important to get enough rest?

- So you have enough energy for the next day
- To prevent illness
- So your brain and body can grow and remain healthy

TOPIC 5.6: ABDOMINAL THRUSTS

What does it mean when someone is choking?

Choking occurs when a person can't breathe because something is blocking his or her airway.

What usually causes someone to choke?

Choking can happen when someone gets food or an object stuck in his or her throat.

What should you do to help someone who may be choking?

Call 911 and perform abdominal thrusts, which help to dislodge the object stuck in the person's throat.

TOPIC 5.8: WATER PARKS

What are some safety rules at water parks?

- Stay with your group and arrange a spot to meet if you get separated.
- Follow the rules of the slide; ride in the proper position, as directed.
- Walk, don't run.
- Listen to and obey lifeguards.
- Put on sunscreen regularly.
- In a wave pool, know the depth of the water you are entering; listen for the signal that the waves are starting.



Safety & Character Topics

6 / Stroke Mechanics

At every swim lesson, we cover one safety or character topic. To reinforce what your child is learning, ask the following questions at home or in the car:

TOPIC 6.1: HYPOTHERMIA

What is hypothermia?

Hypothermia occurs when a person's body temperature becomes dangerously low, usually because of prolonged exposure to cold temperatures.

What are some things you can do to prevent hypothermia?

- Cover all exposed areas of skin.
- Keep moving in freezing temperatures, no matter how tired you are.

How might you treat hypothermia?

- Warm up gradually.
- Use blankets.
- Seek medical help.

TOPIC 6.2: RESCUE BREATHING

Why is it dangerous when a person is unconscious or not breathing?

The person isn't getting any oxygen, which could lead to serious injuries.

What should you do to help someone who is not breathing?

Call 911 and perform rescue breathing.

How do you perform rescue breathing?

Blow air into the mouth to inflate the lungs.

TOPIC 6.3: HYPOXIC BLACKOUT

What is hypoxic blackout and how can it happen?

Holding your breath and swimming underwater for a long time can cause a person to black out or lose consciousness.

How can you prevent hypoxic blackout?

- Don't hold your breath and swim underwater for long distances.
- When swimming short distances underwater, always have a buddy.

TOPIC 6.4: BENCHMARK SKILLS

Why is it important to learn to swim long distances?

- It can save your life.
- It's a good way to stay physically active.

What can you do once you've become a strong swimmer?

- Swim team or triathlons
- Synchronized swimming or diving
- Swim instruction and lifeguarding
- Swimming for fun and physical activity

Safety & Character Topics continued

TOPIC 6.5: GOAL SETTING

Why are goals important?

Goals help you focus on something you are trying to do or achieve.

What is your personal swimming goal?

TOPIC 6.6: CPR

What is CPR?

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) helps maintain vital blood flow to the heart and brain.

How can you tell if someone needs CPR?

If someone doesn't respond, check for breathing and a pulse. When you can't see, hear, or feel any signs of breathing and you can't find a pulse after 10 seconds, the person probably needs CPR.

TOPIC 6.7: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Why is physical activity important?

It makes your heart healthy, strengthens your muscles and bones, lengthens your life, and prevents illness.

What are some fun ways to be physically active?

- Playing sports (basketball, soccer, etc.)
- Running
- Swimming

Swimming is a healthy way to be physically active; it exercises your whole body but is gentle on your joints. The water's buoyancy supports body weight, which means less pressure on your joints.

TOPIC 6.8: CRAMPS

What is a cramp?

A cramp is an uncontrolled tightening of muscles, usually in the legs or the feet.

How do you treat cramps you experience while swimming?

For cramps that occur in the pool, swim to the side, climb out, knead and stretch the cramped muscle, and try to walk to release the cramp. For cramps that occur in open water, when you are far from shore, try to knead and stretch the cramped muscle while you are in a resting position.