

Teaching Young Children to Swim - Why is it important?

Being able to swim opens wonderful opportunities for a lifetime of exercise and leisure activities. The recommended amount of exercise is one hour every day for children, and swimming is a fantastic way to achieve that.

It can play a major role in the bonding process between parent and child, and is something you can do together for years to come. But as well as being healthy and fun, knowing how to swim is a must, as it is a skill that could ultimately save your child's life.

Starting at an early age

The earlier a child is introduced to the water, and the more naturally it is done, the more likely they are to feel comfortable in it. The simple activity of laying them in the bath at home and splashing water on their faces is a great way to begin. If this is a part of your child's daily routine along

with a weekly swimming session, they will become familiar with water and their confidence will quickly grow.

As parents, if we are relaxed in the water, our natural instinct will be to cuddle and reassure our child. Some of us, of course, may be unsure or lacking in confidence ourselves and it's important to be aware that we can transmit our own fears to our child.

Gaining strength and coordination

Swimming, with its strong pulling arm actions and vigorous kicking of the legs, will help develop your child's strength

and coordination. Games like chasing a favourite toy and aids such as goggles and floats will all help in building up their muscles and the ability to swim faster.

At first, you can help your child make simple leg and arm movements in the water by playing fun games with them. They'll react by moving their legs and arms without thought and respond naturally to the water.

Confidence and safety

Without the fear of having their face in the water, children will soon start to do all sorts of activities - jumping in by themselves, diving through hoops and swimming to the bottom of the pool to mention a few.

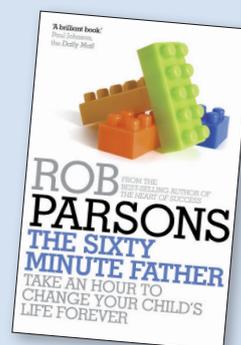
It's very important to teach children how to be safe in the water from an early age and they will need to consolidate their safety skills over time. As we all know, every parent needs to remain watchful of their children in the water at all times.

So is it important to teach your young ones to swim? Definitely! It's a wonderful experience with so many benefits. If you haven't done so before, take the plunge together soon - it really is something not to miss out on.



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