

# GOLD MEDAL SWIM SCHOOL

## GMSS Pool Deck Policy

We understand that many parents will sit and wait for their children to complete their practice due to driving distances or time, but we ask that you do not interact with your swimmer or swimmer's coach during the workout. GMSS will provide a designated area to watch practice at each pool.

We all do a great deal for our kids. We create the environment in which they grow and mature. Our children are products of our values and beliefs. Human nature, however, is such that we sometimes lose our ability to remain detached and objective in matters concerning our children. The following guidelines will help all of us keep your child's development in the proper perspective.

1. Every individual learns at a different rate and responds differently to the various methods of presenting skills.
2. It takes a great deal of the swimmer's attention to master the skills of proper stroke technique. These new sets of habits are the basis for later improvement.
3. Plateaus will occur at one time or another in every swimmer's career. Plateaus can be both in competition and in training. A plateau signifies the swimmer has mastered lower order skills, but they are not yet sufficiently automatic to leave their attention free to attack newer, higher-order skills.
4. Swimmers under 10 are the most inconsistent. This can be frustrating for the parent, coach and swimmer alike! Be patient and permit these youngsters to learn to love the sport.
5. It is the coach's job to offer constructive criticism of a swimmer's performance. It is a parent's job to supply the unconditional love, recognition, and encouragement necessary to help the young athlete feel good about themselves.

We certainly support your presence off the pool deck but not "on" the pool deck. We ask that you do not interact with your swimmer or the swimmer's coach during the workout (if you need to speak with the coach do it via email or phone call). It is best to be a distant observer during workouts. Our children need to develop a bond of trust and confidence with the coaches. This is difficult if not impossible to do if parents are close by.

If you have questions about your child's training or team policies, contact the coach. Please refrain from criticizing the coach in front of the swimmers as this undermines the coach's authority and breaks the swimmer-coach support necessary for maximum success. It is for this reason that we ask parents not to actively participate in coaching their child.

Remember, particularly in the case of younger swimmers, attitude and behavior of the parents in regard to their outlook on the sport has an important effect on the child. In swimming, as in

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life, nobody can “win” or succeed all the time – there will always be some disappointment. The important thing is to keep on striving to do better the next time. Building on that idea, we all know that it is important as a parent to provide healthy encouragement for a child’s interest with recognition that a child’s interests might change. If your child expresses a desire not to participate in the sport of swimming anymore, open a discussion with your child about why they might be feeling that way. Given all the positives that the sport can teach such as time management, perseverance, discipline and confidence, there could be dynamics (e.g. a new coach, an interaction with a teammate) that might just seem too stressful but will change in time. Self-motivation is the stimulus of all truly successful swimmers but there are times when such motivation may lag and parental support is crucial for persistence.

At any time questions or concerns need to be addressed, we extend the offer to our membership to contact the Head Coach for guidance on swimming related topics or the club owner for board related topics. We wish for our organization to be united and strong, free of the related problems that may arise from the lack of communication.

I have read and understand the GMSS pool deck policy.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_