

GENERAL INFORMATION—SWIMFAST 2023

Director: Coach Cindy Ikeler

(for quickest response:Email: swimfastlessons@gmail.com or cikeler@cabrini.edu)

The program Coach Ikeler will be running is in the style of the largest and most successful lesson program in the Philadelphia area for decades. It has conducted tens of thousands of lessons a year for decades to rave reviews. The technique for initially making youngsters safer in the water and then seamlessly integrating proper freestyle stroke and breathing has been refined from over 40 years of teaching all levels from toddler thru adult. But Swimfast Lessons will focus additionally on 2 ½ and 3 year olds that that program does not teach. All instructors will be trained in this self-developed technique that places an emphasis on results, not floats and games.

ABOUT the PROGRAM

The philosophy of the SwimFast Lessons program is to aggressively and lovingly build confidence by helping the nonswimmer confront fear head-on. One major goal is for the nonswimmer to eventually be comfortable around and then to enjoy the water. Results will be the first priority. Instructors will consist of graduate and undergraduate personnel with the swimmer-to-instructor ratio an ideal 5/1. Classes will run 45 minutes at a minimum. No floatation devices will be used.

FACILITIES

The swimming lessons will be conducted at the Dixon Center Pool located on Cabrini's Campus. GPS address: 610 King of Prussia Rd, Radnor, PA 19087. Follow [directions to campus](#).

Please use Upper Gulph Rd. entrance: **From Upper Gulph Road entrance:**

Once on campus, take first right into Dixon Center lot. Building is on your right as you enter lot. Walk straight through lobby to pool on left.

PARENTAL OBSERVATION OF LESSONS

As we did last year, we will be offering access before each two-week session to the registrant families to fixed camera pool observation. Except for the last two days of the session (more on this in your video orientation session prior start of lessons), **only registered kids will be allowed in the pool area itself**. Parents will be sent clear instructions on how this will work, so PLEASE make sure **your email addresses** are accurate as you enter them during the registration process.

Lessons are **Monday thru Friday, for 45 MINUTES**, AND RUN FOR TWO WEEKS.

(Cost: \$350 per child for the two weeks)

Session 1: May 15-26	starting times: 4,5,6,7PM	
Session 2: May 29-June 9	4,5,6,7PM	(Yes, we teach on Memorial Day)
Session 3: June 12-23	4,5,6,7PM	
Session 4: June 26-July 7*	4,5,6,7PM	(Yes, we teach on July 4 th)
Session 5: July 10-July 21	4,5,6,7PM	

Pre-requisite:

All registrants must be 30 months old and potty trained for four months by the first lesson. 2's and 3's will wear **two pairs** of water diapers; 4&5 year olds will wear 1 pair.

SKILL LEVELS

1) BEGINNER: This level is for **5 year olds down to 30 month olds ONLY**, who cannot at this point get themselves, unaided by adult or flotation device, across the pool (approx. 40 feet). If your child is 6 or older, do not sign up for this level. What we do with the younger beginner swimmers is not as effective on older beginners. A 6 or older beginner is a **NOVICE** in this program. The goal in the Beginner level is to get your child to jump in, surface on the back, swim across the pool, and grab the opposite wall--all without being touched by the teacher. Most beginners will achieve these skills in one, two-week session. Pre-requisite: All beginners must be 2 1/2 years old by the first day of lessons and potty trained.

2) Novice—This is for children who are **6 and older, but are absolute beginners**. By starting a little later than is ideal, there will be more resistance and fear at this level than in any other group. The going can be slow here (but will be slower every year that they are able to rationalize their fear), so hang in there; they need to be safe, too, and the going doesn't get easier, but harder the older they get.

Advanced Beginner: If your child cannot swim freestyle, breathing to the side for a distance of 40 feet or more, this is the level for you. We will evaluate all Advanced Beginners the first day to divide them into one of three categories (but you just choose Advanced Beginner at this point):

3) 5 and under Advanced Beginner—These are kids who are graduates of our Beginner program, and **can swim 40 feet successfully on their backs, but who have not yet developed a freestyle arm stroke**. These children will have their back swimming skills reinforced--this is their safety position--while gradually learning to roll over onto their front and take freestyle arm strokes. This way a natural rolling motion, rather than the head out style encouraged by dog paddle and flotation devices, will be used for them to breathe. And they'll always have their back swimming skills for self rescue.

4) High End Advanced Beginner--Kids of **any age who can demonstrate some semblance of the arm-over-arm freestyle motion, but who do not yet incorporate breathing to the side** without having to stop their arm stroke to get a breath. Breathing straight up out of the water, causing the legs to drop and the swimmer to work harder to move forward, is a result of early use of flotation devices and dog paddle, and needs to be "unlearned" at this point. But to move on to Intermediate, rhythmic breathing to the side must be mastered at least the width of the pool (approx. 40 feet).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the cost?

For the 45 minute classes, running Monday through Friday for two consecutive weeks the cost per child is \$350. There are no discounts for multiple child families, but we DO have partial refunds if withdrawn by the end of the first Wednesday's class of that session (see Refund Policy below)

Is this where they throw the kids in the first day?

NOBODY DOES THAT. Competitors have spread that rumor for years. If you heard that, it was from someone who hasn't been in the program. However, we also are not here to put floats on the kids and play games. We don't want to get the kids more likely to jump in when you're not looking, but unable to save themselves if they do. And they won't control the pace of the lessons. We have a set of steps and techniques that must follow a certain progression for us to get the youngsters across the pool on their own in two weeks, and we'll keep moving. Your time, money, and most importantly your child's safety are too important for us to do otherwise.

Do I get in the water?

No, you'll be off the pool deck, most likely in the parking lot. We would actually get less done, especially with the very young ones, if you were more present than that. However, if you get your youngster in the water somewhere else during the two week period, that would be great. BUT DON'T PUSH--we'll do that here; you just let them have fun and reinforce that aspect of acclimation.

How many sessions do you recommend for beginners?

One two-week session should do it, but most—especially the youngest-- benefit from a second, two-week session for the confidence to “catch-up” to the skill level they attained in the first session. Remember, the large majority will be swimming in two weeks because we go at a pace that they can handle, but might resist. We want to get them safe first; another sign-up helps them settle into that pace and relax a little more in the water.

What if my child is upset?

If you have a beginner--any age, but especially 5 and under--there will be resistance. Expect that. And remind yourself that we have been effectively dealing with all levels of fear and resistance for decades. The younger they are, the more they depend on fussing to get their point across. We'll work with that. They'll fuss about being away from you, being with a stranger, or just about not wanting to do what they're being told, even before the natural fear level kicks in. For most of them this is when they'll learn that you do some things even if you don't want to. But they'll come out of it **stronger, more self-confident**, and most importantly **safer** than when they began.

What if my child doesn't want to come back?

Drowning is the leading cause of unexpected death for 5 and unders in this country. That may sound melodramatic, but it's true--it is a very real threat that we're looking to minimize by getting the youngsters safer in the water. A normal kid--a normal adult--is going to have to face and conquer fear. But when there's an immanent threat, we need to work through it NOW. We'll work with that; We've had great success working thousands of fearful kids through that; you work on being resolute at home that lessons will continue until your youngster is safe. Positively reinforce what we've been doing for three decades successfully, and come in for a pep talk if you need it. It is absolutely normal for this to be harder on a Mom or Dad than the little ones that we're empowering. But know this: it won't be easier next year--every year older without getting safe in the water increases the resistance and fear level. Stick with it--you'll be glad you did, while possibly preventing an unspeakable loss.

How young do you take them?

The children must be at least 30 months and potty trained for four months by the first day of lessons.

Can my two kids be in the same class?

Same hour, yes. Same class of 5, not likely. We will evaluate the youngsters the first day according to skill level, and sometimes even age and size, and then put them in groups of like individuals. But if you have two of your own in the same class and don't think that will work well (you know that better than we), talk to the program director or supervisory staff, and we'll evaluate more closely.

I can't make my registered time this Wednesday. Can I come to a different time that day?

No. Sorry, the only time we'll do a make-up is if for some reason the pool is closed on a particular day. Once the classes are set, that's it. We won't put strays into your child's small class, and we won't do that the other way around. Get to the pool as many times as possible in the two weeks, and we'll get as much accomplished--and often more--than any other lesson program in the greater Philadelphia area.

If my child has a cold and can't make it for a day, can I make that class up?

No, Sorry. See above.

My child is 5 and doesn't fit into most water diapers. What do I do?

First, don't wait until right before the lessons start to ask this. You might want to have them delivered. But if you google "swim diapers for older kids", you should find plenty of options—both disposable and re-useable types.

****NOTICE: ALL 2-5 YEAR OLDS MUST WEAR WATER PANTS** (actually 2 pair for the 2's and 3's). This is regardless of skill level and it is a safeguard against waterborne illness. 5 and unders who come to lessons without the above will be returned to their parents (this situation is NOT eligible for refund other than the conditions stated above in the partial refund policy). This is also in the Waiver Information signed off on before registration is complete.

Suggestions: Splashers and Little Swimmers are fine as are most products that are designed for water and create a tight fit around waist and thighs:

Please, please, please don't assume that your "potty trained" 4 or 5 year old is exempt—no one is exempt. We're in the business of keeping your youngsters safe—both in the water and from the water.

I don't need absorbency, just **containment, but they can't be porous**, so we can clean up in the bathroom, not the pool. We just can't do the job if we keep having to clear the pool.

Suggestions in communicating with your youngster:

- Don't call them diapers! They're swim lesson water pants that are required at this pool only.
- This is what you wear at lessons—nowhere else.
- Babies wear diapers; these are swim pants.

Additionally: The second time a cleanup needs to be done outside the pool, and the first time a cleanup needs to be done inside the pool in relation to solid waste is criteria for immediate dismissal from the program without refund. And this would apply to the remainder of the season. If a dismissal is necessary and the child is signed up for an additional two-week session, that future session would be refunded in full. The pre-requisite for this program, as parents sign off on with the waiver information, is 30 months old and potty trained.

Refund Policy and Change of Sessions (also in waiver information)

Once registration has been logged, there is a non-refundable registration fee of \$150. If a child is withdrawn from lessons at any time and for any reason, including illness or injury, from the initial registration until the end of the assigned class session on the first Wednesday, \$200 will be refunded. By the end of that first Wednesday's class, Coach Rudisill will need an e-mail from the parent or guardian. Absent that e-mail, the books close on that session at the end of the first Wednesday's class. After that point there will be no partial refunds of any kind. Please note: injury or illness after that first Wednesday cut-off will NOT yield a refund, and we don't do make-ups. These are very small classes, offered at the specific times you register for. We'll be here throughout; you just need to make as many of the ten lessons as possible. All classes will be full—there's NO WAY to do make-ups. This policy is firm. Please don't ask for refunds past the deadline above, and if you miss a class, please don't ask for make-ups.

If you want to **CHANGE** your session and/or time before it begins, to another, open class, there is no charge. But **there is a deadline**. E-mail the program director, Coach Rudisill, swimfastlessons@gmail.com, and give your child's name, session and skill level, and that that you wish to change to, and he will e-mail you back once the change has been made. **This must be done before noon on the Wednesday preceding the start of the session** you originally registered for. We do not offer make-up lessons or partial credits for missed lessons, unless for some reason we need to cancel lessons ourselves. In this instance a canceled lesson will be given at the same time but on the first Saturday following cancellation (if a small amount of "lost" time cannot be made up by lengthening remaining classes until you're whole).