



WATERBABIES

PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING BABIES

The earlier we can introduce a baby to an underwater environment, the less stress and more in harmony the child feels about his aquatic abilities and his relationship with his parents. Swimming can be a positive experience that contributes to the total development of the child. We are dedicated to the goal of teaching non-stressful swimming in lessons surrounded by experiences of enjoyment and success!

Here are **five** of the many **advantages** of baby swim lessons:

- ✓ *Safety of knowing how to swim*
- ✓ *Emotional bonding from skin to skin contact between parent-child*
- ✓ *Prevention of aqua phobia (fear of water)*
- ✓ *Recreational benefits (uninterrupted time between parent and child)*
- ✓ *Exercise of all major muscle groups*

It's important to know that each child will achieve these benefits according to his or her own unique schedule. This individual schedule will be governed by the increasing comfort the baby feels in the water as a result of the enjoyment she or he experiences with the songs, games and activities played in swim lessons.

GOALS OF WATER BABIES

- Improve Emotional Bonding of Parent and Child
- Achieve Water Adaptation
- Master Seven Basic Swim Skills
 1. Stomach Position
 2. Back Position
 3. Kicking
 4. Submerging
 5. Swimming
 6. Rolling Over
 7. Getting A Breath

Positive Points To Taking Year Round

Why parents of Water Babies continue with year-round swim lessons is no mystery. There are simply too many positives associated with babies in organized swim lessons.

- **Babies** with swim skills are better equipped to avoid the leading cause of accidental death in children – drowning!
- **Babies** who swim have improved cardiovascular fitness due to exercise that is not restricted by gravity.
- **Babies** who swim move bilaterally which improves coordination and balance.
- **Warm** water, combined with gentle exercise, relaxes and stimulates babies' appetites causing improved sleeping and eating habits.
- **Early** mastery of swimming gives babies a head start in swim skills while allowing their self confidence and independence to blossom.
- **Babies** flourish in the focused attention that their parents lavish on them during swim time. Hectic schedules make these moments precious!

WATER BABIES SWIMMING AROUND THE WORLD

Other countries, not the United States, pioneered aquatic education for infants. To most Polynesians, swimming was not a skill that had to be taught but rather an inborn ability that only required encouragement to bring it into full bloom.

The Australians were the first to recognize the safety benefits of teaching babies to swim. In recent years, however, the harsher 'drown-proof' methods have given way to a gentler approach. German experts promoted infant swimming after researchers collected evidence that proved that early swimmers tested higher in social, academic and motor development. Soviet specialists discovered newborns that spent extensive amounts of time in the water excelled in a variety of areas due to their adaptation to the weightless effect of water.

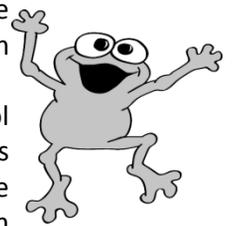
In the late 1960s, baby swimming finally made its way to the U.S. Our contribution to baby lessons was discovering that a gentle approach to swimming is very valuable in shaping a healthy emotional relationship between parent and child. It has taken a number of countries, aquatic professionals and research studies to develop today's baby swim lessons, which are both nurturing and effective!

Games and songs are crucial to successful baby swim lessons. They increase the babies' emotional comfort by providing familiarity and routine. Likewise, the short tasks practiced in the circuit stations keep the babies involved in simple, but necessary skills. Each one serves a purpose and we encourage you as a Water Baby parent to learn from us what they are as we progress through the curriculum each session.

WHO TEACHES WATER BABIES AT SWIMMALEY

WaterBabies instructors are chosen for their unquenchable love for children. They become eligible to begin training to teach the Linda Maley WaterBabies Curriculum® only upon successful completion of the initial instructor training process.

The general Water Babies curriculum, which is certified by the United States Swim School Association (USSSA), was first written in 1970 and is updated annually. Our WaterBabies instructors participate in ongoing education throughout the year to help ensure that we fulfill our commitment to being on the leading edge of infant and baby aquatic education in the state of Mississippi.



ONCE THE BABY'S SWIMMING...WHAT'S NEXT

Your responsibilities don't decrease once you've gotten your baby swimming. Year-round lessons will keep your baby from forgetting his or her swim skills. Pediatricians are concerned that parents of swimming babies will not keep up the safety skills and will assume that their babies are still safe in the water. If you stop your lessons, your child will immediately begin the process of forgetting the skills they have mastered. Winter and Spring lessons are great at SwimMaley because the water is warm and the crowds are small. Remember, you may consider swimming to be seasonal, but drowning is not! Learn about our water safety partner, The Safer3 (safer3.org). Swim skills are no substitute for parental supervision. Keep visual contact with your children at all times near water hazards. If you read a magazine, close your eyes to sunbathe, or run inside for a drink, your supervision has lapsed. It only takes a minute for a child to drown, and it's usually a silent death. If you have a backyard pool, build a layer of protection to ensure your child's safety. Have alarms, use safety covers and fence the pool from the house. Also be sure you and all caregivers know CPR and are strong enough swimmers to retrieve a child from the bottom of the pool.