



## AQUATICS PROGRAMS PARENT HANDBOOK



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## Welcome!

The Canada Games Centre (CGC) Aquatics Team is happy to welcome you to our swim lessons. We know your child(ren) will not only learn new swimming skills, but also have fun doing it! The Parent Handbook contains pool deck policies and helpful information about our swim lessons and aquatic programs.

Based on the internationally recognized Swim to Survive standard aligned with the Sport for Life model, the Lifesaving Society's Swim for Life Program focuses on basic survival skills and proper swimming technique – fun from day one! Swim for Life starts by developing strong foundational and self-rescue skills and progresses by challenging swimmers to develop stronger swimming strokes. Success oriented and fun for the entire family, there is something for everyone in the Swim for Life program.

## General Information

**Canada Games Centre Address:** 26 Thomas Raddall Drive, Halifax, NS

**Facility Hours:** Monday-Friday: 5:30am-10pm; Saturday-Sunday: 7am-9pm  
(Hours subject to change; please visit our website for updates)

**CGC Customer Service Desk:** 902.490.2400 ext. 7

**Aquatics Program Supervisor Email:** [aquaadmin@canadagamescentre.ca](mailto:aquaadmin@canadagamescentre.ca)

## Program Age Groups

At the Canada Games Centre, our swim lessons are organized by program level and participant age.

- **Parent and Tot Programs** consist of three age-based levels for children ranging from *4 months to 3.5 years*.
- **Preschool Programs** are made up of five levels for participants between the ages of *3-5 years*.
- **School-Age Programs** for children aged *5 years and over*. Throughout these levels, participants will start by learning the fundamentals of swimming through to stroke progressions and water rescues.
- **Teen Programs** are for participants *11 to 15 years old*, who have never taken swim lessons before and would like to build their swimming skills.

## Program Size Ratios

Our class size ratios are based on those recommended by the Lifesaving Society's Swim for Life Program. These ratios are for one certified instructor per class. By providing an additional instructor we're able to increase these ratios without compromising your child's experience.

Lifesaving Swim for Life Programs	Recommended	Our Maximum
Parent & Tot	10-12 participants	8-10 participants
Preschool	4-6 participants	5 participants
Swimmer 1 & 2	6-8 participants	5 participants
Swimmer 3	8-10 participants	6-7 participants
Swimmer 4, 5, 6, 7 (Rookie), 8 (Ranger) & 9 (Star)	10-12 participants	8-10 participants



## Aquatics Support Staff

During swim lesson times, you'll see a variety of staff on deck. Allow us to introduce ourselves!

### Aquatic Program Supervisor

The Aquatic Program Supervisor is responsible for lesson related issues, concerns, feedback, and ensures overall instructor development through mentoring & coaching.

**What they wear:** Blue CGC polo

### Aquatic Program Specialist

The Aquatic Program Specialist (APS) oversees instructor mentoring and development. With an overall focus on program quality, they are also responsible for assisting with class control and dynamics. The APS reports to the Aquatic Program Supervisor.

**What they wear:** Blue CGC polo

### Float Instructor

The Float Instructor may appear as a second instructor during class; however, this is not always the case. The key role of the Float Instructor is to provide support and coaching for the instructor.

**What they wear:** Blue CGC pinny/tank top

### Instructors

This is the face you will see most often! Our instructors plan and execute safe and fun lessons for participants for all 9 weeks of lessons. All instructors have taken the extensive Lifesaving Society Swim for Life Instructor course.

**What they wear:** Blue CGC pinny/tank top

### Lifeguards

The Lifeguard Team is responsible for the overall pool safety and operations in the pool area. The team ensures that posted safety rules and policies are being enforced. They also keep the pool organized, ensuring that all programs happily co-exist without disruption.

**What they wear:** Red CGC pinny/tank top

## CGC Swim Academy Coaches

The Swim Academy Coaches are experienced in coaching quality sport programs to children of various ages and abilities. All CGC coaches hold a National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) level coaching certification (or equivalent) in their respective sports, as well as High Five and Fundamental Movements training.

**What they wear:** Black CGC coaching shirt

## Program Expectations

### What to Bring to Your Swim Lesson/Program

- **Appropriate bathing attire:** Bathing suit, swim trunks, or snug fit athletic clothing. Swim trunks or athletic shorts must have a built-in liner.
- **Previous report card:** Bringing this to the first or second lesson (even if the report card is from a different pool or program) can help the instructor tailor the lesson plan more specifically to the needs of the participants.
- **Program Access Card:** non-members are required to bring their Program Access Card for every lesson. This will give you access to the facility during lesson time and eliminate having to check-in at the Customer Service Desk. Program Access Cards can be used from one programming session to the next as they reload with your new programs when you sign-up. If you have yet to receive a card, they are available from the Customer Service Desk.
- **Towel:** Nothing better than wrapping up in a warm towel after a swim lesson.
- **Lock:** When storing items in the lockers during the lesson, we recommend bringing a lock to help secure your items.

## Pick Up & Drop Off

In line with the general age policies at the Canada Games Centre, we ask that participants, parents, and guardians (18+ years) adhere to the following age policies:

- Participants who are **11 years of age and younger** needs to be accompanied by a parent/guardian to the pool deck and are encouraged to stay on the pool deck throughout the lesson.
- Participants ages **12 years and older** can enter the building without a parent/guardian.

## Change Rooms

Our Family/Universal, Men's Wet and Women's Wet [Change Rooms](#) will be available for swim lessons.

## Participant Expectations

Below we outline the expectations for all participants enrolled in aquatic programs. All programs take place in a busy aquatic environment where the safety of all participants is our priority. We also outline what you can expect from our staff. Please take a minute to review these policies.

## CGC Aquatics Program Guidelines

### Respect for Property:

- Please respect CGC property and other participants' belongings.
- The CGC is not responsible for lost or stolen items such as: cell phones, laptops, travel DVD players, gaming systems, iPods, money, wallets/purses, jewellery, etc.

## Behavioural Guidelines

### Respectful Language:

- Profanity and foul language will not be tolerated.
- Verbal harassment/bullying of any kind will not be tolerated. If these behaviors are continuous and/or excessive the participant may be removed from Aquatic Programs.



### Providing a Safe Space:

- Participants should be aware of others' personal space and boundaries and respect them when others verbalize their limits.
- Participation in program activities is expected. Children may not be unattended in program spaces.
- Participants will follow pool deck policies, and the directions of instructors and lifeguards.

The following guidelines may be used if a child is unwilling to participate or cooperate while in swim lessons:

- Limits will be set and enforced consistently and fairly.
- A brief break period may sometimes be required when a participant is distraught and/or emotional. The participant may be removed from the activity for a period of quiet time to cool down. They will remain under supervision and will not be placed outside program parameters, or in harm's way.
- Reinforcement of positive behavior will be used at all times. Staff are encouraged to refrain from simply saying *no*, but rather explain why something should or should not be done.
- Staff will assist participants in resolving conflicts that arise and redirect participants to another activity before issues may occur.
- Parents will be contacted if behavioral problems persist, and the next course of action taken will be at the discretion of the Aquatics Program Supervisor.

A participant will be removed from the Aquatics Program for the day or session if excessive and inappropriate language, harassment, or bullying is continuous and/or excessive.

### Disciplinary Guidelines

Participants who continue to disrupt aquatic programs, are disrespectful to other participants or staff, or bullies others **after** the above corrective measures have been taken to stop or deter inappropriate behaviour, will be subject to the below consequences.

These will be issued at the discretion of the Aquatic Program Leadership Staff and will be discussed thoroughly with parents/guardians.

**First Warning:** The participant will be taken aside and spoken to about their behaviour. It will be explained that the behaviour must not continue, why it is



not acceptable during programs, and further consequences if the behaviour continues. At the end of the lesson parents/guardians will be made aware that a verbal warning was issued.

**Second Warning:** If the same behaviour continues, the child will be removed from the program to discuss with the Lesson Supervisor and a parent/guardian why the unacceptable behaviour is continuing. This meeting will be documented, and parents/guardians will be given a written copy of what was discussed. The parents/guardians will be required to sign off to acknowledge that a staff member spoke with them about their child's continued behavioural challenges.

**Final Warning/Dismissal:** After the above attempts have been made to address the behavioural concerns of a participant, the participant will be removed from the program. This will occur after a meeting with the Aquatic Program Supervisor and Aquatic Program Coordinator, the participant and/or the participant's parents/guardians. A refund will not be given for the remainder of the session, and any additional programs for which the participant is registered will be subject to our cancellation policy.

Depending on the severity of the inappropriate behaviour, the participant may not be allowed to participate in future activities and/or programs hosted by the Canada Games Centre.

**Automatic Dismissals:** Should a participant partake in any of the following types of behaviour, immediate dismissal from the program may occur. Participants may be automatically dismissed for any other extreme behaviour that staff deems unacceptable and unable to be corrected:

- Physical violence/harassment/bullying. Less serious incidents will be dealt with using the above-mentioned disciplinary methods, but in extreme cases, automatic dismissal may occur.
- Violent and inappropriate language directed at any participant or staff.
- Drugs (unless otherwise prescribed by a physician) and alcohol of any kind consumed before or during any CGC Program.

## Aquatics Centre Guidelines

### Pool Deck Policies

Please help us to maintain a safe and clean pool deck for everyone by remembering these few rules:

- Dangerous practices are prohibited. Patrons must not run on the pool deck; climb slide stair railings; jump from the hot tub edge; dive in shallow water (less than 9ft deep); swim in diving areas; double bounce or crowd diving boards; dunk, push, pull or unnecessarily splash other swimmers.
- Instructions and emergency procedures from lifeguards must be followed. Swimmers must leave the pool area immediately upon hearing a double or triple whistle blast from a lifeguard.
- Outdoor footwear, clothing and strollers are **not** permitted on the pool deck.
- Proper swim attire is **required**. Cut off shorts, underwear, sports bras, boxers and loose-fitting clothing like t-shirts are not acceptable swimwear.
- Food, beverages, or any breakable items are NOT permitted in the pool area. Please discard chewing gum in garbage receptacle before entering the pool.
- Anyone not toilet trained must wear water resistant swimwear to prevent contamination of the pool. Cloth or disposable diapers are not accepted.
- Personal toys (including puddle jumpers and mermaid tails), monofins, snorkels, and/or aquatics masks are NOT allowed. Should you or your child need flotation support for the pools, we have lifejackets, PFDs, and flotation belts onsite, simply ask a lifeguard.
- All patrons MUST rinse off before entering the pool. Persons with open cuts, sores, bandages, colds, coughs or infected eyes are NOT permitted in the pool.
- Spitting, spouting or nose-blowing in the pool is strictly prohibited.
- Animals are not allowed in the building or pool area, with the exception of guide dogs. Guide dogs are allowed on deck, but not in the water.
- The use of camera/video enabled devices is strictly prohibited in change rooms and washrooms. In all other areas of the facility, use of these devices is allowed provided it is for personal use only, does not disrupt the activity of others, and is in accordance with the [CGC User Code of Conduct](#) and posted Safety Standards. Please be respectful of others: avoid capturing others in the background of photos and make phone calls/send texts in the hallways.
- Written permission from the CGC is required prior to capturing any images or video for professional or commercial use within the facility.

## Additional Information

### Instructor Requests

Did you know you can request an instructor by name? While this is not a guarantee, if they are available the day you are registered, it is likely your request will be met. If you would like a *firm* or *warm* type of instructor, you can request that too! You can also request for the lesson to be taught in a different language. While our resources may be somewhat limited, we might be able to accommodate your request.

To make these types of requests:

- When you register online, a pop-up for **any special notes** will show up. Simply type your request in the box provided.
- If registering in person, be sure to let Customer Service know of your request, which will be submitted along with your registration.

### Swimmer 1 Advanced

Swimmer 1 Advanced do not fall into the existing flow of the Lifesaving Society's Swim for Life program. We've created them to help participants who are missing only a couple skills to fully complete Swimmer 1. If your child receives an incomplete for Swimmer 1 and depending on the skills needed to complete the level, the instructor may suggest moving onto Swimmer 1 Advanced for the following session.

### Swim Lesson Registration

If a section time is full when you attempt to register, please check back again to see if anything becomes available, as we are no longer able to offer waitlists.



## Meeting Signs

Where should participants go once on deck? When exiting the change rooms head to the left corner of the pool deck where we have signs posted for each level. The Instructors will meet participants there.

On the first night of a Private Lesson or Aquatic sports program, participants will be directed where to meet via a sandwich board on deck. Private and Advanced courses (Bronze Star; Bronze Medallion; Bronze Cross) signs are posted beside the lifeguard office.

## Lost & Found

It is your responsibility to keep any belongings together and safe, either keeping them with you or making use of our day use lockers. When the building closes at night, a sweep is done, any unclaimed items are collected and discarded.

## Questions?

Still have questions about programs? Contact our Aquatics Team at [aquaadmin@canadagamescentre.ca](mailto:aquaadmin@canadagamescentre.ca).