

TRAVIS COUNTRY SHARKS

Age Group Parents Guide

The best position and the best kids

This Guide is to always be a work in progress. It should hold little and big suggestions plus guidance to help any Age Group Parent traverse the Swim Team Season with more efficient strokes and end the Season with a strong KICK!!

First Suggestion: Have Fun with the kids and other parents. If you're not enjoying it—take a “Get Out of Jail Free Card” and don't do it. Talk to the volunteer coordinator and let yourself find a position that actually makes the meet FUN for you while still helping contribute to the team.

Okay, Onward ---- to hopefully “helpful” things that should make some things clearer and easier.

Age Group Parent Positions and Lines of Communication:

AGE GROUP PARENT COORDINATOR: This person coordinates all the Head Age Group Parents and forms e-mail/ phone trees to get information/resources (i.e. rain delays) directly too the Age Group Parents, who can then pass it on to the Swimmers Parents. This person also gets the Heat Sheets, Relay Sheets, Event Sheets, Clip Boards, and Markers to the Age Group Parents ASAP before the start of the meet. They take responsibility for the pick-up and storing in the Shark Shack of all the above stated materials at the end of each meet. The UT Meets this person needs to make sure to bring all these materials to and fro. This person also will communicate Age Group Parent needs, concerns, issues to the Volunteer Coordinator and Swim Team Board.

HEAD AGE GROUP PARENT: Each Age Group will designate a Head Age Group Parent. This person will be the main person to communicate with Ready Bench, Coaches and their Age Group Parents as well as the Swimmers Parents. This person is responsible to get scratches, add-ins and relays information correctly to and from the Coach then onto Ready Bench and their Age Group Parents. The computer operator should also be notified of add-ins and scratches. Head Age Group Parent will also coordinate their Age Group Parents to make sure enough age group parents are present at each meet to cover the needs of the swimmers.

AGE GROUP PARENT: Age Group Parents are the heart and soul of the swim team organization. They carry the responsibility of making sure all the kids are in the right place- at the right time- to swim their event while also serving as main cheerleader, assistant coach, entertainment committee and protective barrier against “Missing Children's” or “APD Most Wanted posters” popping up in Travis Country. Therefore the Age Group Parent sits in the designated Age Group Area with their swimmers at all times except for when escorting their swimmers to Ready Bench or assisting swimmers at

their event. The newest and most important responsibility added to Age Group Parents is that they are now responsible for getting the swimmers to their appropriate lane, heat and LEG starting position for ALL Relays. Age Group Parents must still go to ready bench and stay in appropriate positions as they work up to their starting positions. But Age Group Parents will be the persons in charge of knowing and placing correct swimmers into correct stand up positions. THANK YOU AGE GROUP PARENTS FOR HOW EXCELLENT YOU HAVE BEEN AT THIS!!!

COACH PAUL REQUEST: All Head Age Group Parents please talk to Paul before moving a swimmer from your relays alternate's list into a A, B or C relay position. Gracias! ☺

Other Suggested AGE GROUP PARENT positions/tasks:

Check-in/Check-out person--This Age Group Parent takes the Event Sheet, which has All their swimmers names listed on it and has each swimmers parent sign their children in/out when they check in, go to restroom, concessions or leave the meet. (If anybody gives you grief about this remember-- "No TC Swimmers on the Back of Milk Cartons Please!")

Body Artist: This person takes Sharpie markers to their highest art form by listing each swimmers name, events, heat, lane that they swim on their right arm where kids can see them. Additionally team logos, mottos, etc. may be added for additional pride and kick. (NO ARTISTIC PRIOR EXPERIENCE or TALENT REQUIRED ☺)

HELPFUL HINTS and IDEAS:

Heat Sheets and Relay Sheets:

Look for emails late Friday night or Early Sat. prior to meet. Computer Ops and Coach will try to get them out to the The AGE GROUP COORDINATOR and that person will send them out to the Head Age Group Parent/Age Group Parents. Then print and bring them with you to the meet.

For Ready Bench:

When first escorting kids to the Ready Bench give Scratches and Add-ins to the Head Ready Bench Contact. Keep diligent with this throughout meet.

***ALL ADD-IN's , SCRATCHES, ETC. are to be written on the Head Ready Bench Contact's table. (This is located in between the basketball court and loading area for Ready Bench) Head RB Contact will then communicate this information to Timers, Judges, Computer and Ready Bench)

Make sure to bring Goggles, Swim Caps, etc. to ready bench with you. Check if swimmers have these items upon first lining up for Ready Bench placement. AVOID last

minute needs, (i.e. goggles, bathroom, etc.) when sitting on Ready Benches and approaching starts.

Keep Swimmers in their age group areas until CALLED to Ready Bench. We are trying to avoid chaos and mass number of swimmers gathering behind ready benches this year. It also keeps the kids fresher and more relaxed before their swim. THANKS! ☺

FUN NEW POPSICLE LANE # STICKS for our small but mighty Shark swimmers to hold onto while being lined up for LOADING onto Ready Benches. The Loading Ready Bench person will give the kids their sticks when they move to the benches to be SEATED. SWEET!!!! ☺ They will hold and carry them until they are in their lane positions where the Lane Ready Bench person will collect them after ensuring that all children are in the heat and lane indicated on their stick (each heat has a different color stick with numbers 1 through 6 indicating the lane).

13 years and older swimmers must come to Ready Bench! We know you older swimmers can keep track of yourselves and get to the pool on time, what you forget is that it is not about you. We need you in your places at ready bench to keep the system working so that other swimmers don't get accidentally put into the wrong event/heat because their was a blank position over looked. We have hundreds of young swimmers from visiting, as well as home team, to try and keep organized. Have pity on us yee' independent minded 13and over swimmers!!

The First Three Heats of Relays are asked to be sitting in the Lane chairs and Standing at their lanes before the National Anthem is sung so that the MEET /First Event and Heat can begin IMMEDIATELY.

Clean up and trash:

Have kids have competitions to see who can pick up the most trash in your area. Offer a special picture drawn on their back or concession token for the winner.

Make sure to use the Sharpie Markers to put each swimmers name in their T-shirt and if possible on there goggles, etc.

Come up with creative way to inspire group to not leave their items behind. Again perhaps a competition or reward for whole group if their spot is left with no items or trash behind.

We also need all food to be kept and eaten on the GRASS. Make it TEAM PRIDE to keep courts and pool area cleaner than it was when we started. (literally we need to keep the TC Swim Board and TC Board supporting us and show we can keep all areas clean and well cared for. SHARK PRIDE—GREAT WHITES LOVE TO EAT TRASH!!!)

Snacks, Games, Books:

Encourage parents of swimmers and kids to bring interactive type games such as beach towel checkers, legos, bionicles, drawing paper and pens, etc to entertain kids while they wait to swim their events.

Encourage parents to send water bottles, protein or carb based snacks.

Encourage parents to send TWO towels with swimmers. One to sit on and one for drying off.

Encourage LOTS of sunscreen, lip sunscreen and other sun protection to keep kids out of “the PINK” for the season. Applying a layer of sunscreen before leaving home is always helpful.

Helpfully remind visitors, observers and cheering section to keep the area behind timers chairs and rope clear at ALL times. The walk way is on the grass behind the rope.

This Guide is a support and help tool for Age Group Parents present and future. This is our first draft. We have the best Age Group Parents a team could ever dream of. Age Group parents past and present thank you for all you do. Please write in more suggestions, encouragement and helpful ideas.

Thank you all for your contributions to this Guide.
Hope Young, TC Volunteer Coordinator