

Swim safer

With
Julia Ham

FIND out why getting involved in your local swim club can help young families.

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Get in the water and find yourself

IF you live in a neighbourhood with a school or a community pool, then chances are you have the opportunity to join a local swim club and become involved in one of Australia's most popular sports.

Swim clubs are not-for-profit organisations that are normally either run by volunteers (usually parents of swimmers) or operated through a swim school.

Swim clubs have weekly meets (often in the evening), and provide a forum for swimmers to race against other swimmers of comparable ability.

The emphasis of these races is not on winning the race, but rather on swimmers achieving their personal best (PB).

Swim clubs are traditionally a place for kids doing swim classes, or who are training with a squad, to get some competition racing experience.

These days a local swim club offers a range of events to suit all ages and

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abilities. Just about anyone can join in the fun.

The only prerequisite is the ability to swim (anyway and anyhow!) up to 12.5m.

Involvement in a swim club provides a motivation for a swimmer taking swim classes or training with a squad to keep improving by giving them an opportunity to practise in a race situation the techniques and skills learnt in these classes/squads.

Joining a swim club is also a great way to make friends with other kids who attend local schools or the local swim school.

Swimming is a proven form of exercise for staying healthy and active, and for improving overall fitness levels.

Apart from the physical benefits, the competition available through a swim club provides a terrific op-

portunity to build the self esteem of a child.

No matter what the performances at the season start, improvement as the season progresses is almost guaranteed. Whether it be graduating from a 25m swimmer to a 50m swimmer, learning to dive from the blocks correctly, or bettering a personal best time.

Your child will feel great about doing their best and seeing improvement in their results.

Swim club membership is comparatively inexpensive - a season fee is usually around \$100 (which covers insurance and administration costs).

So, get involved in your local swim club, and take advantage of all the things that swimming at the grass roots level has to offer.

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