



# Parent Handbook

**2020 - 2021**

This handbook was created to support and inform all levels of swimmers and parents by outlining all applicable policies, guidelines and procedures, unless otherwise specified. We hope this handbook assists our swimmers to be successful and have a great season.

Please note that the information in this handbook is subject to change if there are any discrepancies between executive motions or coaches decisions and the policies and procedures defined in the handbook, the most recent executive motion will take precedence.

This handbook is aligned with the Canadian Artistic Swimming (CAS) A Parent's Guide to Artistic Swimming.

Please refer to:

York Artistic Swimming Club website [www.yorksynchro.com](http://www.yorksynchro.com) often for updates, a calendar of events, and other resources you may find helpful. Also, join the York Artistics Swimming Club Facebook page or Instagram page.

For any questions or concerns please contact [inquiry@yorksynchro.com](mailto:inquiry@yorksynchro.com).

**Please refer to the YASC Policy & Procedure Manual  
for more detailed information**

# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TRUE SPORT</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>OUR MISSION, VISION &amp; VALUES</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>10 COMMANDMENTS FOR YORK ARTISTIC SWIMMING CLUB PARENTS</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>WHO'S WHO</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>YORK ARTISTIC SWIMMING CLUB HISTORY</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>WHY ARTISTIC SWIMMING?</b>	<b>10</b>
The Physical Benefits of Artistic Swimming	10
The Social Benefits of Artistic Swimming	11
The Physiological Benefits of Artistic Swimming	11
<b>DID YOU KNOW?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>REQUIRED EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY</b>	<b>14</b>
Black Out Period	14
Vacation and Extended Absences	15
Practice Cancellations	15
Concussion Awareness	15
<b>TEAMS</b>	<b>15</b>
ALTERNATES	16
EXTRA ROUTINES	16
<b>PARENT INVOLVEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>TRAINING</b>	<b>17</b>
Land Drill	17
Dry-Land Training	17
Stretching	18
Swimming Drills	18
Nutrition	18

<b>COMPETITIONS</b>	<b>19</b>
Handling Disappointment	19
<b>SCORING IN A NUTSHELL</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>MOVING UP THE RANKS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>SYNCHRO GELLING HAIR INSTRUCTIONS</b>	<b>22</b>
Hair Preparation:	22
Gel Preparation/Application:	23
Supplies list:	24
YouTube link for how to do a bun & gel hair: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tljtD49-b2o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tljtD49-b2o</a>	24
<b>WHAT TO EXPECT AT A COMPETITION</b>	<b>24</b>
What to bring...	24
Before the competition...	25
Make-up...	25
The warm-up and spacing...	25
The competition...	25
Awards...	25

## TRUE SPORT

York Artistic Swimming is aligned with the TRUE SPORTS Movement. We vow to live up to the seven principles TRUE SPORT represents, cultivating a healthy and positive sport experience for all athletes.



## OUR MISSION, VISION & VALUES

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

York Artistic Swimming Club is committed to developing, promoting and supporting the pursuit of excellence, in artistic swimming at all levels.

### **VISION**

York Artistic Swimming Club's focus on continuous improvement and positivity while having fun will create and inspire success. This vision will support a steadfast commitment and longevity within York Artistic Swimming Club.



### **VALUES**

**HEALTHY LIFESTYLE:** Artistic swimming instills a love of physical activity that contributes to the health and happiness of all who participate. A positive and encouraging environment that promotes mental health as much as physical health.

**LIFE SKILLS:** Goal-setting, discipline, perseverance, and lessons about competing with integrity, winning fairly and losing gracefully are skills that are valuable in all aspects of life.

**BUILDING CAPACITY:** Pursuing learning and reaching goals in the company of others creates a sense of community and willingness to give back to one's larger community.

**CREATIVITY/INNOVATION:** The collaborating process between coach and athlete, with parental support, water and movement is integral to innovative physical and aesthetic self-expression.

**EXCELLENCE:** Excellence is being the best swimmer, competitor, coach, official, administrator or leader you can be.

### **ETHICS/RESPECT**

We welcome and encourage diversity and respect for all aspects and perspectives and demand responsible, ethical and accountable behavior from all.

## 10 COMMANDMENTS FOR YORK ARTISTIC SWIMMING CLUB

### PARENTS

**I. Thou shalt not impose thy ambitions on thy child.** Remember that artistic swimming is your child's activity. Improvements and progress occur at different rates for each individual. Don't judge your child's progress based on the performance of other athletes and don't push them based on what you think they should be doing.

**II. Thou shalt be supportive no matter what.** It is important that you pledge to help your child fulfill his/her commitment to YASC and their team by keeping abreast of information getting him/her to competitions and practices on time and notifying the coaches of absences and any medical conditions. There is only one question to ask your child after a practice or a competition - "Did you have fun?"

**III. Thou shalt not coach thy child.** You are involved in one of the few youth sports programs that offer professional coaching, do not undermine the professional coach by trying to coach your child on the side. Your job is to provide love and support and a safe place to return at the end of the day. Love and hug your child, no matter what. The coach is responsible for the technical part of the job.

**IV. Thou shalt encourage good sportsmanship.** If you are going to show up at a swimming meet, you should be encouraging, but never criticize your child or the coach. Both of them know when mistakes have been made.

**V. Thou shalt acknowledge thy child's fears.** A first swimming meet can be a stressful situation. It is totally appropriate for your child to be scared. Don't yell or belittle, just assure your child that the coach would not have suggested the event if your child was not ready to compete in it. Remember your job is to love and support your child through all of the swimming experience.

**VI. Thou shalt not criticize the officials.** If you do not care to devote the time or do not have the desire to volunteer as an official, don't criticize those who are doing the best they can.

**VII. Honor thy child's coach.** The bond between coach and swimmer is a special one, and one that contributes to your child's success as well as fun. Do not criticize the coach in the presence of your child, it will only serve to hurt your child's swimming.

**VIII. Thou shalt be loyal and supportive of thy team.** It is not wise for parents to take their swimmers and to jump from team to team. The water isn't necessarily bluer in another team's pool. Every team has its own internal problems, even teams that build champions.

**IX. Thy child shalt have goals besides winning.** Most successful swimmers are those who have learned to focus on the process and not the outcome. Giving an honest effort regardless of what the outcome is, is much more important than winning

**X. Thou shalt not expect thy child to become an Olympian.** If your athlete aspires to that goal, then support them as they strive to reach it but remember that the odds of success are about .0002%.

## WHO'S WHO

Artistic Swimming Canada: A volunteer-based organization with a professional staff based in Ottawa, is responsible for the development and operation of the sport through a wide variety of programs. These programs encompass research and development, marketing and communications, participation, athletes, officials' and coaches' development, and competitions.



Ontario Artistic Swimming: The sport body that oversees artistic swimming in this province. This includes varsity competition, competitive clubs, and community recreation programs. Their mission is to develop, promote, support and regular artistic swimming through the implementation of an integrated sports system that is accessible to all Ontarians by providing opportunities for enjoyment and the individual goals.

Fédération Internationale de Natation (FINA): Is the international federation (IF) based in Lausanne, Switzerland, that is recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for governing international competition in the aquatic sport. FINA currently oversees competitions in five aquatic sports: swimming, diving, artistic swimming, water polo, and open water swimming.





## YORK ARTISTIC SWIMMING CLUB HISTORY

### **Established in 1988 as the Aquatic Angels**

#### **Founding member and Program Coordinator - Ghislaine Boulianne**

- Established as a recreational program with swimmers working to achieve their Trillium Level awards.
- First Year Registered as Competitive in 1989/1990 as The Aquatic Angels.
- Club reorganized as Newmarket Synchronized Swimming Club at the Competitive “B” Provincial Level in 1995/1996 with Gayle Wimmer as Program Coordinator until December 1998.
- In December 1998, Mary-Jane Ling joined the club as coach of the 12-14 age group. She was named Program Coordinator for the 1999/2000 season and the Club was registered at the competitive “A” National Level, competing that year at Nationals in Edmonton at the 12-14 age group.
- Newmarket Synchro offered programming at Recreational, Provincial and National levels of competitive synchro.
- In January 2006, the name of Newmarket Synchronized Swim Club was changed and ratified to York Synchronized Swim Club to better represent our growing membership across the region.
- In 2018/2019 the York Synchronized Swim Club changed its name once again to York Artistic Swimming Club to reflect the name change of the sport of synchronized swimming to artistic swimming implemented by the governing body of FINA.
- York Artistic Swimming Club has grown to include practice venues in the township of Aurora (Stronach Aurora Recreation Centre) and Newmarket (Magna Centre). To gain experience in deeper waters, our competitive teams also trained at the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre (TPASC).

## WHY ARTISTIC SWIMMING?

Artistic swimming offers an ideal environment for young girls and boys to learn and grow. It's a multi-faceted activity and allows participants to develop a variety of physical skills, while also benefiting from many physiological and social aspects of the sport. While the focus of artistic swimming is on the team component through which athletes learn how to be exemplary team-players, the athletes also train and compete individually (compulsory figures, solo), or as a pair (duet), and develop the ability to self-motivate, engage in healthy self-talk and learn independence.

Artistic swimming provides young athletes with fantastic role models. Your athlete will be coached and mentored by capable, strong and intelligent individuals, and will have successful, hard-working athletes to look up to. Artistic swimming helps girls and boys develop a strong sense of self-confidence - the kind of confidence that will lead them to success and to the belief that they can succeed at anything if they work hard enough at it.

Artistic swimming empowers your child and teaches him/her about self-esteem, self-discipline, healthy body image, team-work, and time-management. Your child will learn how to set goals and push themselves to excel.

While your child will be asked to challenge herself/himself, artistic swimming will not risk her/his health and safety. It is a sport with a low risk of severe injury.

Most of all, artistic swimming can be lots of fun and having fun is the key to your child pursuing an active and healthy lifestyle and then maintaining that lifestyle throughout his/her adult life.

## The Physical Benefits of Artistic Swimming

- Better health
- Build stamina (increase anaerobic and aerobic capacity)
- Improve and maintain a high level of flexibility
- Develop balance
- Improve posture
- Develop speed and agility
- Build strength and power
- Improve motor skills
- Develop exemplary swimming skills

- Develop musicality and rhythm
- Increase kinesthetic awareness
- Improve coordination
- Grow vocabulary of movement (with grace, with sharpness, with power, etc.)
- Understanding of good nutritional habits
- Appreciation of active and healthy living

### The Social Benefits of Artistic Swimming

- Cooperation
- Strong female role models
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Receiving and delivering feedback
- Improve schematic achievement
- Perseverance
- Encouragement (giving and accepting)
- Courage/Risk
- Strong social values

### The Physiological Benefits of Artistic Swimming

- Increase creativity
- Patience
- Concentration/Focus
- Multi-tasking
- Excitement
- Goal setting (individual and team)
- Dealing with competition/stress
- Time-management
- Confidence
- Healthy friendships
- Challenge
- Increase self-esteem
- Healthy body image
- Emotional stability
- Success

## DID YOU KNOW?

- Artistic swimmers can hear the music underwater through underwater speakers
- Swimmers are expected to arrive at the **pool 15 min in advance of practice time** to be ready to go for the start of practice
- It is against the rules for artistic swimmers to touch the bottom of the pool at a competition, for routine. For such infractions, they are given a two-point deduction
- A lift or boost in artistic swimming is done by lifting the body of one or more swimmers above the water's surface. Swimmers are not allowed to use the pool bottom to execute these lifts.
- Artistic swimmers swim with their eyes open underwater. They do this to be able to maintain their balance underwater, see where they're swimming, and to line up with their teammates to make patterns and set-up for specific moves in their routine.
- The nose plug is an artistic swimmer's most vital piece of equipment because it prevents water from entering the nasal cavity during the upside-down movements and allows the swimmer to stay under the water for long periods of time.
- Deck work consists of the movements the athletes perform on the deck once the music starts and before entering the water. Deck work is intended to set the mood for the routine and can only be a maximum 10 seconds in length. Deck work does not factor into the final score.
- Most artistic swimmers carry an extra nose plug (or two) in the hip of their bathing suits during their routine in case the one they are wearing gets knocked off. Some even choose to wear two nose plugs at once or apply a bandage on top to ensure it really stays on!

## REQUIRED EQUIPMENT

What does a swimmer need to swim with YASC?

### TRAINING

- Any style 1-piece bathing suit will suffice for practices unless otherwise specified
- Goggles (two pairs ideally so there is a spare in case of loss or breakage)
- Club swim cap to keep hair out of swimmer's eyes
- Nose clips (should have three or four in the swimmers bag at all times)
- Collapsible Water bottles used for holding positions in the water eg:  
[https://www.amazon.ca/Reliance-Jerrican-pliable-20-L/dp/B001QBZI90/ref=sr\\_1\\_4?crid=2LA3156BC0G6X&dchild=1&keywords=reliance+water+jug&qid=1598280320&srefix=relliance+wa%2Caps%2C166&sr=8-4](https://www.amazon.ca/Reliance-Jerrican-pliable-20-L/dp/B001QBZI90/ref=sr_1_4?crid=2LA3156BC0G6X&dchild=1&keywords=reliance+water+jug&qid=1598280320&srefix=relliance+wa%2Caps%2C166&sr=8-4)  
<https://www.walmart.ca/en/ip/Reliance-Products-Five-Gallon-Fold-A-Carrier-II-Blue-Collapsible-Water-Carrier-with-Integrated-Handle/6000190010533>
- Yoga Mat
- Resistance Bands
- Attire & Footwear, towels, running shoes, flip flops for deck and change room and sports
- attire for stretching Club shorts and T-shirt
- Refillable water bottle to have on deck to keep hydrated
- Skipping Rope
- Weights (As per direction of team coach)

### COMPETITIONS

- Club training suit & club cap
- Figures suit: A plain black training swim suit for figure competitions
- White swim cap: this is a requirement for all figure competitions
- Goggles: for warm ups and figures but are not to be worn during routine
- Routine suit (s) athletes will require a routine suit for every routine event they compete in
- Nose Clip
- Hair gelling supplies: unflavored gelatine is used to keep the hair slicked back in a tight bun
- Headpieces: bun covers and headpieces are an accent that is used in competitions
- Attire & footwear: club uniform is to be worn at all time and flip flops
- Refillable water bottle & healthy, nut-free snacks

## ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

All swimmers must arrive to practice 15 minutes prior to the start time to ensure they are ready to get started on time.

Attendance and punctuality are extremely important in a team sport like artistic swimming. The swimmer should clearly understand the commitment to the team, coach, and club before the season starts. Attendance at all practices is compulsory unless the athlete's illness or injury is contagious or debilitating. With minor ailments (i.e. cold), it is expected that athlete's will still attend practice and participate as much as possible or watch from the deck.

It is important to note that during the competition season (January to May), the highest degree of attendance and focus is necessary. The progress of the team depends on the regular attendance of every swimmer.

Absences and arriving late affect the entire team. ***If a swimmer must miss or arrive late for a scheduled practice, the Team Coach must be notified by text or email as soon as possible.*** This allows preparation time for the Coach to organize the practice for the least amount of disruptions.

Parents of swimmers with more than two absences or consistent late arrivals (more than 15 minutes) within a one month period will be contacted, and a parent/coach meeting will be arranged where the swimmer's commitment and the Coach's expectations of the swimmer will be discussed. If absences or late arrivals continue, the athlete's status with the team will be reevaluated and a course of action will be determined by Program Staff and the Training and Development Committee.

### Black Out Period

Since attendance during the competition season is so important, it is expected that 2 weeks before a competition athletes on the team cannot miss a single practice. A doctor's note may be requested if an athlete misses a practice within this period, it is up to the Team Coach, Program Coordinator and the Program Director to decide if the athlete shall become an alternate on the team for the next competition.

### Vacation and Extended Absences

Parents are encouraged to schedule vacations at times when swimmers do not have scheduled practices (for example, Winter holidays and March Break). If vacation is to be taken during scheduled practice time, written notice to the team coach and Program Coordinator must be given at least one month beforehand to enable program staff to plan around a swimmers absence. Vacations should not be planned within two weeks before the Central/North Regionals, Hilton Worldwide and Age Group Provincial championships for Provincial swimmers and Novice routine meets in May for Novice and Pre Comp swimmers.

### Practice Cancellations

Practices may be cancelled unexpectedly due to extreme weather or pool closures. If this occurs, parents will be notified via social media, WhatsApp, email, website and/or phone. Refunds will not be issued for cancelled practices however we will do our best to offer a make up class (for non-weather related cancellations), and/or schedule on-line training classes as an alternative.

### Concussion Awareness

York Artistic Swimming Club requires that all new and returning athletes, including the parents of athletes under the age of 18 years, are required to review and acknowledge that they have read and understand the Ontario Artistic Swimming specific Concussion Guidelines prior to the first practice of the season. Additional resources can be found at <https://ontarioartisticswimming.ca/about/concussion-resources/>

## TEAMS

It is essential that competitive athletes make every effort to be present during the team selection process. Teams are selected solely by the Program Director in consultation with the Program Coordinators and Team Coaches. Program staff will establish teams based on Ontario Artistic Swimming rules with consideration of age, skill sets, strengths, experience, common goals and commitment to the sport. For returning athletes, the coaches will also consider results from the previous season. Parents and athletes are not to be involved in this process. Team selection is finalized in the month of September. Teams are typically announced by the end of September and team routines are generally set by late October.

Athletes that may require special arrangements be made to the regular program schedule can contact the Program Coordinator and Program Director to submit a request.

## ALTERNATES

In some cases our teams, duets, trios or free combinations may require an alternate(s). “Alternate” means a competitor who is designated to replace a member of a duet, team, or free combination. A duet may have one alternate, a trio may have one alternate, and a team/free combination may have a maximum of two alternates. The alternate practices with the team/duet/trio but does not swim in formation with the team and will swim as a back-up swimmer during competitions. The alternate will generally practice several positions in the team/trio/duet formation so that they are prepared to replace a member if needed. During competitions, if the alternate is not replacing a member, the alternate is still expected to attend the competition fully dressed and gelled and will be on deck to support their team/trio/duet. An alternate is chosen by the Team Coach/Program Coordinator/Program Director.

## EXTRA ROUTINES

Team comes first. Solos and duets are secondary and considered extra routines in that they require additional practice time separate from their team routine. The ability to accommodate requests for additional routines is subject to factors including, but not limited to, the availability of coaches and pool time. Athletes interested in additional competitive routines should indicate their interest at the time of registration.

Program Director, Coordinators & Coaches will assess athletes during the team selection process to determine if extra routines are appropriate and to identify suitable partners or teammates. Selected swimmers will be asked by the end of September if they would like to participate in an extra routine. Training for extra routines will commence early October. Extra routines require additional weekly practice time (approx 1-2 hours per week) outside of team practice time. All athletes who are selected for extra routines will be called to a meeting with the parents, Program Coordinator and/or Program Director to discuss expectations and training schedule. A consent form with terms and conditions will be required from parents before practices can begin.

Additional fees apply to all members for each extra routine they participate in (please see club fee structure for details). On the occasion that an athlete is registered for a team program that does not have enough participants to form a team, the swimmer(s) may do a solo or duet as their artistic swimming program and not be considered to be participating in an “extra routine”.

All extra routines will be re-evaluated by the Program Coordinator/Director in December. If the Program Coordinator/Director feels that there is a lack of commitment on the part of the swimmer(s), or if other issues have arisen, the Program Coordinator/Director may decide not to continue with the extra routine. If this is the case, payment for extra routines would be discontinued after December 31. If full payment for extra routine has already been made a prorated refund will be issued.



## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

As YASC is a not for profit organization we rely on parents to help out. Fundraising and volunteering are a very important part of being a YASC member.

**Volunteering:** We required all YASC families to join one of our Volunteer Committees. These committees are vital to the everyday operations of our club. For more information on Committees please refer to our Policy and Procedure manual or reach out to a Board member.

**Fundraising:** All families-have the opportunity to participate in ongoing fundraising and all proceeds you earn will be credited back to you at the end of the season. Participating in fundraising initiatives will help to offset your program fees.

**Respect in Sport:** YASC asks that all parents take the Respect in Sport training course. Your fee will be reimbursed back to you after you submit your certificate number. Please use the attached link to fulfill this requirement. <https://synchro-canada-parent.respectgroupinc.com/>

## TRAINING

### Land Drill

Land drill is essential in artistic swimming. Land drill includes determining counts, setting patterns, clarifying position presentation, and practicing movement out of the pool. ***Swimmers are required to do land drill independently, outside of normal practice time.*** Team land drill will be done for a minimum of one hour per week. Anyone with an extra routine will be required to land drill for their solo, duet, or combo for at least one hour per week over and above her team's land drill time. Parents are asked to encourage their swimmer's compliance with these expectations. Your swimmers' coach will provide instructions and music in order to practice music at home.

### Dry-Land Training

As pool time is always very limited, it is reserved for training that can only be done in the water. Dry-land strength, stretching and conditioning exercises bring out optimal fitness, more efficiently than relying on training in the water. Dry-land workouts include squats, lunges, push-ups, and many types of body-core exercises to develop tighter, stronger swimmers. Balancing strength-building exercises with stretching builds flexibility and helps prevent injury. Furthermore, athletes who did daily dryland conditioning and flexibility were stronger, faster and

more flexible on their return to the water. This shows the importance of "Build the Athlete" 2020-2021 theme

(Provincial /Competitive Level Swimmers - specific age-appropriate programs will be developed and administered by a strength training professional at least once a week and will encompass both in person and on-line training)

### Stretching

Proper stretching prevents injury and increases flexibility. Flexibility is extremely important in many of the intricate positions and movements that artistic swimming demands. Many positions are not possible without good hip, back, and shoulder flexibility. For example, certain sculls require flexibility in the shoulders to be effective.



Stretching can be done individually and as little as 30 minutes per day can bring marked improvement in all areas of flexibility in short periods of time. At the very minimum, swimmers will be expected to participate in stretching for half an hour every practice; however, **swimmers are encouraged to stretch as much as possible on their own**. The difference between a swimmer who stretches and one who doesn't is very apparent in the pool. Although proper stretching does not include a solitary, quiet environment, it does demand thoughtful, concentrated effort to prevent injuries.

### Swimming Drills

Much of the conditioning for artistic swimming involves speed-swimming drills, including laps of freestyle, butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke. These drills are designed not only to increase strength and endurance but also to increase the speed with which one can move through the water.

### Nutrition

Nutrition is an important aspect of an artistic swimmer's training. Proper nutrition is important not only when the swimmer is competing, but throughout the entire season, in order to build a

strong and healthy body. Here are some ideas to complement the recommendations of *Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating*:

- Establish a regular schedule for meals and snacks, make sure to find time to eat at least one hour before training.
- Choose more servings of grain products and vegetables and fruit, to meet the higher energy needs of athletes-these foods provide carbohydrates that are important for optimal performance.
- Choose a variety of each food group every day, as no single food or food group supplies all the nutrients that an athlete needs.
- Drink plenty of water before, during, and after training sessions and competitions.
- Eat pre-competition meals (two to three hours before competing) that are high in carbohydrates and low in protein and fat and fibre. Protein and fat take longer to digest and are likely to leave athletes feeling uncomfortable if eaten too close to competition.
- Increase servings of carbohydrate-rich foods during times of training and competition (e.g. bread, pasta, rice, crackers, potatoes, and muffins).
- Avoid eating foods or beverages that are high in sugar just prior to a competition or training session.

## COMPETITIONS

Your child's participation in artistic swimming may expose her to various types of competition. Competition can be extremely rewarding, provided that winning is kept in perspective. Competition (especially at younger ages) should focus on fun, effort, skill development, building experience and confidence, and team activities, and should not focus solely on winning.

After an artistic swimming competition, you might want to ask your athlete whether they had fun or how they felt they performed, rather than asking whether they won, or what her marks/scores were. It is very important that children self-assess and evaluate their own performances. The sooner they develop this ability, the more satisfying and rewarding their journey will be. In artistic swimming and other judged sports it's not uncommon for parents to complain about the judging. It is crucial to remember that judges are unpaid and trained volunteers. A key principle of fair play is respecting the officials and their decisions. Parents should exhibit this behaviour in order to be a good role model for their children.

### Handling Disappointment

From time to time your child is going to make mistakes, perform poorly, and have friends that are better swimmers. Learning how to handle disappointment becomes a valuable sport (and life) skills.

How you handle these ups and downs will also set an example for your child. Your child not only pays close attention to your words, they also pay attention to your non-verbal messages, such as a look of disappointment or disapproval. Do your best to remain positive for your child's sake. Athletes could endure struggles, frustrations or have an off day at a competition or 2. Team coaches will support athletes if mistakes are made and help them learn from the experience in a positive and encouraging manner.

## **SCORING IN A NUTSHELL**

- At an artistic swimming competition, there are two 5- (and sometimes 7) member panels of judges, one which is tasked with scoring the technical merit and the other scoring artistic impression.
- Technical merit covers three specific areas: execution, synchronization, and difficulty. Execution covers strokes and other propulsions techniques and the precision of patterns. Movement should be smooth and effortless and the swimmers should be high in the water.
- The form of swimmers in maintaining patterns, completing movements, and swimming with speed, strength and power should now deteriorate as the routine progresses.
- Synchronization looks at how "in tune" the swimmers are in body position, movements and transitions. Synchronization must be maintained above and below the water line.
- Levels of difficulty are determined by the demands the routine places on the strength and technical proficiency of swimmers. As in many other sports, the athletes are rewarded for performing difficult moves and tasks well.
- Judges assessing artistic impression rate the "look and feel" of routines.
- They judge the creativity of the choreography, the aesthetics of patterns, the fluidity of movements and transitions, and the effect of the music has on the mood of the performance.
- The judges award points on a scale of 0.0-10.0 (in tenths).
- When the judges have recorded their scores, the highest and the lowest on each panel are discarded and the other three (or five) are averaged out.
- At the senior level, artistic swimming competitions often include all artistic swimming events: solo tech, solo free, duet tech, duet free, team tech, team free and combo, while the younger age groups (age 18 and below) may have solo free, duet free, team free, compulsory and combo.

### **Figures are scored as follows:**

- All judgements are made from the standpoint of perfection.
- Judges look at "design" and consider the accuracy of positions and transitions as specified in figure description.

- They also consider “control”-the extension, height, stability, clarity, uniform motion, unless otherwise specified in the figure description.
- Judges watch to see if the figures are executed in a stationary position (unless otherwise specified in the figure description).
- The judges award points on a scale of 0.0-10.0 (in tenths).

Perfect 10

Near perfect 9.9 - 9.5

Excellent 9.4 - 9.0

Very good 8.9 - 8.0

Good 7.9 - 7.0

Competent 6.9 - 6.0

Satisfactory 5.9 - 5.0

Deficient 4.9 - 4.0

Weak 3.9 - 3.0

Very weak 2.9 - 2.0

Hardly recognizable 1.9 - 0.1

Completely failed 0

- The final result is determined by adding the results of different figures performed.
- Each figure has a designated degree of difficulty score that is used to calculate the final score of each figure. More difficult figures will have a heavier weighting in the total figure event score.

**For routines, results shall be calculated as follows:**

- In events that include three components - figures, technical routines and free routines - results shall be calculated according to the percentages allocated to each session (figures (25%), technical routine (25%), and free routine final (50%)).
- In events that include only the figures event and free routine event, the results shall be calculated on the basis of figures (50%) and free routine final (50%).
- In the event that only includes the technical routine and the free routine results shall be calculated on the basis of technical routine (50%) and free routine final (50%).
- In the free combination (combo) event, the routine score is 100% of the final score.

## **MOVING UP THE RANKS**

Your athlete may choose to pursue artistic swimming at the Provincial or National stream level. Your athlete may have dreams of competing as a Provincial team member or a Canadian National team member on the international stage. If your athlete is serious, it is vital that parents understand that the pursuit of such lofty goals requires intense and voluminous training and

commitment. Not all swimmers will have aspirations to reach this level, and those swimmers should know that artistic swimming can be pursued after the highschool years at the varsity league or masters level in Canada and the NCAA level in the USA. There are several prominent American schools that offer scholarships for artistic swimming. Numerous artistic swimmers have continued to pursue their artistic dreams in shows such as Cirque du Soleil, La Reve, etc.

## SYNCHRO GELLING HAIR INSTRUCTIONS

### Hair Preparation:

1. Completely wet the swimmer's hair. Smooth and brush the hair into a **very** tight ponytail in the middle of the back of the head, using the ears as your line at the back of the head, unless the coach has given different instructions for the bun location. Make sure that all the hair is very flat and smooth, including under the ponytail. Use a water spritzer to help manage loose ends, as this will allow for a better end result and a shinier finish.
2. Split the ponytail in half and make two braids, braiding tightly. If the hair is particularly long or thick, three or even four braids may be necessary. Wind the braids around the ponytail into a tight, symmetrical bun in the middle of the back of the head, securing with bobby pins as you wind. Make sure all loose ends are pinned and tucked into the bun. Hair pins are better to use than bobby pins for securing the braids into a bun.
3. If the swimmer has loose hair, bangs or short pieces that do not fit into the ponytail, use a spider comb or flat hair clips to secure these hairs before beginning the gelling process. A bottle of hairdressing spray gel may help to smooth hair and hold down the loose ends before applying Gelatin.

### Gel Preparation/Application:

1. In a mug or small container, mix 3-4 packages of food gelatin (Knox or unflavored from bulk food supplies) and 1/4 cup boiling water. If you have bought your gel in bulk, then you can use 1/3 cup gel to 1/2 cup of water per swimmer. Stir gently (to avoid air bubbles), with a fork or small whisk until smooth, with no lumps. If there are any lumps, strain through a small sieve. Let the strained gel sit about 20 seconds, and skim carefully, any bubbles that rise to the top. When you are done, the gel should be the colour, clarity and texture of honey. If it is too thick or thickens during application, add a touch of hot water as needed. Knox Gelatin is available in the baking/preserves section of most grocery stores or in the bulk food bins. It can be stored from year to year in tightly lidded dry plastic containers.

**Tip #1 :** You can make the gel the night before, and put in the refrigerator. All the bubbles will settle out of it overnight, and it will become rubbery & hard (like a hockey

puck). You can then soften it by warming it up in the microwave - try to warm it in 10-15 second increments, stirring in between. Making it the day before ensures no bubbles, and less stress at gelling time.

**Tip #2:** Gelatin smells a bit like a wet dog. You can add 1 tsp of vanilla extract (or other scents such as peppermint or coconut), and then it smells better.

2. Apply gelatin to hair with a flat hair salon colouring dye brush available at beauty supply stores or some dollar stores. A turkey basting brush (usually silicon) also works well and is available at the dollar store. Make each stroke long and consistent, starting at the top of the head/hairline, going in the direction of the hair from front to back. Smooth consistent strokes, doing one side, and then the other side.. Avoid putting the gel on too thick, or putting on a second coat too soon after the first. This may result in bubbling or the gel turning white. Gel is difficult to get out of clothing and can be a bit messy to work with, so please make sure to have a towel on the swimmer's shoulders, and a warm wet face cloth on hand to catch any drips.
3. Apply 2 - 3 coats of gelatin, to make sure it does not come off during warm up. Although one coat of gelatin if applied well will hold up through warm-up and the routine, the ideal, if time permits is to have two coats applied, with the first coat being blown dry with a hair dryer for about 10 minutes before applying the second coat.
4. If the team has headpieces, then the headpiece is carefully applied before the first coat is completely dry, to ensure that the bobby pins can get through the gel. Touch ups may be required after the headpieces are on. Gelatin needs time to completely dry before entering the water (approximately ½ hour). You can use a hair dryer on cool to speed the drying process.
5. To get the gel out of your hair after the swim meet, you need to soak it out in the shower using hot water and shampoo, until all lumps are gone. You can also soak in a tub, with your hair submerged, it's good to relax after a busy competition day! Use a conditioner as you normally do. Your hair will feel extra smooth after the gel is washed out.

### Supplies list:

- Bun making supplies: comb, brush, tight elastics, tight bobby pins, wider pins, hair net, regular hair gel, hair spray, etc..
- Gelatin (Knox or from bulk barn)
- Vanilla or other extract (optional)
- Hot water (or ability to get hot water)
- Measuring cup
- Sieve

- Spoon
- Old hand towel & washcloth (to catch drips)

YouTube link for how to do a bun & gel hair:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tljtD49-b2o>

## WHAT TO EXPECT AT A COMPETITION

Each team will swim to music combining figures and arm movements to create a program that is choreographed and synchronized with the music. The marks are given in 3 categories - Execution (how well they execute the skills and movements), Artistic Impression (originality and creativity) and Difficulty (how challenging is the arm action, figures, highlights and patterns). The marks are averaged and added together to determine the routine winner. 50% of the routine score and 50% of the combined team's figure scores are added together to determine the championship score which constitutes the overall winner.

What to bring...

- Club Uniform
- Deck Shoes
- Club Spacing Suit
- Club Gold Cap
- Routine Suit & Headpiece
- 2-3 nose clips
- 2 Goggles
- White socks
- Running shoes
- 2 or 3 towels
- Robe or sweat shirt to keep warm
- Healthy snacks
- WATER!

Before the competition...

The athletes will be asked to arrive at a time set by the coach before their warm up begins in order to stretch, get familiar with the pool, landrill, put on make-up and go over how things work. Please arrive wearing your Club Attire and NO nail polish or jewelry (earrings must be removed)! All teams enrolled in the same meet are expected to be at all required competitions and must attend other routines to cheer on York Artistic Swimming Club athletes whenever the



schedule allows. Instructions/itinerary will be provided to each team by your Coach before each competition.

### Make-up...

Wearing make-up is a part of the artistic and performance side of synchronized swimming. Each swimmer needs to come prepared with their own WATERPROOF make-up. It often works best if a team parent coordinates the same make up for every swimmer, based on input from the coach, and keeps it packed for all meets. They usually require blush, eye shadow, mascara and lipstick.

### The warm-up and spacing...

For the warm up they will be instructed to wear their Club Spacing suits and gold YORK caps. During the 15-30 minute warm-up the girls will have the opportunity to swim lengths and practice the routine. A whistle will then blow, indicating the end of warm up time.

### The competition...

Each team in their respective age group will be given a number. The numbers are randomly assigned and will be the order they are to compete.

The routine competition is very different from a figures competition as lots of cheering is encouraged!! Each team will swim through their routine once, and will be marked by several judges.

### Awards...

The award ceremony will happen once the competition is over. Awards will be presented for 1st to 6th place in each age group. The girls are required to stay for awards to cheer on their fellow swimmers and teammates, regardless of whether they receive an award or not. Some tips for the parents...

Parents play an important role in supporting their athletes. Do not expect to see your athlete during the competition, as they will be focusing on their performance. You should also be prepared with some nutritional snacks and bottles of water, as not only will the swimmers become hungry, but sitting watching in the stands can also be a thirsty endeavour. You may also want to support your athlete by purchasing a "club fan wear" top as sitting in the stands of a pool deck can become very hot and humid.

For A complete Parents Guide to Artistic Swimming Please visit <https://artisticswimming.ca/parents-guide-to-artistic-swimming/>. There you will find more info about the exciting sport of Artistic Swimming.

For any other questions or concerns please refer to the YASC Policy and Procedure Manual listed on [www.yorksynchro.com](http://www.yorksynchro.com)