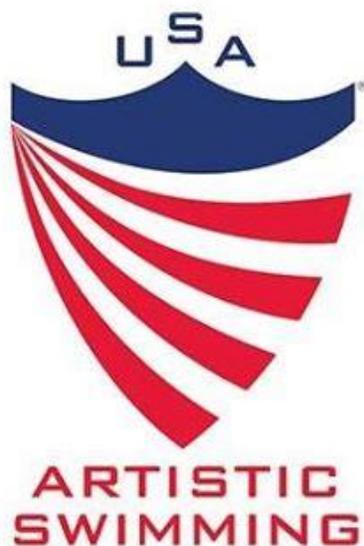


# UNITED STATES ARTISTIC SWIMMING



## WELCOME TO COACHING MANUAL

### Part 1

June, 2021

# ORGANIZING AND MANAGING YOUR PROGRAM

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## **FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS**

## **TYPES OF CLUBS**

## **USA ARTISTIC SWIMMING MEMBERSHIP AND INSURANCE**

## **ESTABLISHING PROGRAM PARAMETERS**

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## **CREATING A COMMUNITY**

## **HOW TO START A CLUB CHECKLISTS**

- ***How to Start a Club***
- ***How to Start a Collegiate Club***
- ***How to Start a Varsity Program***

## **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND LINKS**

*Thank you to: Anne Schulte, Ginny Jasontek, Anna Farmer, Holly Vargo-Brown, Mikayla Francese, Marissa Leahy, Krista Karwosky, Sabra Hayes, Chris Leahy, Michal Fandel & Michele Kraus for all of their hard work to help future coaches - your advice and expertise is greatly appreciated!*

## FACILITY REQUIREMENTS AND EQUIPMENT

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### POOL SPACE

In many areas, pool space is at a premium and synchro programs must compete with swim teams, swim lessons, dive programs, water polo programs, water aerobics and fitness classes, lap and recreational swimmers and even scuba diving and kayaking. Others are fortunate to have ample pool space available to them.

Ideal space for beginners and older, competitive swimmers differs. For example, beginners benefit from access to a shallow end, where they can use the bottom until they build confidence, and where the teacher can easily provide hands-on instruction in the water. On the other hand, more experienced swimmers need deep water for lifts, spins and other skills

The chart below details minimum space requirements and ideal requirements for each level of swimmer:

	Minimum	Ideal
<b>Recreational</b>	3.5 to 5 feet deep one lane OR half of 2 lanes	3.5 to 6 feet (or deeper) Access to shallow <i>and</i> deep water. 2-3 lanes Warmer temperature (82-86°)
<b>Novice</b>	3.5 to 6 feet half of 2 lanes	3.5 to 9 feet Access to shallow <i>and</i> deep water 4 lanes
<b>Intermediate</b>	3.5 to 6 feet 2 lanes	6 to 9 feet 4 lanes
<b>Age Group</b>	6 to 9 feet 4 lanes	25 x 12 meters 12M x 12M area 2.5 meters deep; remaining area at least 1.8 meters deep (FINA requirement) Temperature 80-82°

### DRY LAND SPACE

Synchro programs also need an area to do dry land training, including strength training, stretching, tumbling and other types of work outs.

*Minimum:* Deck space with yoga mats or tumbling mats

*Ideal:* Space in a studio with mirrors or a gym

## **EQUIPMENT:**

Equipment can make synchro instruction and training safer, more effective and more fun.

### **POOL:**

#### *Minimum:*

- ❖ Sound system with underwater speaker (<http://www.lubell.com/> OR <http://oceanears.com/>)
- ❖ Kick boards
- ❖ Pull buoys
- ❖ Dumb bells, empty bleach bottles, or water jugs

#### *Ideal:*

##### Recreational and Novice Programs:

- ❖ Microphone
- ❖ Metronome (download on iTunes)
- ❖ Hula hoops
- ❖ Swim noodles
- ❖ Flotation belts
- ❖ Balls
- ❖ Sticky toes (from TumbITrak)

##### Intermediate and Age Group:

- ❖ Microphone
- ❖ Metronome or Tempo trainer
- ❖ Thera-bands
- ❖ Hand paddles
- ❖ Blind Cane or long pole
- ❖ Ankle weights

### **DRY LAND**

#### *Minimum:*

- ❖ Yoga mat or tumbling mats

#### *Ideal:*

- ❖ Thera bands
- ❖ Medicine balls
- ❖ Bosu balls
- ❖ Foam rollers
- ❖ Resistance loops
- ❖ Cheese wedge for tumbling training

#### **Collapsible Water Jug**

Good flotation tools for working on body positions



#### **Ankle weights**

Used on ankles or waist



#### **Thera-Bands**

Different colors identify the level of resistance.



## USING SPACE EFFICIENTLY

Here are a few ideas for setting up your pool space with multiple groups of swimmers and limited coaches and/or space.

### Swimmers Train Together (works with one coach for 16-30 swimmers)

45 minutes of warm up and water conditioning in lanes

15 minutes of drills and figure instruction (led by coach)

60 minutes of figures with partners around edges of pool, while coach trains routines

### Stations (4 teams – 20-32 swimmers and 4 coaches)

45 minute stations for each group. This can work in as few as three lanes (one lane for workouts, two for routines, and space near the wall for figures. Of course, more lanes are better!

	Conditioning/Laps	Figures/Skills	Routines	Dry Land
5-5:45	16+	13-15	12U	13-15 Int
5:45-6:30	13-15 Int	16+	13-15	12U
6:30-7:15	12U	13-15 Int	16+	13-15
7:15-8	13-15	12U	13-15 Int	16+

## TRAINING IN SHALLOW WATER

Shallow water space can be ideal for beginner swimmers. But there are a number of ways even older swimmers can use shallow space for training. These workouts and drills work in 3.5-4.5 feet of water.

1. Swimming
2. Sculling/Ballet leg laps
3. Eggbeater (shallow water will ensure knees are high!)
4. Shallow figures or figure parts:
  - a. Ballet Leg
  - b. Front Pike Somersault
  - c. Front Walkover
  - d. Back Walkover
  - e. Beginning of Kipnus/Kip
  - f. Front pike down transition
  - g. First leg of Prawn/Tower
  - h. Barracuda drills on the surface
5. Routines – arms only; work on patterns and pattern changes
6. Drills on the wall or with bottles
  - a. Hold positions – Table top, Split, Fishtail, Bent Knee Vertical, Vertical, Knight, Bent Knee Surface Arch
  - b. Knight close to Surface Arch transition
  - c. Stationary Ballet Leg
7. Support Scull drills: on the wall, in Table Top, in Split or – for more proficient swimmers – in Fishtail, Bent Knee Vertical, Knight or Vertical

## TYPES OF CLUBS

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There are three main types of organizational structures for artistic swimming teams, which will affect the legal, governance and tax implications for the organization.

- ❖ Board-governed club
- ❖ Coach-owned club
- ❖ Facility-owned clubs (such as YMCAs, YWCAs, Parks and Recreation Departments, etc.)

Each type of organization has its advantages and disadvantages. Teams should consult a lawyer, accountant and/or business advisor to determine which organizational structure works best and to make sure they are in compliance with all applicable tax and legal considerations.

### **BOARD-GOVERNED CLUB**

A common legal structure for artistic swimming teams is a non-profit association or non-profit corporation that is governed by a board of directors. The board must have at least 3 members – these are most typically made up of parents of swimmers on the team. The board-governed structure allows organizations to apply for tax-exempt status.

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The most popular form of non-profit status is under IRC 501(c)3, which applies to organizations formed for religious, charitable, literary, scientific or educational purposes (synchro teams fall under this category). Under this code, an organization is exempt from federal taxation. In addition, contributions to the organization are tax deductible for the donor. Non-profit organizations can also apply for tax-exempt status under other codes.

A board-governed organization can choose to incorporate, which allows the non-profit to protect its directors and staff from certain types of liability. To get the details on incorporation in your state, check with the office of your Secretary of State, Division of Corporations, or Attorney General.

Non-profits must keep records, prepare minutes of meetings, and have a separate bank account. The non-profit organization cannot distribute profits to its members. Typically, the Head Coach of the team acts as the CEO, making day-to-day operational decisions for the team, as well as leading all aspects of training. The Board of Directors typically establishes a mission, budget, and objectives, hires a CEO (or Head Coach) and holds the CEO/Head Coach accountable for achieving objectives and upholding the mission of the organization.

### **COACH-OWNED CLUB**

A Coach can own the club as a Sole Proprietorship or as a Partnership (with one or more other coaches). Other legal structures include a limited liability company (LLC), which combines the limited liability of a corporation and the pass through taxation of a sole proprietorship or a partnership. Club owners enjoy the benefits and risks of a small business owner. Although the risk is higher, owners have the opportunity to realize higher compensation and build equity in the organization over time.

## **FACILITY-OWNED CLUBS**

Many facilities or institutions, such as YMCAs, YWCAs, Community Parks and Recreation Departments, and private schools, own and operate programs (including artistic swimming programs). The Coaches, including the Head Coach, are employees of the facility or the owner/operator of the pool. The facility or owner/operator will collect fees from the synchro program participants to generate revenue and cover expenses. Many facility-run organizations also have separate parent booster clubs (which under certain circumstances can be eligible for a 501(c)3 or other tax-exempt status) or parent volunteer organizations which contribute volunteer hours and additional financial assistance to the team. This will depend on the facility, however, some may not allow a separate booster club.

## **SUMMARY OF ORGANIZATION MODELS FOR CLUBS:**

	<b>Board-Governed</b>	<b>Coach-Owned</b>	<b>Facility-Owned</b>
<b>Tax Status</b>	Eligible for tax exemption (including 501(c)3	Not eligible for tax exempt status	Depends. Some facilities will allow separate booster club for fundraising
<b>Limited Legal and Financial Liability</b>	Yes, if incorporated	No, unless organized as LLC	Yes
<b>Government Regulation</b>	Highly regulated	Less regulated	Coach not usually involved
<b>Leadership Continuity</b>	With turnover in Board, leadership continuity is a challenge	Yes – Coach owners have the most continuity and leadership control	Yes – usually
<b>Management Challenges</b>	Parent board can tend to micromanage	Involved in every aspect of club – which has pluses and minuses	Vision and leadership are dictated by facility – which can be advantageous or challenging
<b>Financial Risk</b>	Low	High	Low
<b>Volunteer Support</b>	Usually high	Can be challenging	Varies
<b>Financial Resources</b>	Can be overly reliant on fundraising	Limited	Less risk in start-up, usually less reward although coaches may receive health and retirement benefits

## USA ARTISTIC SWIMMING MEMBERSHIP AND INSURANCE

For more information on Membership types & fees, go to the USA Artistic Swimming website: Click [HERE](#)

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	NATIONAL FEE**
Competitive Athlete	\$100 + \$4.00
Athlete	\$50 + \$4.00
Trial Athlete	\$15
Professional	\$100 + \$4.00
Official Level 1 or 2	\$50 + \$4.00
Instructor	\$50 + \$4.00
Life	\$2,000
Friend of Synchro	\$35 + \$4.00
Olympian	N/A
Club	\$75

*As of 06/01/21*

\*\*Please note that the fee structure above does not include any applicable LSSC fees. LSSC fees are set by the LSSC and sent directly to the Association Administrative Chair.



## ESTABLISHING PROGRAM PARAMETERS

### DEVELOPING A BUDGET

There are many decisions to consider when starting a program. Whether it is the responsibility of the Head Coach, the Board of Directors or the facility that runs the program, developing a budget is key to running a successful program.

### SAMPLE BUDGET

EXPENSES		
<b>Coaching:</b>	Head Coach	\$xx,xxx
	Assistant Coach	\$xx,xxx
	Part-Time Assistant Coaches	\$xx,xxx
	Payroll Taxes	\$x,xxx
	Professional Development	\$x,xxx
<b>Equipment:</b>	Amplifier and speaker purchase or repair	\$xxx
	Microphone purchase	\$xx
	Training equipment purchase or repair	\$x,xxx
	Gymnastics mats	
	Thera-bands	
	Camping water cubes	
	Kickboards	
<b>General &amp; Administrative</b>	USA Artistic Swimming Club Fee	\$xx
	USA Artistic Swimming Professional Fees	\$xxx
	USA Artistic Swimming Athlete Fees	\$x,xxx
	Publicity & Marketing	\$x,xxx
	Office Supplies & Printing	\$x,xxx
	Accounting & Legal	\$x,xxx
	Team Communication/Website	\$xxx
<b>Facility Expenses</b>	Pool rental	\$xx,xxx
	Dry land room rental	
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$xxx,xxx</b>
REVENUE		
<b>Team Fees</b>	Registration Fees	\$x,xxx
	Monthly Fees	\$xx,xxx
<b>Recreational Fees</b>	Registration Fees	\$x,xxx
	Monthly Fees	\$x,xxx
	Camp Revenue	\$x,xxx
	Camp Expenses	(\$xxx)
<b>Events</b>	January Meet Revenue	\$x,xxx

	January Meet Expense	(\$xxx)
	April Meet Revenue	\$x,xxx
	April Meet Expense	(\$xxx)
	Winter Clinic Revenue	\$x,xxx
	Winter Clinic Expense	\$x,xxx
<b>Fundraising</b>	Water Show Revenue	\$xxx
	Water Show Expense	\$xx
	Fall Fundraiser	\$x,xxx
	Winter Fundraiser	\$xxx
	Spring Fundraiser	\$xxx
<b>Sponsorships &amp; Donations</b>	Revenue	\$x,xxx
	Total Revenue	\$xxx,xxx
	Net Year Revenue (Expenses)	\$xx

## **FACILITY CONTRACTS**

Most teams, with the possible exception of those that are sponsored or run by a facility, will need to enter into a contract to use pool space for training and/or events. Pool rental expenses vary based on geography, the availability of pools, and whether or not the team is sponsored or run by a facility.

Ideally, an attorney should review any contract that you sign. Here are a few tips to entering into a successful contract with a facility:

- ❖ Carefully read and understand each section of the contract
- ❖ Make sure the following elements are specified:
  - Start date and duration of contract.
  - Renewal date and process
  - Description of each party's responsibilities and who is in charge
  - Process for resolving conflicts or grievances
  - Possible use of administrative equipment such as computers, printers, copiers and phones
  - Use of additional space such as conference rooms, exercise space and deck space
- ❖ Additional considerations:
  - Renewal terms – consider a 6-month warning to significant changes in contract terms
  - Non-compete clause – carefully consider this type of clause because it might limit your ability to expand the program
  - Responsibility for air and water quality and resolution of any problems
  - Use of locker rooms and parking
  - Insurance requirements and responsibilities
- ❖ Types of rental agreements
  - Lane rental (per lane per hour. National average according to USA Swimming.com is \$14 per lane per hour for 25y 6-lane
  - Flat fee. (Or a daily fee for a portion of the pool)

- Per class or session. Pay a set amount for each session per day
- Per person fee. Pay an amount per person in the program or class
- Percentage of revenues. Pay a percentage of the program gross revenues

## **COACH COMPENSATION**

One of the biggest program expenses outside of facility rental is coach compensation. Synchro coaches in the USA vary widely from full-time salaried coaches to part-time coaches (who typically have outside full-time jobs) to volunteers.

If coaches are paid a salary, it is considered a fixed expense, which is easier to budget than hourly pay. Part-time coaches can also be paid a salary.

Also consider:

- ❖ Insurance
- ❖ Benefits (such as health insurance and retirement)
- ❖ Professional membership
- ❖ Continuing education (CCP certification, First Aid, CPR, Clinics & Coaches' College)
  - The USA Artistic Swimming Foundation often times will award grants to teams for Education based programs for coaches – Click [HERE](#).
- ❖ Coaches' travel expenses

Although volunteers or part-time hourly employees will make a program less expensive to administer, typically these programs will be less stable over the long-term. Volunteers and part-time employees (who typically have other jobs) will be less likely to commit to a program over the long-term. It is also unlikely to be able to recruit a part-time coach from another part of the country and more difficult to have a succession plan. The loss of a Head Coach, without the ability to recruit other coaches, can mean the collapse of a program. Consider building a program that is financially able to support or pay at least one full-time coach.

### **Determining coach compensation:**

What you pay your coaches will depend on several factors including:

- ❖ Salaries and cost of living in your area
- ❖ Availability of coaches
- ❖ Experience and competency of coach

**Step 1: Write a job description.** This will help define characteristics and skills you need, and compare these to what other organizations are paying for similar jobs.

**Step 2: Find comparative salary data.** Review salary information for other synchro coaches (preferably in your geographic area). If necessary, also review salary data for other coaches, such as swim, dance and gymnastic coaches. Ways to gather this data include online searches and interviewing other organizations.

**Step 3: Develop a salary range.** Develop a range based on the median pay for similar jobs. (Typical range spreads are 30% to 60%). For example:

	Min	Midpoint	Max
40% Range Spread	\$10.00	\$12.50	\$15.00

**Step 4. Develop multiple ranges for different coaching jobs.** The following is an example based on hourly rates.

Job Title	Certification	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum
Novice Coach	CCP 1	\$10.00	\$11.00	\$12.00
Intermediate Coach	CCP 1	\$11.00	\$12.00	\$13.00
Age Group Asst. Coach	CCP 2	\$12.00	\$14.00	\$16.00
Head of Age Group	CCP 3	\$17.00	\$19.00	\$21.00
Head Coach	CCP 3	\$23.00	\$25.00	\$28.00

One way to determine an individual coach’s salary is to base the starting point on the individual’s experience. Therefore, a coach with 0-1 years of experience would start at the Minimum, a coach with 1-3 years of experience would start at the midpoint, and a coach with 3+ years would start at the max of the range.

**Step 5. Determine criteria for increases.**

- ❖ Merit increases – based on performance. Higher performing employees will be at the top of the range, average at the midpoint, and those working on improving skills will be at the lower end of range
- ❖ Cost of living or time in grade increases. Employees receive an increase each year. This method rewards employees for longevity.
- ❖ A combination approach establishes an average pay raise for average performers (e.g., 2%). High performers receive a higher increase (e.g., 2.5-4%) and low performers might receive no increase.

## **DETERMINING FEES**

The largest source of revenue for most programs is based on the fees charged to participants. Fees should cover fixed expenses such as facility rental and coach compensation, which are the two biggest program expenses for most clubs.

In addition, programs should look at fees for other synchro programs and competitive programs (such as swimming, diving, gymnastics and dance) in the area to help determine fees. Collect data for as many relevant programs as you can, and calculate the average and median fees per hour or per month (for comparable amount of hours practiced per week).

Keep in mind that with the increase in costs of recreational and sports activities, many children, and girls in particular, are left without appropriate after school activities. (Source: *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 31, 2014 and Women’s Sports Foundation, 2012). As such, consider providing a scholarship program for children who meet predetermined financial criteria. Your program may

be able to get grants and funding from charitable organizations or communities to help cover costs of these scholarship programs.

## **TEAM POLICIES**

Establishing and communicating team policies will go a long way in ensuring the smooth functioning of your team. A common way to document and communicate team policies is through a Team Handbook.

While establishing your team policies, consider:

- ❖ Your coaching philosophy
- ❖ USA Artistic Swimming rules
- ❖ Any applicable facility rules
- ❖ Risk management protocol (e.g., safety and security, injury and concussion protocol, etc.)

## **Sample Team Handbook Outline**

### **Section 1: About the Team**

- ❖ Team history and accomplishments
  - Accomplishments do not need to be competitive results!
- ❖ Coaching philosophy
- ❖ Goals for the year
- ❖ Description of programs and fees
- ❖ What to expect at practice
- ❖ Required equipment and apparel

### **Section 2: Expectations and General Policies**

- ❖ Team and small routine selection
- ❖ Other coaching decisions
- ❖ Attendance and missed training time policies
- ❖ Safety (pick up and drop off, etc.)
- ❖ Parent role at practices
  - Consider identifying a space where parents can watch without interfering, e.g., bleachers, waiting area)
  - Consider developing a Parent Code of Conduct
- ❖ Communication
  - How and when to contact coaches
  - Not interrupting practices
  - Positive communication and open door policy
- ❖ Athlete commitment expectations for practices and meets
- ❖ Athlete behavior and discipline
  - Outline basic expectations
  - Describe consequences for infractions (e.g., warning, sitting out practice)
  - Consider developing an Athlete Code of Conduct
- ❖ Coach role and expectations
  - Positive communication with athletes and parents

- Follows safety rules
- Appropriate conduct
- Consider Coach Code of Conduct
- ❖ Handling of injuries and concussions
- ❖ Media and social media policies
  - Posting of swimmer photos
  - Guidelines for team use of social media
  - Privacy and honesty
- ❖ Waivers:
  - General liability
  - Medical release forms (especially for travel)
  - Photo and media release forms

### ***Section 3: Attending Competitions***

- ❖ Meet policies
  - Attendance expectations
  - Punctuality
  - Leaving the pool
- ❖ Travel policies
  - Chaperone role and expectations
  - Travel rules
  - Travel expenses
- ❖ Meet etiquette
- ❖ Competition description/basics

### ***Section 4: Volunteers***

- ❖ Volunteer job descriptions
  - Team expectations for volunteering

# MARKETING AND PROMOTING YOUR PROGRAM

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## ***CLUB MARKETING GUIDE***

- ❖ Marketing Basics
- ❖ Promoting your Program
- ❖ Public and Media Relations
- ❖ Sponsors
- ❖ Fundraising and Grants

Click [HERE](#) for more information.

# CREATING A COMMUNITY

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## *Team Social Activities*

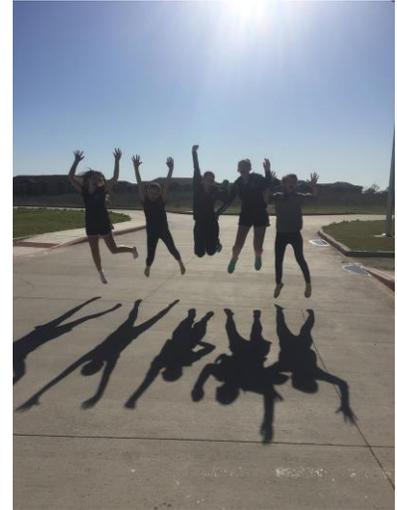
Team social activities are important for building the bond between athletes, as well as providing a way for parents to get to know each other outside of the pool.

An ideal social calendar could include:

- ❖ Events or activities for team routine and/or age groups
- ❖ Events for the athletes and their families
- ❖ Activities that include all athletes on the team, regardless of age group
- ❖ Events in the community (see below)

Examples include:

- ❖ Team dinners at meets
- ❖ Social activities such as bowling, pizza parties, or movie night
- ❖ Holiday brunch or potluck
- ❖ Video watching party (synchro videos, of course)
- ❖ End-of-the-year party or team banquet
- ❖ Game day, with team relays and pool games
- ❖ Holiday gift exchanges or “secret synchro’s”
- ❖ Big/Little sisters (pair an older swimmer with a younger swimmer and exchange notes, encouragement and perhaps small gifts)
- ❖ Fun days at practice such as “ugly suit day”, “wear funny socks day”, etc
- ❖ Synchro de Mayo party



You don't want to plan so many activities that it becomes onerous to families, but enough so that athletes and their parents can connect. Keep in mind that on most teams, the athletes will create their own social activities outside of the formal planned events.

## *Reaching out to the Broader Community*

Some activities can create exposure for the team in the community, help the team to connect with the broader community, and reinforce the culture of a community within a community. This can also help create marketing and publicity for the team.

Examples include:

- ❖ Participation in community holiday parades
- ❖ Have a booth at school or community festivals. Ideas include:
  - Pass out candy
  - Exhibit your prettiest competition suits & show synchro videos
  - Provide paper and art supplies and have kids design their own synchro suit
  - Have a contest of Best Synchro Suit Design
  - Raffle off a free day of synchro class

- ❖ Participate in a team-wide charitable drive:
  - Collect canned goods, coats, school supplies, etc for a good cause
  - Help serve meals at a shelter, pack boxes at a food bank, pick up litter at a park
  - Contribute all or a percentage of fundraising to a charity:
    - Synchro-athon (Note: anything with “athon” attached to it must go through USA Swimming – see their site for instructions)
    - Raffles
    - Water show ticket sales
    - Car washes
  - Volunteer as reading buddy or tutor for kids in need
  - Visit a retirement facility and connect with elders

### ***Getting Parents Involved in Positive Ways***

Synchro clubs depend on the involvement of parents and other volunteers to run smoothly. Like other sports, synchro also depends on parents to be involved with the sport in a positive manner.

Most parents are happy to volunteer, but some lack an understanding of what is required or fear that they don't have the right skill set. Some parents will have more availability than others; some will only be available at certain times of the year due to job or other obligations. Here are some ways to increase the likelihood that your parents will volunteer:

- ❖ Develop descriptions of the volunteer positions available, including the estimated amount of time required and skills needed.
- ❖ Communicate volunteer needs and expectations at the beginning of the year. Follow up (or have a volunteer coordinator follow up) directly with people to see how their interests and skills can help the team. Many people won't sign their name on a list, but if asked directly, will be happy to help.
- ❖ Develop a list of “one hour” jobs that volunteers could take care of in about an hour. This relieves some of the fear that they don't have enough time to commit to volunteer.
- ❖ When hosting a meet, divide jobs into shorter shifts (see point above). Ensure parents that by timing, (running, etc.) they will still get to see their swimmer compete, and will have front row seats to boot. Finally, make sure everyone knows what the job entails and that they will get any needed training.
- ❖ Make volunteer jobs fun and social. If you are doing suits or headpieces, invite everyone over and serve drinks and snacks. Invite volunteers out to lunch after a big competition.



- ❖ Create a system for getting new volunteers up to speed. This could be one or all of the following:
  - Create a binder (or google doc) with job descriptions, resources, tools, and major steps for the most important jobs
  - Have a new volunteer shadow an experienced volunteer, or, depending on the complexity, consider having a new volunteer partner up with an experienced one and share the job for a year
  - Find experienced volunteers (in your club or even from another club) who are willing to answer questions and pass down their knowledge
- ❖ Recognize volunteers. This can be as simple as a public “thank you” in the team newsletter or in an email or as elaborate as a small gift at the end of the year.
- ❖ Make sure volunteers know how their role contributes to the overall success of the team.

Even synchro parents who aren't involved in running meets or decorating suits are integral to creating a successful and positive experience for the athlete. Here are some guidelines for parents:

- ❖ Attend as many competitions as you can
- ❖ Be a good sport and cheer for all competitors
- ❖ Don't talk bad about the coach in front of your swimmer
- ❖ Encourage your swimmer to work through disagreements or dissatisfaction directly with the coach
- ❖ Encourage parents to have these rules for their children:
  - Once you start you finish
  - The coach's decision is final
  - The success of the team is more important than the success of the individual

Source: *Positive Coaching: Building Character and Self-Esteem Through Sports* by Jim Thompson



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND LINKS

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❖ ***Employee vs. Contractor?***

US Dept of Labor – Wage & Hour Division, Click [HERE](#)

❖ ***General information about pay***

US Dept of Labor – Wages, Click [HERE](#)

❖ ***Developing team policies:***

Human Kinetics, Click [HERE](#)

❖ ***Sample parent/coach communication guide:***

Richardson ISD, Click [HERE](#)

Sample Parenting Contract, Click [HERE](#)

