

## Tips for Parents at Competitions.

Let's make it clear – Swimming is not the be all and end all of life.

Some swimming performances will be 'outstanding' or 'good' or 'average' or even 'really bad!'

It is the role of parents to praise what needs praising, but it is vital that swimmers in Poseidon Swimming Club are surrounded by positive support which includes lots of love, hugs and kisses!

- Be aware of what your child's goals are for that competition. This is to ensure you don't interpret the final outcome the wrong way.
- Ensure the targets for the competition are set by the child and not you! You are not swimming the race, they are! Don't set times, scores or opposition for them to beat.
- Be supportive, despite any outcome: good or disappointing! When your child has a poor performance, is your disappointment obvious? Remember: A face, a gesture, a reaction can speak a thousand words! Always smile, even if your child hasn't reached their target.
- Become predictable – don't do things you usually wouldn't do. This may raise a sense of anxiety, when a steady and consistent environment is the key.
- Don't compare your child's performance against others. Compare your child's performance against their own.
- Do not analyse your child's performance. This is not your role as a parent – remember: even on a bad day, good things still happen e.g. a poor overall time, but a great last 50m or 25m, or a super start or turn; or at a diving comp, a great entry or tuck!
- Don't rely on food/drink provisions – come prepared.
- Be role models for other parents – be professional. Don't forget, you are representing Poseidon Swimming Club in the stands and be proud to do so – lets win awards and acknowledgements for the best supported club!
- Let the coach, coach. Your role is to be their biggest supporters, have fun and cheer from the stands!
- There is only one question to ask your child after practice or competition.... "Did you enjoy it?" If the swimmers are not having fun, and are not enjoying themselves then they should not be forced to participate.
- Remember lots of hugs, kisses and smiles.

By Rose Snyder, Managing Director Coaching, USA Swimming and "Mama Parry's Essential Guide for Swimming Parents" available to buy from [www.totalswimming.co.uk](http://www.totalswimming.co.uk)

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