



In 2011, Grand Strand Masters Swim Team (GSMS) located in North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina developed a learn-to-swim program with the support of the Swimming Saves Lives Foundation. The success of the weeklong free swim lesson program was driven by the team's willingness to become involved in this community service opportunity and their chance to make a difference by giving back their most valuable assets; their time and love of swimming.

The USMS Swimming Saves Lives (SSL) Foundation was enthusiastic to support GSMS. SSL provided banners to promote the learn-to-swim program, swim caps, and promotion via USMS. Head Coach Diane Bartlett shares how she pulled this program together:

### 6-9 Months Out:

- Meet with team members to get their buy in for volunteering their time
- Meet with aquatics/facility coordinator to get their buy in
- Select potential program duration, dates and times
- \*Determine what age participants your group would like to offer lessons

\*If your learn-to-swim program will involve minors, you must contact the USA Swimming Foundation. USMS is only able to support learn-to-swim programs that involve adults over the age of 18. The Swimming Saves Lives Foundation may provide support to learn-to-swim programs that include minors only if the host club has received approval from the USA Swimming Foundation. For more information on the USA Swimming Foundation and their Make a Splash learn to swim initiative, please contact Kim O'Shea ([koshea@usaswimming.org](mailto:koshea@usaswimming.org) / 719-866-3520) or Harriett Navarre ([hnavarre@usaswimming.org](mailto:hnavarre@usaswimming.org) / 719-866-3546).

Once you have a commitment from your team and the program/site worked out:

- Contact USMS with dates of program. USMS will provide banners so you may promote.
- Review pool space available for teaching and determine class size and number of classes that can run at the same time. From this, AND the number of swim team members available to teach, determine how many students you can register in your learn-to-swim program.
- Coordinate with the facility to be sure LIFEGUARDS are on duty during the program. The facility may need additional staff.
- Establish registration process ie: phone in, walk in (location), web, etc
- Prepare flyer and registration form – determine registration start date





### **2-3 Months Out:**

- Contact churches, community service organizations, doctor offices, rehab centers, etc. to promote the learn-to-swim program
- Check equipment at pool: determine number of available teaching aides such as kickboards, floating noodles, etc. Is there enough equipment for each participant for each class member?
- Determine number of available lifejackets for safety discussion
- Prepare “lesson plans” or teaching notes for the week
- Logistics: where will students meet before class, where will supporters sit during class, sign-in sheet, locker rooms, how (and who) will you handle bathroom trips

### **1-2 Months Out:**

- Media blitz to promote program: local newspapers, radio, press releases, facility and team website
- Hang banners
- Print flyers for distribution
- Design and print participant certificates to be distributed at the end of the program (if you choose to give them)

### **1-2 Weeks Out**

- Meet with your volunteers to review teaching plans – training workshop on how to teach, what to teach, etc.
- Review class logistics – where students will enter pool; where instructors will pick up students; how the program will “flow”

### **12 – 24 Hours Out**

- Print class rosters and assign instructors (team members)
- Print sign in sheet for each day
- Have snacks and drinks for your instructors, they will be hungry after teaching

**Run Program, Have Fun, and Take Pictures!**



### *Grand Strand Masters Swimming*

*The goal for our learn-to-swim was IMPROVEMENT. At the end of the week we wanted each of our students to be more comfortable in the water, have knowledge of basic safety skills, and show some improvement in basic swimming skills.*

*When we advertised the program, our emphasis was beginner swimmers or those children/adults who were afraid of the water. Additionally we targeted those children/adults who might not otherwise have the opportunity (financial means) to take lessons.*

*Grand Strand Masters Swimming chose Monday through Friday, June 6-10<sup>th</sup>. This was the first full week of summer after school got out. Additionally, we chose to run 3 sessions per night: 5:15-6pm, 6:15-7pm; 7:15-8pm. At each session we took 40 students for a total of 120 swimmers for the week.*

*GSMS practices at the North Myrtle Beach Aquatic & Fitness Center. The facility partnered with the team and was willing to donate the 3 hours of pool time each day for the week to host the program. All of the GSMS swimmers donated their time to teach the lessons.*