



PARENT ORIENTATION INFORMATION

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Introduction

Parent orientation is an important first step in the Waterbabies Program.

It is an opportunity for you to hear about our philosophy, to review our policies and approach to swimming with your child, and to get a clear understanding of our curriculum.

We believe that in order for you and your child to have the most successful water experience possible we need to partner together (parents, instructors & administrators) in the Aquatic Education of your child.

At Parent orientation we share with you a variety of tools and information to support you in the process of teaching your child to swim. **What follows is a summation of the most important information that we cover – this information does not replace the parent orientation meeting.**

About Us

- The Waterbabies program was created in 1997 by Vera Garibaldi. We started with 25 students and have steadily grown thanks to the commitment of our families, instructors and the quality of our program.
- Currently we are at 3 pools with over 1000 students per quarter attending weekly classes.
- Waterbabies is one of the largest Infant Aquatic programs in the Northwest.
- We offer classes for Bathtub Babies (under 4 months old), Parent-tot, Preschool, and Youth classes.
- Instructors are specially trained including:
 - Classroom training
 - In-Pool Trainings
 - Co-Teaching with an experienced instructor for approx. 10 weeks
 - Current CPR & First Aid Training
- Waterbabies is constantly updating training and curriculum – to bring our students the latest in “learn to swim techniques”.
- Waterbabies is a member of and attends conferences for:
 - The World Aquatic Baby Congress (WABC) – an association that meets every 2yrs to share new ideas and techniques in baby swimming.
 - The US Swim School Association– www.usswimschools.com – meets once a year – this association is geared toward the latest in teaching all swimmers.
- Vera Garibaldi, Director of Waterbabies, has presented at these and other national and international conferences and is recognized as an authority in Infant Aquatics

Parent-tot Classes

Waterbabies Philosophy for Parent-tot Classes:

- To use a gentle, loving approach to teaching infants thru preschoolers while still challenging you and your child.
- To teach basic swim skills using songs & games
- To use a child centered approach - We apply the technique to the child rather than the child to the technique
- To support families in the bonding and communication process
- To help develop a harmonious relationship with the water
- To have instructors and parents modeling what we want children to do in-and-under the water. Doing swimming activities with children rather than to them.
- To base the curriculum on teaching skills that are age and developmentally appropriate – so classes are divided by both age & skill levels.

Waterbabies Curriculum for Parent-tot Classes:

- Back floating

- Submersion
- Water safety – Since we are surrounded by water here in the Northwest & everyone needs these skills, water safety is an important part of our program. Exercises include:
 - Sit, Listen and Wait
 - Life Jackets
 - Safety jumps
 - Humpty Dumpty
 - Constant vigilance
- Class sizes are about 8 (at Silver Lake about 7)

Tips for Success:

- **ATTITUDE:** Swimming lessons together with your child will be one of the happiest and most rewarding experiences of your life. You are giving a full 30 minutes of uninterrupted playtime and direct attention to your child. Talk enthusiastically about “going to the lesson” and “seeing” the instructor. Your child may not understand your words but the happiness is contagious. Your attitude makes the success of the parent and infant WATERBABIES lessons.
- Body language and tone of voice – your baby/child is looking to your reaction to the water to know what to expect -
- If you are fearful – join an adult swim class
- Model the behavior you want, go underwater together
- Your language:
 - Avoid Negative talk in front of child
 - Encourage your child to try new things
 - Empathize with their potential, not their fears
- Have fun! Your child’s main mode of learning is play. Play is learning-- learning is play!
- Smile & laugh a lot.
- Make eye contact with your child.
- Relax – don’t compare children, every child is different and goes at their own pace.
- Tell your child what we are going to do next.
- Allow your child to explore & be independent. They can safely discover what doesn’t work as well as what does.
- **HELP THE INSTRUCTOR:** Repeat your child’s name often for the instructor.
- **Tell Don’t Ask** - Don’t ask your child, *especially 2 year olds!*, questions such as “do you want to...” The only answer to a question about something unknown is **No**. Instead, phrase it as a statement: “now we are going to do...”
- **COMMON CONCERNS: Crying** is the only way a child can express what is going on for them (surprise, disappointment, hunger, or any number of other things). It does not necessarily mean the child doesn’t like the swimming lessons. [We will enthusiastically try each skill that is introduced in a lesson three times before determining that we should put it off for another day because of crying.]

- Remember... everything changes – what your child does not like one day can easily become a favorite thing the next day!

Class Information:

- **Bring two towels** for your child, one for the deck (to wrap up in after the lesson) and one to dry off with.
- **Please swim & practice skills** at least one additional time each week with your child.
- **No Make-ups** - We do not have make-ups for missed classes due to illness, vacation, etc. We do offer two family swim passes to be used at the First St. Fitness pool. To redeem the pass (there is no physical pass) you need to confirm that there is "open swim" at First St. Fitness (425-450-8870), and then check in at the desk when you arrive. They have a list of all of our families enrolled in the session and will check off your name.
- **Cancelled Classes** - If Waterbabies cancels a class, we will schedule a make-up class.
- **Swim caps** – Everyone with hair below their ears or in their eyes must wear a swim cap (Parents and children).
- **Goggles** – In all of our Parent-tot classes parents need to have a pair of goggles for use in class to see your child clearly underwater.
- **Swim Diapers** – **Everyone under 5 years old (potty trained or not)** needs to wear a cloth reusable swim diaper, no disposables. The swim diaper needs to fit snugly around the legs and waist.
- **Arrival** – Wait for your class. Please enter and exit pool promptly. Do not allow your child to wander on the pool deck.
- **Pool use** – The pool is for class use only. No open swim is allowed during lesson time.
- **Parent Concerns** – Talk to instructor or call the office, please don't wait if you have a concern/question.
- **Please stay with the class** - If you need to move away please tell the instructor.
- **Guests** – Please remind guests to observe quietly on the side of the pool.
- **SONGS TO LEARN**
 - Tune to: Mulberry Bush (we use with all the "this is the way we do" verses)
 - Ring Around the Rosy
 - Humpty Dumpty
 - Big Kid Swimmers, Time to Go
 - Hokey Pokey
 - The Wheels on the Bus Go Round and Round
 - I'm a little Pancake
 - All the Fish are swimming in the water

Pre-School thru Youth Classes

Waterbabies Philosophy for Pre-School – Youth classes:

- Develop a harmonious relationship with the water

- Use parents to make a smooth transition to a teacher led class
- Develop proper alignment in the water – it is easier to learn the correct way to swim first then to try to correct a stroke after it is learned incorrectly.
- Our PreSchool and Youth swim programs are based on the curriculum and philosophy of our Waterbabies Parent-tot program, along with incorporating the ideas of Bill Boomer (a world renowned Olympic swim coach consultant), and the application of Boomers' ideas by Edie Flood and Swimplicity™.

Waterbabies Foundations for Preschool - Youth classes:

Activities include:

- Pop-Up Breathing
- Jumps
- Rolling to breathe
- Diving for toys
- Fun & games

Class Information:

- **Classes not filling** - If you are signed up for a class that does not fill, there are the following options: change classes, pay for a semi-private or private class, cancel the class, or reduce the class time (45 min. class for 2 students would become a 30 min. class).
- **Shouting** - Please do not shout instructions from the side of the pool. This can be confusing for the child and undermining for the instructor.
- **Bring two towels** for your child, one for the deck (to wrap up in after the lesson) and one to dry off with.
- **Please swim & practice skills** at least one additional time each week with your child.
- **No Make-ups** - We do not have make-ups for missed classes due to illness, vacation, etc. We do offer two family swim passes to be used at the First St. Fitness pool. To redeem the pass (there is no physical pass) you need to confirm that there is "open swim" at First St. Fitness (425-450-8870), and then check in at the desk when you arrive. They have a list of all of our families enrolled in the session and will check off your name.
- **Cancelled Classes** - If Waterbabies cancels a class, we will schedule a make-up class.
- **Swim caps** – If your child's hair is below their ears they are required to wear a swim cap.
- **Goggles** – Every child needs to bring their own clear lens goggles to class. We recommend you purchase & adjust goggles prior to your child getting into the pool. Label goggles clearly with your child's name.
- **Arrival** – Wait for your class. Please enter and exit pool promptly. Do not allow your child to wander on the pool deck.
- **Pool use** – The pool is for class use only. No open swim is allowed during lesson time.
- **Parent Concerns** – Talk to instructor or call the office, please don't wait if you have a concern/question.

- **Swim Diapers** – Everyone under 5 years old (potty trained or not) needs to wear a cloth reusable swim diaper, no disposables. The swim diaper needs to fit snugly around the legs and waist.

All Classes [\(Health, Policies, Make-up & Refund Policies\)](#)

Health

- **Ears** – Internal ear infections are not caused by water entering the ear externally. Swimmer's ear is an external infection that occurs if you are in the water 3-4 hrs per day.
- **Don't feed your child one hour** before coming to class to avoid the possibility of throwing up during class.
- **Chicken pox** – please wait until the scabs start to fall off before coming to class.
- **Diarrhea** – do not attend class until there is 7-10 days with no sign of any diarrhea.
- **Fever** – Please do not attend class if your child has a fever.
- **Cold** - if your child has a cold and your child feels okay you can come to class, the humidity may help clear sinuses.
- **Keep us informed** of any other health conditions or contagious illnesses.
- ***Weather** – be sure to dry ears and hair after exiting the pool. During the cold months please bring a hat for your child.
- **Chlorine:** We are not in the water long enough for the chlorine to be a problem unless you or your child has chlorine sensitivity. For sensitive skin, Shea Butter, Jojoba Oil and Vitamin E used before and after swimming provides protection.

Policies

- **Poop Accidents** - If you suspect your child has had a poop accident during classes, please do not check their swim diaper while still in the water; go to the nearest edge and check (being careful not to drop it in the pool or on the pool deck.) If they have had a poop accident, you can clean them up in the shower and rejoin classes if appropriate. Please be aware that if there is a poop accident that gets in the pool, we must chemically shock the pool and cancel classes for at least 3 hours to let the water cycle through the filter.
- **Swim Diapers** – Everyone under 5 years old (potty trained or not) needs to wear a cloth reusable swim diaper, no disposables. The swim diaper needs to fit snugly around the legs and waist.
- **Facility Rules** - Please abide by all rules and policies of the pool facility you are attending.
- **Fees** - There is a \$10.00 non refundable Registration Fee per session.
- **Listed instructors are subject to change.**

- **WAIT for the class** - Pool space is limited so please enter and leave the pool promptly at your lesson time. Do not allow your child to wander on the pool deck. The instructor will take roll and then start the class lesson.
- **Online registration does not guarantee a class spot.** Confirmation by email will follow. If you do not receive an email, call the office – we consider your registration a commitment to the class and do not refund based on not receiving a confirmation.
- **Hot Tub** – Please never leave your child unattended in the hot tub and never for more than 10 minutes.

Make-up and Refund Policy

- We do not offer make ups for illness or vacation.
- In lieu of make ups we offer 2 family open swim at First St Fitness (only) to be used during open swim times.
- There are no refunds unless you **cancel one week prior to classes starting.** To cancel, you will need to speak to someone in the office.
- If a class is cancelled by Waterbabies we schedule a makeup class.
- We do offer credit for family emergency/serious illness, for situations where you or your child cannot swim for the remainder of the session. We do require that you provide us with a doctor's note stating that you cannot continue. Credits are based on the date you **notify the office** that you will not be continuing – we do not back-date credits. We will credit your Waterbabies account (not your credit card) and that will be available to use against future swimming lessons with us for up to one year.

Locations

At all the pools please remember to abide by the rules at the facility. Also, please wait until the class before yours exits the pool, do not sit with your feet in the water while waiting, this is distracting for the class that is still going on.

First St Fitness – 10001 NE 1st St. Bellevue

Information for the First St. Fitness Pool

- Pool temperature is 92 degrees
- There are changing tables and cubbies on the pool deck so you can change your baby where it is warm.
- There are no street shoes allowed on the pool deck, please remove your shoes at the door. If you do not wish to remove your shoes you can purchase a pair of booties to cover your shoes for .25 cents at the First St. Fitness counter.
- First St. Fitness has a variety of swim diapers, goggles, swim caps, and swim toys for sale.

Columbia Athletic/Pine Lake Club – 2930 228th SE Sammamish (Issaquah plateau)

Information for the Pine Lake Pool

- This pool is a saltwater pool.
- Pool Temperature is 90 degrees.
- Parking - The parking lot tends to fill up you may need arrive early to park.
- There are changing tables on the pool deck and showers on deck for non-members.
- Remember to bring your own towels if you are not a member.

Columbia Athletic/Silver Lake Club – 505 128th St. SE, Everett (Mill Creek)

Information for the Silver Lake Pool

- This pool is a saltwater pool.
- Pool Temperature is 88 – 90 degrees.
- Please do not swim in the larger pool if you are not a member of the club.
- Class size in this location is around 7 students.