

Swimming Matters

The official parents newsletter of Swim Australia

Issue 8 Summer 2006

Saved in Queensland by Victorian Lessons

My husband and I are very pleased we have persisted with our son's swimming lessons, after an unfortunate incident in Queensland recently.

Josh, 4 1/2, had begun swimming lessons more than a year earlier, but didn't seem to be a quick learner. He progressed very slowly, clinging tightly to the teacher and refusing to get his head wet. I often wondered if his swimming lessons were a waste of time and money when I saw the other kids in his class improving, while his progress appeared to remain the same.

However, a few months ago, things just seemed to "click" for Josh. He was advancing quickly, and enjoyed being in the water. He had lost his fear and was having lots of fun.

His increased confidence in the water became a lifesaver on a recent trip to Queensland. Josh was playing with his cousins on a long pier when he slipped on a crab and fell into the river, which was thirty feet deep. A few months earlier he would have panicked, but this time he deliberately pushed himself up toward the surface and began dog-paddle. His quickthinking 12 year-old cousin fished him out of the water, and by the time the white-faced adults had reached his side, Josh was fine. He told his father he had been scared, but he had known what he should do.

There could so easily have been a different outcome if Josh had panicked and we had been unable to find him in the murky water. The main reason we first began swimming lessons for Josh was for his safety, and we were thrilled to realise that it has been well worth the time and effort we have put into it. Thanks to the staff at the Swim School (particularly Anita and Kerry) for their patience and persistence with all the children!

Janet, 30.06.04.



Josh is now six (pictured) and is enjoying grade one at school. † He continues to attend swimming lessons each week. † He has a two and a half year old brother (Jake) who will be starting swimming lessons soon -- he's been watching Josh in the pool and he can't wait to get started.

Parents Babies & Childrens EXPO 2006 Calendar



Sydney

Fri 28 to Sun 30 April 2006
Sydney Showground Dome,
Sydney Olympic Park

Brisbane

Fri 30 June to 2 July 2006
Brisbane Convention
& Exhibition Centre, South
Bank

Perth

Fri 18 to 20 August 2006
Claremont Showground,
Claremont

Melbourne

Fri 20 to 22 October 2006
Melbourne Exhibition Centre,
Southbank

The Parents Babies & Childrens Expo is the biggest event in Australia dedicated to parents-to-be, mums, dads, babies and toddlers.

The only expo to deliver all of your needs in one place. See all the big brand names as well as the latest innovations.

You also find heaps of information, useful tips and advice from experts and support groups, plus entertainment galore for you to enjoy with your children.

Mums and dads around Australia have been enjoying the Expo for over 15 years now:

"Great fun - very good for kids and helpful for parents - we had fun!" Lexie, QLD

"This is an excellent resource for mums to be - thank you very much" Catherine, SA

"Customer service was excellent and the parent room made life a lot easier." Bridget NSW

"I've been coming since 2000, love it to the fullest. Freebies for my and my sister's son. Keep up the great work" Sloane, WA

"Fantastic giveaways - very informative, great feeding/changing area, well done" Sara, VIC

Check out our website for more info or to register to receive a timely reminder of when the Expo will be visiting your state www.pbcexpo.com.au



Poisons and Kids Don't Mix

Harrison's Story:

Harrison was a healthy inquisitive toddler, when one morning, he opened the kitchen cupboard and reached for the dishwasher powder. Although the product had a child resistant cap, the cap mechanism had not been fully engaged and seconds later his mother heard him gagging. Harrison had swallowed caustic powder, which began burning his oesophagus and upper airway. Harrison presented at the Mater Children's Hospital emergency department vomiting blood and having difficulty breathing. Despite receiving emergency treatment he has been left with scarring of his oesophagus that will persist for life.

Harrison's story is not unusual. Every day thousands of toddlers explore their environment, running, climbing and tasting. This is a part of their normal learning and development, but it is up to the adults in their world to make their environment safe.

Dishwashing detergent is sold in tablet, liquid, gel and powder forms. All of these compounds are caustic and can burn skin and mucosa on contact. Australian legislation and standards regarding packaging of these compounds is complex. Some products require labelling and child resistant caps, whereas others do not.

Preventing toddler poisoning:

- Toddlers are inquisitive and persistent and not deterred by taste or smell.
- Supervision is important but it is best to also modify the environment to minimise potential for poisoning to occur.
- Carefully read the warning labels on products.
- Minimise access by storing potentially poisonous products in locked cupboards.
- Leave product in original containers and return to secure area after each use.
- Use cupboard and drawer locks to keep toddlers from accessing contents.
- Don't plant poisonous plants in the garden and remove poisonous weeds.
- Keep the Poisons Information phone number 13 11 26 listed with other emergency numbers.

SPECIAL matters

One summer evening during a violent thunderstorm a mother was tucking her child into bed. She was about to turn off the light when the child asked with trembling voice, "Mummy, will you sleep with me tonight?" The mother smiled and gave the child a reassuring hug. "I can't dear," she said. "I have to sleep in Daddy's room." A long silence was broken at last by a shaky little voice: "The big sissy."



Family Time – Learning Time

The following topics are suggestions for mums and dads and step-parents to have 'up their sleeves' when having meals or spending time with their children.

Make sure you have something to say to start the ball rolling. Look for opportunities to share your experiences, to inform, to teach and to encourage. Children will learn to listen, share, take turns and be curious along the way. Remember to actively listen to your children without preaching, criticising or putting them down. During these conversations everyone must feel free to say what they like without being offensive. It's okay to be silly, irrational or unrealistic.

Creative topics

If you could be an animal, what kind of animal would you be, and why?

If the house was burning down, what three things would you like to save? (things, not people – we know you would save the people first!)

What are your favourite names, what will you call your children?

If you were lost on a desert island, what things would be most useful? (For example, matches, compass, rope, first aid, recipe book, teddy bear, doona, games, books, Tim Tams.)

Mimicking famous 'people'; for example, can you talk like B1 and B2, Big Bird, Cookie Monster, your Swimming Teacher.

Celebrate something; a completion, a success, an anniversary, the pet's birthday.

Personal topics

What have you been dreaming about lately? (Sleep dreams or daydreams)

What is the best news you have heard this week?

If you could be the best at any sport, what would it be and why?

What is embarrassment? When have you been embarrassed? How can you help someone to feel better when they are embarrassed?

Are you good at anything that your teacher doesn't know about?

General topics

What place in Australia would you most like to visit?

What place in the world would you most like to explore?

What is the most exciting thing you can think of that you would like to try? For example; surfing, bungyjumping, parachuting. What would this feel like? How old would you have to be? How scary would it be?

Plan an imaginary party. Who will you invite, what theme will you have, what would you eat, how will you decorate, what would you wear?

Plan an outing or a holiday.

Weather. Don't laugh! – Talk about hailstorms, what is the hottest month (February), tidal waves and cyclones.

What would you like to do for others? What would you like to invent that would make the world a better place?

From: Tea-time topics for families. Source – Carmel O'Brien, Unpublished material, Lifeworks, published by Child Support Agency, Department of Family and Community Services, 2000, © Commonwealth of Australia reproduced with permission.

Unique Service Provides Boon for Parents!

The Bub Hub is a unique directory of goods and services that provides local information on more than 100 topics for all Australian parents. The site covers every state and territory including regional areas and is endorsed by The Australian College of Midwives Inc. (ACMI), the Playgroup Association and The Australian Lactation Consultants Association (ALCA)

If you need information on ANY aspect of conceiving, having or raising babies (and toddlers) than join the 35,000+ viewers who visit www.bubhub.com.au each week.

"Our aim has always been to try and make parenting a little easier by putting relevant, current information in one spot." Said Hilary Lauder (Founder). "We list every organisation (more than 3,500) providing a direct service to parents free-of-charge."

Features of the site include:

- Shops, Services, Information and Activity Directories, covering more than 100 topics
- Community Forum
- Calendar of Events
- Pregnancy Journal

Week by week pregnancy email

Monthly eNewsletter (3 articles and competitions)

Four ways to search/browse the site

From finding a local swim school to Helplines & support Organisations the Bub Hub has been helping Australian Parents nationally for more than three years.

www.bubhub.com.au is a must see for parents all over Australia.

For editorial enquires call Brad @ The Bub Hub on (07) 3862 4491

The Bub Hub is Australia's most comprehensive online directory of pregnancy, baby and toddler services with local information for parents anywhere in Australia.



Check out www.bubhub.com.au for more info.



The shock withdrawal of Ian Thorpe from our Australian Swimming Team and his subsequent press conference was played into millions of homes around Australia.

It was not fear of the South African men's sprinting power but rather a bronchial illness that floored Thorpe, our greatest Olympian. It was interesting to hear him say how as a young child it was a bronchial illness that kept him out of school for three months.

Turn back the clock on Grant Hackett you will find that Grant has a history of bronchial complaints and currently lends his support to the Mater Children's hospital on behalf of young babies with respiratory problems.

Neil Brooks, Olympic Gold medallist in Moscow, was a severe asthmatic whose parents were instructed by the local doctor to take Neil swimming.

I was brought to the pool on doctors orders after having a lung removed as a young child. Many Australian swimming champions have started in our great sport by a doctor's order to strengthen the lungs.

Today more and more doctors are recommending swimming to their patients as a practical remedy for lung complaints.

We know that Ian and Grant followed their siblings to the swimming pool but I am sure the parents and medical people associated with these champions were aware of the therapeutic values of swimming.

Winter is a time when influenza, sniffs coughs and colds are on the prowl. Today with heated indoor pools there is no reason for any child to stop swimming during the colder months.

Don't make the mistake of stopping your child's swimming lessons because it may be a little inconvenient, you will be doing them a disservice. Swimming is the one physical activity/sport which will benefit your child's health in the colder months. It is also a physical activity/sport that requires constant practise on the skills to continue improvement.

A little effort on your part as parents this winter will reap great rewards next summer as you build swimming skills self esteem and keep up an activity that has the potential save your child's life.

Remember, Kids Alive Do the Five.

Laurie Lawrence

KIDS ALIVE
DO THE FIVE

- 1 Fence the pool
- 2 Shut the gate
- 3 Learn to swim ... It's great!
- 4 Supervise, watch your mate
- 5 Learn how to resuscitate

Your swim school details



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