



Courage Levels

3 years – 5 years

Watch Around the Water Policy:

Children under the age of 5 must be constantly supervised and within arm's reach of an adult at all times

Children under the age of 10 must be actively supervised and within clear view at all times

For Parents:

Remember to remain relaxed when in the water. Your children mimic your reactions and will enjoy the water if you do too! Do not force your child to do anything when in the water, let them experience and discover it at their own speed. Give plenty of words of encouragement and celebrate milestones, no matter how little with lots of praise!

Balance

Building a sense of balance in the water is important to develop early in children so that they can recover to safe positions in the water. This includes recovering to a standing position or rolling on to their back and staying in a position where their mouth is out of the water to breathe.

Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
In a shower, bath, pool or shell pool, practice bending over to pick up toys. Let your child experience how gravity reacts differently in water, and how to keep their balance in an aquatic environment.	“Windmill arms” are the early stages of freestyle & backstroke. Practice doing big alternating circle arms in & out of the water. These arms will shift the centre of balance. Can they do the arms while floating? Running? Walking? How about doing them while jumping on the trampoline!	Hokey Pokey song <i>“You put your right arm in, You put your right arm out You put your right arm in and shake it all about, You do the hokey pokey and you turn around That’s what it’s all about”</i> Try do this sitting in the bath – encourage your child to stay nice and balanced so they do not fall over!

Floating

The ability to float is the first step towards learning simple swimming strokes. Floating on the front & back are also vital survival skills. If a child is ever in danger in deep water, they should be able to float on their back and either wait to be rescued or make their way to safety.

Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
In shallow water, practice your child floating on their back. Using a mirror, hold it above their head and encourage them to tilt their head backwards. This will slowly submerge their ear in the water. The perfect floating position should have the body horizontal in the water, with the chin tilted slightly backwards and ears in the water.	With a few glow sticks and glow-in-the-dark stars, you can transform your bathroom into a magical astronomical wonderland. Simply crack a few glow sticks and throw them into the water, slap some glow-in-the-dark stars on the ceiling, and hit the lights. Hand your child a “telescope” (i.e., toilet paper roll) so they can get a better view! Float them on their back to go stargazing.	Once good floating technique is established, we look at kicking legs as our next progression in lessons. You can practice kicking legs at home to get ready for the pool! Have your child sit on the edge of the pool, bath tub or even the couch. Encourage nice long straight legs, with pointy “ballerina toes”. Move your legs up and down in a fast, small action. We want to avoid bicycle legs and encourage long legs.

Sensory

The aquatic environment is unique to all senses, and letting your child explore them and be comfortable is an important step towards achieving water confidence.

Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
Have a play in the water, encourage splashing water on their face & body with the “Wheels on the Bus” song <i>“The wheels on the bus go splash splash splash splash (splash water) The wheels on the bus go swish swish swish swish (wave hands underneath the water) The wheels on the bus go clap clap clap (clap water in their hands)”</i>	Get a handful of sponges. Let them soak up with water and squeeze the water out of them. Watch how the water absorbs and falls from the sponge – can your child squeeze the sponge over their own head? Try play Jenga with the sponges – how high can you build a tower of sponges that float on the water?	“Ice Fishing” Fill up a bathtub with cubes of ice. Can they fish all the ice cubes out of the bath or bucket before they all melt?! Use little nets or small measuring cups as fishing nets. Talk with your children about why ice melts in water. Why is ice cold? How does water turn into ice? Where does the ice go once it melts!?

Cues

In swimming lessons, all activities are matched with cues. These cues are used so that children know exactly when a big event like water being poured over their head, or a jump in the water will happen. You can use small toys or buckets that hold water for these activities

Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
<p>This activity combines lots of skills. While singing the pancake song, flip your child over from floating on their back to floating on their front:</p> <p><i>“I’m a little pancake on my back, I’m a little pancake nice and flat, I’m a little pancake on my back, Flip me over and swim me back. I’m a little pancake on my tum, I’m a little pancake having lots of fun, I’m a little pancake on my tum, Flip me over and now we’re done.”</i></p>	<p>Encourage kicking legs by holding your child’s legs while in the water. They may be on your lap or floating on their front/back.</p> <p><i>“Motor boat, motor boat go slow (slow kicks in water)</i></p> <p><i>Motor boat, motor boat go fast (fast kicks in water)</i></p> <p><i>Motor boat, motor boat step on the gas (lots of fast kicks in a row!)”</i></p>	<p>Now we are going to make a cake in the bath with a bucket/bowl/tub. Put some pretend flour, milk, eggs and chocolate – Mix it around in the bath with lots of splashes and kicks</p> <p>Place your mixture in the (pretend) oven, and when it DINGS – blow bubbles to cool it down – pretend to eat it by splashing water around your mouth and face.</p>

Breath Control

Having a good breath control is the beginning steps of being able to fully submerge underwater. This is often taught in lessons as “blowing bubbles” but it is also being able to take inward breaths at the right time, so children do not swallow water.

Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3
<p>Mix up lots of hand wash and water in your hands. Cup your hands with a small hole in between and try blowing your own bubbles. You need to blow just the right amount of air so the bubble blows but does not pop! This encourages excellent breath control</p>	<p>Grab a floating toy. How quickly can your child get their toy to the other end of the bath/shell pool without touching it? (hint, they will need to either blow on it or blow lots of bubbles behind it to move it forward!)</p>	<p><i>“Ring a ring a rosie, A pocket full of posie, A tishoo a tishoo, we all blow bubbles!”</i></p> <p>Blow lots of bubbles with your child when you reach the cue.</p>