



Wonder Levels

6 months - 3 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
<p>Sit your child on your knee while in the bath and have them hold your finger with both hands. Gently bounce them up and down to experience how their body reacts to water & small splashes around them</p> <p>Sing “Wibble wobble, wibble wobble, jelly on a plate. Wibble wobble, wibble wobble, jelly on a plate!” while jiggling them around in the water</p>	<p>Have your child stand up in the bathtub. Find an object that will sink to the bottom, could be a toy or even some cutlery! Have your child bend over to try and pick it up. Bending and twisting all feel a little different when you are in the water.</p>	<p>A lot of what we do around the water is often on top of it (boats, boogie boards, life jackets). It is important to understand how our body reacts when something else is making us float. Grab a kickboard, noodle or even an empty milk bottle. Play around in the bath with how things can keep us afloat. Sit your child up on a kickboard and play around as if they were balancing on a little boat!</p>

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
<p>Supporting your child’s head on your shoulder and running your arm down the length of their back, float them on their back. Gently wave them back and forward in the water and let the water run through their fingers & toes (they may start kicking reflexively!). Slowly lower their head back in the water so their ears are submerged</p>	<p>With your child facing you on their tummy, support their body by either holding their shoulders or hips, encouraging their body to be flat and on top of the water. Gently wave them back and forward in the water and encourage them to blow bubbles with their mouth in the water.</p>	<p>We can also float in vertical positions in the water. With your child facing you in the water, bounce them up and down gently from the bottom of the bath. The water will support the weight of your child on the way up, and slowly sink their feet to the bottom on the way down. This vertical floating is a steppingstone to learning to tread water.</p>

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
<p>Toys are great for this – think squishy toys, brightly coloured toys, sinking/floating objects. Let your child explore how their toys react in an aquatic environment such as a pool, sand pit filled with water or a bucket. How do they look underwater? How do they feel when they are wet?</p>	<p>Fill up the bath or a bucket with bubble bath soap or a bath bomb. Watch how the bubbles grow and expand. Let your child play in the bubbles and experience how water can take lots of different shapes & forms</p>	<p>Grab a sponge/loofah/scrubbers to use along your baby’s body. Start with their feet and toes and work your way up to their chest. Do they like the softness of the sponge or the unique feeling of a loofa?</p>

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
Fill up a small toy bucket or watering can and sing "I'm a little teapot song". Fill it up with water, and when you get to "pour me out" in the song, pour the water over your child's head. They may also want to pour it over your head, or even their own head! Encourage them to close their eyes and close their mouth	Sing "twinkle twinkle little star" with your child floating on their back. Twinkle your fingers as the star in the sky to encourage them to look up at the roof. Some droplets may fall on their face – reassure them that this is safe, and they can just wipe away the water.	Sing "The wheels on the bus go kick, kick, kick" or "The wheels on the bus go splash, splash, splash" Keep singing the song with lots of different actions. You may need to move your child to encourage them to complete all the movements or have them copy you!

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
Using a straw, practice blowing air through one end, with the other end in the water. This will allow children to see how their breath changes what the water looks like. It also teaches them to blow air fast through their mouth. Try blowing bubbles at toys to make them move around.	In the shower, use songs and cues to practice going underneath the flow of water. It is best to try do this while your child is looking at you directly (face to face) so that they can see your positive and reassuring reactions. We look for children to close their eyes and mouth as the first step showing they are ready for submersion.	"Crocodile, crocodile swimming in the bath, crocodile, crocodile watch me dive!" On "dive" carefully submerge your child in the bath. Only do so if they are feeling relaxed and have closed their mouth. This may take some time to build up to. Give them a big smile and congratulations when they come back above the water!