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Welcome to **Red Cross Swim Kids**, our fun, learn-to-swim program for children ages five and older. This 10-level program helps swimmers develop the **five main swimming strokes**—front crawl, back crawl, elementary back stroke, breast stroke, and sidestroke—which supports learning **how to be safe in, on, and around the water**. The program also increases **fitness and endurance** through enjoyable activities.

What to expect

We teach both the **swimming strokes** (front crawl, back crawl, and breast stroke) and the **survival strokes** (elementary back stroke and sidestroke) as they each serve a different purpose. Swimming strokes are life-saving, life-preserving and promote fitness, while survival strokes are for staying safe and getting out of trouble in the water. By learning all of these strokes, your child will have options when he or she is in the water and will be prepared to handle any situation with confidence and skill. Learning a variety of strokes also allows children to develop a lifelong love of swimming for fitness and health purposes, or may act as a springboard to taking up other aquatic sports and activities.

To make skill development easy, your child will work on strokes in easy-to-learn **progressions**. These progressions are the basic components of each stroke and are further developed in each level. Red Cross Swim can also be modified for swimmers with disabilities, please check with your facility. In each level, they will work on: **1**. Body position; **2**. Legs; **3**. Arms; **4**. Breathing; **5**. Coordination and timing.

Water safety education is as important as the swimming skills they are learning. Water safety skills and knowledge are included in all levels of our Red Cross Swim programs. Most water-related incidents are preventable if children understand the risks involved. Our water safety information helps children identify the risks, so they can enjoy a safe and fun water experience, in, on, and around the water. Your child may also have the opportunity to attempt swimming in clothing, which will teach children how to survive unintentional falls into water – one of the leading causes of drowning for this age group.



Continuous evaluation to ensure success

The Red Cross Swim Kids program uses continuous evaluation—a **process of constantly monitoring the progress of each child and recording an item as complete when the child meets the minimum standards for that item**. Continuous evaluation allows the focus to remain on the individual child at all times instead of applying a standard test for all swimmers at the end of each level.

Our Instructors recognize each swimmer's needs and abilities, consider the steps required to improve his or her performance, and provide opportunities for each swimmer to be included in every activity to the best of his or her ability. Your child will be constantly challenged to learn and develop skills and will continually improve throughout the lessons.

Why skills look different in each level

Each level of the Red Cross Swim Kids program builds on the skills learned in the previous level. We ensure that children are comfortable performing one item before introducing them to something new.

Our entire swim continuum is based on skills and abilities. Building skills using progressions—in a gradual and logical series of steps—facilitates the learning process, allows children to develop their skills gradually, and helps maximize each swimmer's potential for success.

Achieving a personal best

Every time your child enters the pool, he or she will have an opportunity to improve his or her skills. This may be swimming farther or faster, treading water longer, diving in a more streamlined position, or even floating longer. Our personal best tracking is designed to ensure each child can monitor personal improvement in swimming distances and times. Red Cross swimming programs support the **Canadian Sport for Life long-term participant development model**. Learning to swim with Red Cross Swim provides the swimmer with the confidence to participate in a range of sports such as sailing, water polo, diving, canoeing, white water paddling, synchronized swimming, and competitive swimming as well as pursue careers in aquatics, search and rescue, law enforcement, etc.

What to expect from the Instructor

Our Instructors use progressions, provide positive feedback, and use corrective teaching techniques to help your child develop skills. **The Instructor's goal is to help each swimmer succeed** by planning enjoyable activities that build on what he or she can do already, and giving the swimmer the feedback and encouragement he or she needs to learn new skills.

Progressions	A gradual and logical series of steps to teach a new skill. Each level in the Red Cross Swim Kids program is built on progressions to help maximize each swimmer's potential for success. Each time your child works on a skill in a new level, there are new performance criteria that your child will work to achieve that are part of the full progression of the skill or stroke. This helps your child master the new skill.
Positive feedback	Receiving information about their performance, what they're doing right, and what they need to improve is a key factor in a child's learning process.
Corrective teaching	As your child attempts to perform a new skill, the Instructor will correct the errors, but more importantly, encourage your child to continue doing the things that are being done correctly.

Red Cross Swim News: Kids 1 to 5

Instructors create an environment where each swimmer feels included and accepted, which helps swimmers become open to learning and makes the learning experience more enjoyable.

Instructors also provide activities that are adapted to the abilities of each child so all swimmers can participate comfortably. As your child progresses, Instructors employ effective communication and various teaching methods, games, and activities to accommodate each child's learning style. Above all, the Instructor's goal is to ensure each individual swimmer's personal success.

Moving to the next program level

As the program develops from the skills learned in the previous level, it is critical to be able to **complete all skills and learning** in each level.

Swimmers who haven't completed skills have the opportunity to continue to work on achieving the necessary progression step by registering in the level an additional time until their skills are strong enough to enter the next level.

Your child will achieve physical developmental milestones at his or her own rate. It is important to look at the successes achieved during each lesson set, knowing that taking a level again offers the opportunity to improve on the skills that are the building blocks for success at the next level.

Practise making waves at home!

How you can build on your child's swimming experience:

- Take your child to public or family swims to develop strength, practise skills, and increase his or her comfort level in the water.
- Encourage your child to play and practise the skills he or she is learning in lessons.
- Review safety practices with your child.
- Discuss safe locations for diving. Have your child talk about how to improve his or her safety by entering "feet first, the first time" to ensure there are no water hazards.
- Supervise your child around water at all times
- Once your child has achieved 25m, go to Getswimming.ca to register as part of Canada's Swim Team.

