

## INFANT SWIMMING RESOURCE



Gretchen Schild-Ellgren  
ISR Certified ISR Instructor  
Licensed Nurse  
Cell: (904) 616-8075  
Email: [waterlillys@gmail.com](mailto:waterlillys@gmail.com)  
Personal website: [www.WaterlillySwimSchool.com](http://www.WaterlillySwimSchool.com)

Dear Parent,

Thank you for your interest in *Infant Swimming Resource (ISR)*. From this letter and the material I sent to you, you will become acquainted about *Infant Swimming Resource* and discover that ISR truly is a special aquatic survival swimming program. I am proud to say that ISR is rated the most effective and comprehensive infant swimming program in America.

I've written this letter in a Question and Answer format to answer the most frequently asked questions about ISR. Please feel free to call me with any additional questions you may have.

### **WHAT IS INFANT SWIMMING RESOURCE?**

*Infant Swimming Resource* is a national program of certified swimming instructors developed by a psychologist and focused on education, safety and research and is approved by the State of Florida thereto.

Research is the catalyst of ISR's program and is the product of more than 39 years of ongoing development aimed at finding the safest and most effective method of teaching infant survival skills. As you know, as soon as a child can walk or crawl, he/she is in danger of having an aquatic accident. ISR believes by teaching infants both swimming *and* survival skills, we can reduce the epidemic rate of drowning. I strongly recommend that you visit our website at [www.infantswim.com](http://www.infantswim.com) if you haven't done so already. There you will find a wealth of information on ISR including history, statistics, learning processes, parent praises, survival letters, instructors, our training and theory.

### **WHY IS ISR DIFFERENT?**

ISR lessons are offered to children 6 months to 6 years. These lessons are not like The "mom and tot" courses taught by other swim programs. These programs teach wateracclimation. courses, while we teach aquatic survival skills. Children 6 months-11months learn to rotate onto their backs to achieve a back float and breathe;

while children 11 months and up learn to swim, flip on their backs to breathe, and then to continue swimming to safety.



The goal of a 6 - 11 month old infant is to assume a back float position, rest and breath.

The goal of 11 months and older is to swim, flip to back and float, and then to continue swimming until your child attains the wall or another form of safety.



### HOW CAN YOU TEACH SWIMMING TO A NON-VERBAL CHILD?

*Infant Swimming Resource* was founded by a psychologist with principles of “operant conditioning” integrated into each lesson. Familiar reinforcers are used, such as picking up the child, pleasant voice tones, and gentle squeezes. Each time a muscle

performs an appropriate action, the muscle is immediately reinforced. Children learn to respond as the instructor encourages them.

## **WHY DOES MY CHILD CRY AND WILL HE/SHE BE SCARED OF THE WATER?**

Children often cry for a variety of reasons (i.e., parent separation, new people, new situations, perception of the unknown, and being unskilled!) For the infant, water holds no perception of danger for the naïve child, so their cry is usually a social one designed to summon adult intervention (it usually works at home when they need something!).

Should you not participate in lessons if your child cries? My answer is this: Would you not give your child an immunization shot because he cried before it? As far as lessons are concerned you usually find that as the child becomes more comfortable with me and the lesson situation and becomes more skilled, crying usually slows down substantially or even frequently stops.

About fears; first of all our lessons are designed to keep your child hopeful. Since we teach our swim-float-swim sequence in reverse order your child is always working toward a familiar goal. While they may be learning something new that day, the rest of the sequence has already been practiced many times and will be a skill that the child has mastered or I will not move on. Therefore, the child is heavily reinforced in what he already knows and therefore there is no “unknown” per se.

Also, as far as explaining fears, let me point this out: All fears are learned. Children learn their emotions from watching the parents respond to certain situations. For example; most people are afraid of snakes even though they have never seen one in the wild, but they have seen other people’s reactions with regard to snakes and have picked up on their fears and learned.

to be afraid. Usually if the parents are not afraid or fearful, the child won’t be. Additionally, a child learning to walk will usually fall down or hit their head on the coffee table and will cry, yet the child is not afraid to walk nor are they afraid of coffee tables, nor do they usually remember learning to walk; just as our children usually don’t remember learning to swim or the emotions attached to it, just that they’ve always known how to swim.

Again, it is very important that as a parent of a child in lessons, you need to be aware that your child picks up on your anxieties, so please be positive about the lessons around the pool and at home so that the child is positive as well. If you do have concerns, you can always call me and talk to me about it - just not at the pool and/or around your child or children.

## **HOW ARE ISR LESSONS TAUGHT?**

Lessons are taught 5 days a week, 10 minutes per day, for 4-6 weeks. This depends on the age of the child, his learning style and what type of experiences the child has had with the aquatic environment in the past. Younger infants are taught to float and to stabilize breathing and older children are taught to swim-float-swim sequence to secure the wall or climb out to safety. We **NEVER** throw a child into the water. Instruction is individualized with only one child in the water at a time. The last three days of the lessons are taught with the child fully clothed as ISR research has demonstrated that 62%

of aquatic accidents occur while children are fully dressed. Parents remain poolside throughout the lesson and take part in the child's lessons by giving the child positive encouragement. Children under 3 are monitored daily by a BUDS sheet (bowel, urine, diet & sleep) completed by the parent 24 hours before lesson and at poolside, and then reviewed daily by the instructor. It is by this that we can monitor for any factors that may affect the lesson for that day. **Safety is our #1 priority.** This information is explained in detail to the parent on the first day of lessons and in the Parent Resource Guide, which every parent receives access to when they register their child for lessons.

ISR instructors have given over 1.2 million lessons without incident. In fact, as of 7/20/04, there have been 771 unwitnessed survivals reported to ISR and 1700+ witnessed survivals.

### **WHAT IS THE COST OF LESSONS?**

ISR lessons cost \$65.00 per week, payable Monday of that week's lessons. There is a Registration fee of \$105.00 (for new students only, refreshers are registered at \$35.00) that goes to ISR headquarters and covers the costs of your National Registration and with that they will also send you a box to your doorstep with our very informative Parent Resource Book, a T-shirt with ISR logos, a swim diaper with logos, a DVD, brochures and it also covers the cost of Dr. Barnett and his medical team (RET) reviewing your child's Registration and medical forms so that we can supply the safest lessons possible for your child.

### **WHAT IS THE RETENTION RATE OF ISR STUDENTS?**

ISR research has shown that there is a 94-100% retention rate for ISR students after being out of the water for one year. ISR teaches sensory-motor coordination, not the "fun and game" approach emphasized in other swim programs. ISR's method is far more lasting. ISR recommends that children under the age of 5 years be brought back each year for refresher lessons, which usually last 1-2 weeks depending mostly on how much your child has grown over the past year.

### **WHAT ARE THE QUALIFICATIONS OF THE ISR INSTRUCTOR?**

Florida law, (FAC10D-5.111) requires that anyone who teaches swimming to infants and young children in a commercial establishment must be a certified instructor with a nationally recognized organization. All ISR instructors meet this requirement.

Each instructor also has been certified in CCPR and First Aid, and carries their own insurance. Each ISR instructor is academically trained and tested in a variety of areas including operant conditioning, child psychology and behavioral charting. Each instructor must be re-certified yearly at the ISR National Symposium. At the National Symposium, each instructor must review safety practices and learn newer, more efficient techniques to incorporate our latest research efforts into teaching. Our academic training always continues.

### **ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR?**

I have been a nurse since 1993, which included pediatrics. I am a mother of three and when I installed our pool, I was very concerned about our daughter and her safety. After I became introduced to the Infant Swim Resource program, I was truly amazed and wanted to bring this type of training to our community.

### **WHERE DO I TEACH AND WHAT ARE MY HOURS?**

I will be teaching at a private location with a heated screen-enclosed pool and starting June 1<sup>st</sup> 2009, will be teaching at Fleming Island Plantation in addition.

I'm sure after reading all the material you will have discovered just how unique our program is. Please call me if you have any further questions, and again, thank you for your time and interest. Also, again, please visit our website at [www.infantswim.com](http://www.infantswim.com).

Best regards,  
Gretchen Schild-Ellgren  
Infant Swimming Resource  
Licensed Nurse

At **ISR** our mission is "*to prevent drownings and enrich the lives of children by teaching them to swim*".



**WaterlilySwimSchool.com**

*Not just swim lessons, but*  
**SURVIVAL!**

**904-616-8075**

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