



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

SWIM ASSESSMENT POLICY

Drowning continues to be the leading cause of unintentional death for children ages one to four years, with children from communities of color at greatest risk. The YMCA of Southern Arizona is committed to keeping children safe in and around the water which is why we have chosen to implement the proven drowning prevention technique Test, Mark, and Protect.

All children 12 years or younger visiting the pool during YMCA operating hours will be given a swim assessment to determine their swimming ability. This includes all children in afterschool groups, camps, birthday parties, pool rentals and during open swim. To ensure each assessment is being conducted appropriately, assessments should only be conducted by trained YMCA staff. By taking the time to evaluate each child, we are not only notifying them (and their guardian if present) of their swimming ability but also reiterating safe swimming practice.

THE SWIM ASSESSMENT PROCESS & OBSERVATIONS

The complete swim assessment consists of a child confidently swimming at least 25-yards of the pool without stopping and climbing out of the pool independently, jumping into the pool's deep end without assistance, and treading water for at least 30 seconds. Below describes the observations of each level:

- **Green Band Qualifications:** Swimmers face must be in the water while swimming at least 25-yards. Their body and leg position must be horizontal, near the surface of the water with a rhythmic breathing pattern without taking a break or touching the bottom at any time. Swimmers must be able to jump into the deep water independently and tread water with their head and mouth above the water at all times without showing any warning signs of exhaustion. Child must be able to climb out of the pool independently once their assessment is completed.
- **Yellow Band Qualifications:** Child must be able to swim at least 15-yards without any warning signs of exhaustion. Their body position must be horizontal and their legs must be kicking behind their body (not vertically) at the surface of the water. The child must be able to demonstrate two survival techniques: treading water and jump-push-turn-grab. After successfully demonstrating their ability to perform the two survival techniques, the child must be able to safely climb out independently.
- **Red Band Qualifications:** Child cannot put their face in the water or swim independently. They may also take frequent breaks or touch the bottom of the pool, has a panicked or concerned look while in the water, their head/mouth frequently dips under the water and quickly becomes exhausted. Anyone who also refuses to take a swim test.

PROCEDURES TO MARK & PROTECT

Every time a swim assessment has been performed or a child is unable to participate, their results must be recorded in Daxko Operations. If at any time the assessment determines a child's swimming ability has changed, no matter the reason, the account should be updated to ensure our records are current.

Guidelines to Protect Children While at the Pool:

- All children 12 years and younger must take a swim assessment and the appropriate band is issued based on their swimming ability. Those who are not able to perform an assessment will be automatically issued a red band.
- Those children who receive a green band can have access to the entire designated swimming area, including the deep end.
- Children 8 years or older who receive a yellow band are encouraged to remain where they can touch and must be actively supervised by a guardian at all times while at the pool. They also must remain in the "shallow end" of the designated swimming area as indicated by the appropriately placed deep rope.
- Children 7 years and younger or those who receive a red band must be actively supervised by a guardian and within arm's reach at all times while in the pool.
- Children who receive a red band may wear a coast guard-approved life jacket. However, this does not replace the role of the guardian. The jacket must remain on the entire visit.
- At no time may children who were issued a red or yellow band swim in the "deep end."
- Reassessments may be requested by a child or guardian, but not within same the day.
- Results of each swim assessment are determined by trained YMCA staff.
- In the event a Lifeguard witnesses a child not demonstrating the appropriate swimming ability for a band that was issued, a child may be asked to be re-assessed. If the child's swimming ability has changed, no matter the reason, the assessment must be documented and another band must be issued before the child can return to the pool.

POOL RULES

Safety is our number one priority within aquatics. Through proactive measures we all can prevent incidents from occurring. This includes ensuring our community members follow all facility and pool rules. Below are list of association-wide pool rules:

1. Obey the lifeguard at all times
2. Only Coast Guard-Approved personal floatation devices (PFD's) allowed
3. Walk while on the pool deck
4. Unsafe behavior, as determined by the lifeguard, is prohibited.
5. No glass allowed on the pool deck

6. Always shower before entering the pool
7. Swim suits must be worn at all times
8. Members and guests of all ages must change clothes in designated locker rooms
9. Diving is permitted only in water 6 ft. or deeper
10. Young children who are not toilet trained must wear a swim diaper
11. Children under the age of 8 years must be accompanied by a responsible person
12. Long (extended) breath holding is prohibited
13. For your safety, the use of goggles that cover your nose are not permitted
14. Pushing, wrestling, dunking, throwing, or riding on the shoulder of others is prohibited
15. Individuals with open cuts, sores, or bandages will not be permitted in the pool
16. Appropriate language should be used at all times; vulgar or offensive language will not be tolerated
17. Food and Drinks only in designated areas

As a reminder, the lifeguard is always in charge. It is the primary responsibility of the lifeguard to scan the pool area, respond to emergency situations and enforce rules for everyone's safety. It is important to become familiar with the dangers at each facility as well as the unique pool rules to ensure a safe environment for all.

FLOTATION DEVICE POLICY

Any water is potentially hazardous if swimmers are not careful. Close supervision is the key to maintain a safe swimming environment for everyone. Therefore, the YMCA of Southern Arizona requires all non-swimmers to be under direct supervision of a legal parent or guardian at all times when in the water managed by the Y. Direct supervision means a parent and guardian must be within arm's reach of the non-swimmer at all times.

Floatation devices are designed to assist swimmers and non-swimmers in staying afloat. Only U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal floatation devices are allowed in the YMCA managed pools. Kickboards, Pool noodles, and Float Belts are not a substitute for a U.S. Coast Guard compliant device and are only permitted during swim instruction, not recreational use.

At the Y, we employ lifeguards to provide all aquatics participants with the utmost level of safety while in and around the water. If a lifeguard determines that a floatation device is unsafe or being used in an unsafe manner, they will be expected to ask the guest(s) to immediately correct their behavior or choose to exit the pool.