Swimming and Water Safety Program
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Introduction

The Tasmanian Department of Education provides the opportunity for every Year 3, 4, 5, and at risk Year 6 student in Tasmanian Government schools to participate in quality swimming and water safety instruction. This program consists of ten consecutive lessons per year – totalling a potential of thirty lessons, in which to become a competent swimmer and be water safe. The annual ten lessons are conducted in a range of government owned, council and private swimming pools around the state.

The program has a strong emphasis on water safety, including boat safety – with experiences using personal floatation devices, survival swimming, reach to rescue, entering aquatic environments safely, as well as efficient stroke development and building swimming stamina. These elements are imperative as our student’s engage in numerous leisure and sporting activities in lakes, rivers and the sea as part of family and community life. These elements also build the foundation for participation in aquatic activities in adult life.

The Swimming and Water Safety Program supports the Australian Curriculum Health and Physical Education, Personal, social and community strand and Movement and physical activity strand – in particular the focus areas of Safety, Health benefits of physical activity, Fundamental motor skills and Lifelong physical activities.

The Swimming and Water Safety Team

• Principal Education Officer – Health and Wellbeing
• Regional Coordinators – South, North, North West
• Administration Officer
• Pool Attendants – North and North-West

The Swimming and Water Safety Program Goals

• To engage all students in a supportive and positive learning environment which will foster enjoyment of aquatic activities
• To develop skills, knowledge, confidence and understanding of water safety, boat safety and swimming stroke technique and stamina
• To provide a broad variety of experiences appropriate to each pool context and each student’s individual needs and ability
• To provide high level instruction in swimming and water safety
• To improve the levels of competency for each student

• To include Year 6 students in the program if they are considered at risk after the (potential) 30 lessons in earlier Years 3, 4, and 5.

Swimming and Water Safety Program Instruction

• Swimming and Water Safety instruction must be delivered by Department of Education Health and Physical Education (HPE) teachers, or by AUSTSWIM instructors who have adequate professional qualifications and personal competence in swimming, swimming instruction, first aid, rescue and resuscitation techniques.

• All HPE teachers and AUSTSWIM instructors who teach in this program are required to attend the annual DoE Professional Development seminar in February of each year. If, due to unforeseen circumstances or staffing changes, this is impossible, the Regional Coordinator will provide induction training upon request.

• HPE teachers and AUSTSWIM instructors must hold as a minimum — Perform Basic Rescue (SISCAQUA002) and perform CPR (HLTAID001). These qualifications must be updated annually at the seminar, or in the event that instructors are employed by a council or private pool, these pools will provide re-accreditation. AUSTSWIM teachers of the DoE Swimming and Water Safety Program must be currently registered and accredited to ISO/IEC 17024 under the AUSTSWIM Scheme (Standards). HPE teachers must have appropriate tertiary units in HPE. If DoE teachers or AUSTSWIM instructors require further experience and confidence in teaching, the Regional Coordinator will negotiate mentoring to ensure appropriate teaching standards are evident and maintained.

• It is ideal that qualified HPE teachers in all primary and district school accompany their students and teach in the program as the ‘Teacher in Charge’ (TIC). If this is not possible the school will be invoiced for the cost to employ a suitably qualified teacher to conduct their program.

• All students are to have the opportunity to access this program, with students who normally require a teacher aide to be supported ideally by their normal aide, provided by the school.

• Student – teacher ratios are recommended to be ten (10) students— one (1) teacher, however, consideration must be given to a number of relevant factors such as – student age, experience, confidence, competency, individual needs. Please refer to: AUSTSWIM Swimming and Water Safety Program Guidelines.

• Classroom teachers accompanying students must conduct active supervision and support students who need to leave the water at any time or who are disruptive, non-compliant or need extra encouragement.
• Boat Safety – all students will be given the opportunity to be involved in a boat safety experience at least once every three years. This experience involves fitting and using a lifejacket, safe entry/exit of a boat, maintaining stability and what to do in an emergency to preserve wellbeing.

• All casually employed instructors who are required to travel to work at a pool that is further than 60km from the regional Learning Service is eligible to claim travel allowances. Every effort will be made to employ instructors closest to the program.

• All casually employed instructors are required to register on the Employment Management Register and sign an annual employment contract.

Other Guidelines

**At Risk Students** - Year 6 students are deemed to be at risk if they have not attained all skills in Stage 1. The Swimming and Water Safety Program recommends that any Year 5 student not attaining Stage 1 returns to the program in Year 6.

**Swimming caps** are to be worn by all students participating in the Department of Education Swimming and Water Safety Program for the following reasons:

• Caps provide sun protection

• Caps assist in maintaining body heat, thus keeping body temperature up, especially important in outdoor settings

• Caps assist in maintaining good water quality by reducing hair in water and filters

• Caps help identify students

• Caps maintain a clear vision – free from hair

• Many pools used for this program stipulate the wearing of caps for all users.

**Swimming Goggles** – students are encouraged to participate without the use of goggles. It is important for students to be able to open their eyes while submerged. Goggles are unlikely to be worn in all aquatic environments, and probably not in an emergency situation. Assessment of all students for water safety/survival will occur without goggles.

For assessment/evaluation the following policies are to be applied:

• Safety and Survival skills - no goggles are to be worn

• Stroke Development - goggles are permitted to be worn
We advise the following:

- Parents need to ensure that goggles fit the child correctly and contain impact resistant lenses
- Swim teachers will not be responsible for the fitting of goggles to the children
- The child should have received adequate instruction, prior to participation, as to the fitting and adjustment of goggles.

Recommendations

That students be actively discouraged from using goggles in the following circumstances:

- Prior to formal lesson e.g. warm up, unstructured play
- At times during water adjustment/orientation activities
- At times during stroke development – all strokes
- At times during survival activities – please note that during assessment of Safety and Survival skills the guidelines require that no goggles are to be worn.

Change rooms

These guidelines provide a safety framework for the protection of children and staff.

- Parents are welcome to attend the Swimming and Water Safety program. However, parents are not permitted to be in the change rooms whilst students are changing as we encourage students to be independent dressers.
- Classroom staff and swim staff will closely supervise change rooms and adult support will be provided to those students who require assistance. In special circumstances a principal may give prior permission for a parent to also assist their child.
- Adult males are not permitted in female change rooms and adult females are not permitted in male change rooms.
- Every effort is made for the SWSP program and/or the school to provide teachers and instructors of both gender to assist with supervision of change rooms.
**Being SunSmart**

The Department of Education has a duty of care to all staff and students while they are on educational sites, during educational site hours and while undertaking educational activities. Reasonable steps must be therefore taken to ensure the safety of staff and students in relation to sun exposure.

All HPE and AUSTSWIM instructors must take steps to protect themselves from the sun when teaching outdoors.

All HPE and supervising classroom teachers must consider how to best protect their students from the sun - as they would during a normal school day when outdoors.

Please refer to Being SunSmart in Tasmania, provided by the Cancer Council.

**Jewellery**

Students should not wear ear studs, dangly earrings or any other items that are not secure or may come off and cause injury to bare feet, or be damaged or lost.

**Illness, Injury or Infectious Diseases**

- Students with open wounds should not enter the pool
- Students with bandages or serious injuries may not enter the pool
- Students with infectious diseases should not enter the pool
- School staff should be aware of, and make decisions about which students are fit to participate in lessons
- If unsure, consult with the Teacher in Charge.
Early Childhood Water Orientation Guidelines

The following guidelines have been developed after extensive evaluation of current programs and are recommended as ‘best practice’ when organising Early Childhood Water Orientation programs.

**Organisation**

- As these programs are **not** part of the mandatory grade 3-5 swimming and water safety program and are school based, it is the responsibility of the school to organise and pay for all aspects of the program including venues, swimming teachers, equipment and buses. Your Regional Coordinator may be able to assist.

- It is the Principal’s responsibility to ensure that all the necessary risk management procedures have been documented and approved and parent consents for Major Excursion and Aquatic Activities have been obtained prior to a program commencing.

- A signed **Major Excursion Consent and Medical Information Form** and **Consent form for Aquatic (water-based) Activity** are mandatory (see Procedures for Planning Off Campus Activities, 4.9.3 Consent on page 38). A student must not undertake the activity unless signed consent forms are obtained.

**Supervision**

- There must be at least one teacher at the pool who is responsible for the whole group.

- Swimming teachers are qualified Health and Physical Education teachers or AUSTSWIM instructors.

- **At least one teacher must hold a current CPR qualification as a minimum.** Other qualifications are depending on venue/pool depth (see Procedures for Planning Off Campus Activities, 4.9.3 Qualifications/Experience on page 39).

- Although this may vary with the venue, the maximum recommended class size is 30 students.

- Ideally, the **maximum in-water** group size is ten (10) students to one (1) qualified swimming teacher. Other adults/support staff and senior students are able to assist with the groups.

- Names and a head count of all participants must be checked and recorded at the beginning and the end of each lesson. Refer to DoE Swimming and Water Safety intranet re student numbers daily check.
Change Rooms

- Classroom teachers and swim staff will closely supervise change rooms and adult support will be provided to those students who require assistance.

- In DoE school pools, parents are not permitted in the change rooms unless at the direction of the Principal/teacher in charge. Parents must have Working with Vulnerable People card.

- In non-DoE pools the centre rules will normally apply and parents may only accompany their own children in the family or disabled change rooms. However, wherever possible, students are encouraged to be independent dressers and parents are requested to stay out of the change rooms.

- Males are not permitted in female change rooms and females are not permitted in male change rooms.

Length of Program/Lessons

- The maximum recommended length of the programs is five (5) days. Young children tire easily and the effectiveness of programs is significantly reduced if programs are too long. Conducting two (2) five day programs with a gap in between is a better option than 10 days straight.

- Lesson times should be a maximum of 30 minutes with 15 minutes allowed for changing before and after. Each group should be allocated 45 minutes in total.

Lesson Content

The purpose of the lessons is to familiarise infants to the aquatic environment. The emphasis should be on fun and consolidating basic water orientation skills:

- Movement activities
- Face wetting activities
- Submerging/breath control activities
- Floating activities
- Gliding activities
- Propulsion activities.
Evaluation

If the school desires, it is their responsibility to organise a suitable certificate to recognise and give feedback on children’s achievements and progress. The certificate should be age appropriate, child friendly, meaningful, easy to complete, positive and reflect the goals of the program (as described above). Examples of the content of grade appropriate certificates are given below:

- **Kinder: Participation Certificate**

- **Prep/Grade One:**
  - I enjoy the water
  - I can blow bubbles
  - I can bob under
  - I can float on front
  - I can float on back
  - I can glide
  - I can swim about ______ (max. 15m)

- **Grade 2:**
  - As for Prep/Grade One plus
  - I can kick on front
  - I can kick on back
  - I am beginning to learn
    - Underarm
    - Freestyle
    - Backstroke
**Useful Contacts**

This contact information is provided to facilitate access to organisations which may assist you further with information on Swimming and Water Safety.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>AUSTSWIM - Victoria and Tasmania Business Centre</strong></th>
<th><strong>Royal Life Saving Society - Australia</strong> (Tasmanian Branch &amp; AUSTSWIM Course Provider)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postal Address: PO Box 139, Mulgrave VIC 3170</td>
<td>4 Franklin Street, Lindisfarne TAS 7015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone: (03) 9562 7900</td>
<td>Post: P.O. Box 112</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: (03) 9562 6450</td>
<td>Lindisfarne TAS 7015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:info@austswim.com.au">info@austswim.com.au</a></td>
<td>Phone (03) 6243 7558</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.austswim.com.au">www.austswim.com.au</a></td>
<td>Fax: (03) 6243 7793</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:tas@rlissa.org.au">tas@rlissa.org.au</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.royallifesaving.com.au">www.royallifesaving.com.au</a></td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Surf Life Saving Tasmania Inc.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Australian Red Cross</strong> (Tasmanian Headquarters)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16A Evans Street, Hobart 7000</td>
<td>40 Melville Street</td>
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<tr>
<td>Post: GPO Box 1745 HOBART TAS 7001</td>
<td>Hobart TAS 7000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone: (03) 6222 6555</td>
<td>Phone: (03) 6235 6077</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fax: (03) 6223 55776</td>
<td>Freecall: 1800 246 850</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:slst@slst.asn.au">slst@slst.asn.au</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:tas@redcross.org.au">tas@redcross.org.au</a></td>
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<td>Website: <a href="http://www.slst.asn.au">www.slst.asn.au</a></td>
<td>Website: <a href="http://www.reckcross.org.au">www.reckcross.org.au</a></td>
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<th><strong>St. John Ambulance</strong> (Tasmanian Branch)</th>
<th><strong>Cancer Council</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>177 Main Road</td>
<td>Hobart</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moonah TAS 7009</td>
<td>180-184 Collins Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone: (03) 6271 0333</td>
<td>Hobart TAS 7000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freecall: 1800 360 455</td>
<td>Phone: 61691900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:tasmania@stjohnatas.org.au">tasmania@stjohnatas.org.au</a></td>
<td><a href="http://www.cancertas.org.au">www.cancertas.org.au</a></td>
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