



Information and guidance to swimmers 17 and under

You the swimmer are the most important part of any ASA swimming club. Without you there would be no one for the coaches to coach and no junior competitors to compete.

This section of Wavepower has been written for you with the help of the ASA Youth Forum. You also have a section of the ASA website specifically for your age group called Child Power. You are the heart of any club!

The ASA commitment to swimmers 17 and under

The ASA and your club are committed to enabling you to:

- Get and stay fit.
- Have fun.
- Make new friends.
- Develop skills in the sport that allow you to reach a level of competition that is appropriate to your ability and aspirations.
- To be safe while you are training and competing.

When you became a member of your club you should have received a swimmers pack from the club including a letter from the club Welfare Officer. If you did not receive any information, or you joined so long ago you may have misplaced it or it is out of date, you can:

- Ask your Welfare Officer for a welcome pack.
- Look on the club notice board or website – it may have a copy of the welcome letter.
- Ask your coach.

How can your club and the ASA achieve that commitment?

We know we cannot make you all into swimming stars who reach the Olympics like Tom Daley or Rebecca Adlington but we can help you to reach your own level of achievement and satisfaction in the sport. The important thing is not to be disappointed by what you don't do but what you can do. Whatever your level of achievement, be it as a good club swimmer, a county finalist or a national champion, you, your family and your club should be proud of your achievements.

Your club officers and coaches are committed to help you be happy and content in your club but we know sometimes swimmers do have problems for a number of reasons. These may be due to:

- Your training regime and / or lack of achievement in competitions.
- How you are being treated by other young people or adults inside or outside of the club.

Training and achievement issues

Even Olympic swimmers do not have a smooth ride in terms achieving best times at every meet they attend. Often minor injuries will cause a period during which you will not improve and sometimes nothing is obviously the cause for not doing as well as you did 6 months ago. Young people grow at different rates and the person you may have been faster than last year may suddenly now be leaving you in their wake. The main thing is don't panic. This happens to everyone at some time. But we know it can be made worse by other swimmers or adults pointing out that you are "not improving".



So what can you do?

Don't worry, talk it over with someone who can help such as:

- Your parents and / or your coach.
- More senior club swimmers who have probably experienced similar problems in their years of competitions.
- Your friends at the club.

They will offer you support and advice to help you.

Issues of the behaviour of others towards you

- Sometimes you feel angry or upset with other people and how they are behaving towards you.
- You feel that another swimmer or an adult at the club is not treating you properly.
- It may be that someone is being unkind to you, they may be bullying you.
- It may be that you feel uncomfortable with what is happening in training or elsewhere in the club.
- It may be that you are unhappy about things that are happening outside of the club and want to tell an adult in the club you trust.
- It may be that someone is saying or doing things that make you feel uncomfortable, unhappy and sad.

For this reason the ASA has developed ways to help you should you have any such concerns.

- Your club can deal with bullying by other swimmers or adults.
- They can help resolve problems with the behaviour of others towards you.

Or if they can't,

- They will contact other trustworthy adults you can share your concerns with who will listen, take what you say seriously and act to help you.

So what should you do?

What is important is that you speak to an adult with whom you feel comfortable and able to tell what is happening or worrying you. Below is a list of possible people to whom you will be able to turn for assistance and reassurance.

- Your parent or guardian. They can take your concern forward for you.
- Your club Welfare Officer. The Welfare Officer's name will be on the club notice board and on your welcome letter.
- Your coach or teacher. You may feel you have a good relationship with them, better than with anyone else in the club, and they can help take your concern forward for you.
- Any member of the club committee and again they will take the concern forward for you.

Or if you don't wish to speak to someone in the club directly you can

- Ring Swimline on **0808 100 4001**, which is the ASA helpline number. You will need to be prepared with a phone number and time when one of our trained and experienced Safeguarding Team members or Swimliners can call you back. If you need to speak to someone immediately, hold on after the message and you will be put through to the NSPCC helpline.
- Send an E mail to the ASA safeguarding Team via the Child Power website or use the form on the Child Power leaflet to give to someone you trust in the club outlining your concern.



What will they do?

- All conversations with the club Welfare Officer, your coach or another club officer will be in confidence.

BUT

- They cannot keep what you say secret if to do so may leave you in a situation that is potentially going to hurt you or another young person.
- They will consider the concern with you and how it can be addressed and if that can be done by supporting and offering you guidance they will do so.
- Or they may decide you need help from other people and carefully consider with you who they need to share your concerns with.
- Whatever the route taken you will be supported and kept fully informed of any action to be taken.

What if I can't tell someone in the club, the ASA or my parents?

If you would prefer to speak to someone outside of the club and the ASA, the numbers below will put you in contact with people who can offer you help and guidance.

1. Kidscape - For young people who are being bullied. The Helpline is available on **08451 205 204** Monday - Friday from 10.00am - 4.00pm or visit their web page on www.Kidscape.org.uk. Calls cost no more than 5p per minute from BT landline phones but may cost more using phones from other providers.
2. Childline - www.nspcc.org.uk Need advice or just want to talk? Call Childline **0800 1111**. Calls are free, will not be shown on any phone bill and totally confidential.
3. Children's Social Care Team or the police. In an emergency **ring 999** or you can get the local Children's Social Care Team details from a trusted adult, your phone book or by calling **118 118**.

We do hope this section has proven to be both informative and useful to you as young people in swimming. We welcome your feedback on this section and any comments of how to improve it, along with anything else you would like to see in it.

To give feedback directly to the Safeguarding Team please contact Jenni at jenni.dearman@swimming.org