

Just add water!

Welcome to AquaSquirts!

Congratulations on choosing AquaSquirts for your child! AquaSquirts is a new, play-based water orientation program that incorporates skills from a variety of aquatic sports such as swimming, water polo, diving and synchro. The program is offered to boys and girls aged 11 and under who already have basic swimming skills. This program, along with the Red Cross Swim Kids and Red Cross Swim Preschool programs, sets the foundation for a lifetime of swimming and fitness. We're proud to offer:

- Trained instructors with practical teaching experience
- Learning through play, theme-based lesson plans and creativity
- A seamless integration with Red Cross Swim Kids and Red Cross Swim Preschool programs

What do swimmers learn in AquaSquirts?

AquaSquirts helps swimmers improve:

- Breath control
- Floats
- Entries
- Swimming skills & strokes
- Awareness and confidence in the water
- Sculling

AquaSquirts instructors use the theme-based lesson plan to introduce these skills in a fun and playful environment. AquaSquirts themes include: *Let's Float*, *Let's Visit Sea Creatures*, *Let's Go Upside Down* and more! AquaSquirts is intended to complement a child's progression through the swimming levels. It is perfect for a child who needs a break from lessons or is stuck at one level. For the child who is quickly progressing through the swimming levels, AquaSquirts can also be the ideal interim program.

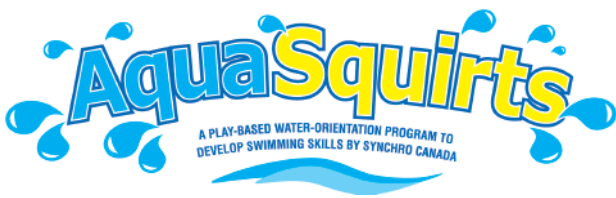
There are numerous health benefits associated with swimming and the AquaSquirts program has been designed to help increase the activity levels of children in a fun format. Currently 15-20% of Canadian children are obese and 50% of our children are considered not active enough. Research tells us that children must be hooked on sport and physical activity by the end of

grade 6 in order to be more likely to keep participating and to maintain a healthy lifestyle and body size in their teen and adult years. AquaSquirts is chock-full of health benefits such as:

- improved circulatory system
- improved strength
- coordination and flexibility (swimming exercises all of the major muscle groups with minimal stress on joints)
- reduced likelihood of heart disease, diabetes and stroke. Participants can also expect to expend energy (control weight) and feel more relaxed (mental health benefits).

How are swimmers evaluated in AquaSquirts?

AquaSquirts is a participatory program. There are no tests or levels to pass. All children receive a sticker and certificate as a reward for their hard work at the end of the session. AquaSquirts recognizes that all swimmers advance at his/her own pace and will likely master certain skills faster than others. Instructors will customize the lessons to cater to individual needs and skill levels. Even younger or less-skilled swimmers (including special needs swimmers and/or swimmers with disabilities) can participate in AquaSquirts through adaptations offered by the AquaSquirts instructor.



Where do swimmers go after AquaSquirts?

After your child completes an AquaSquirts session, he or she can continue to improve on the skills learned by registering for another AquaSquirts class or trying AquaSquirts Too, the follow-up program to AquaSquirts. AquaSquirts Too has the same play-based philosophy, but adds new themes such as *Pirate Surprise*, *O Canada!* and *Kaleidoscope Magic*. Swimmers can also resume their Red Cross Swim lessons by picking up where they left off.

Parents and caregivers: help promote an active lifestyle!

You play an important role in your child's enjoyment of aquatic activity. Your enthusiasm and encouragement can make your child's experiences in sport and physical activity a fun and rewarding experience. Be sure to praise your child's efforts in the pool. Avoid comparing one swimmer to another – remember that children develop swimming skills at different rates.

"My daughter has tried a number of different sports programs, but swimming is really the only one that seems to capture her interest. She loves the water and takes lessons at our local pool. I heard about AquaSquirts and how it incorporates different aquatic sports using imagination and creative themes so I thought it might be something that Emma would enjoy. She just finished her first AquaSquirts class and absolutely loved it. In fact, her swimming has improved leaps and bounds!"

Kelly, parent, Quispamsis, NB

What are you waiting for? Hop in the pool and practice some of those AquaSquirts skills! Your child will enjoy seeing mom or dad attempt the "raft", "tug boat" and the "bat hang". Don't forget to ask your child to demonstrate his or her skills and expertise – you just might learn something new!

For more information about the AquaSquirts program, check out the parents section of the AquaSquirts website.



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Be an active role model! Did you know that mom's participation in sport and physical activity increases participation rates of her child by 22%? Dad's participation in sport increases participation rates of his child by 11% (Source, Canadian Association for the Advancement of Women and Sport and Physical Activity www.caaws.ca).



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