

Because every child should know how to swim, we are the

KIDS FIRST Swim Schools



SCAN ME

Loyal Customer Handbook

To Our Loyal Customers,

Thank you for being a loyal **KIDS FIRST** Swim Schools customer. This resource was written especially for you, to ensure that you understand the unique benefits and obligations that you enjoy in our valued relationship.

You no doubt have seen the notice "Available ONLY to New Customers" used by other businesses. Maybe you've noticed the extremes that some business owners go to attract new customers. They think that the only way to grow their business is to invite more people in with attractive "giveaways". They offer big discounts and other benefits to "First-time Customers". They give little thought as to how that practice is being received by their loyal regulars. Maybe you have said (as we have), "Hey, what about me?"

Well, **KIDS FIRST** has set out to turn this paradigm upside down. We want to retain loyal customers and shift the rewards to those customers as they make our business so successful over time. If you are reading this, you are included in that group of loyal customers. We wish to thank you for your loyalty, and offer a unique set of benefits to reward you for your patronage and cooperation. This resource is intended to help you get the most out of our valued relationship.

KIDS FIRST offers the best curriculum in the industry with a proven track record of results. Your children are at the right place to learn how to swim. The fact that we are the most cost effective means to acquire a lifetime of safety around and in the water means that you chose well.

Please take the time to read through this material. Should you have any questions, please see your Manager. They are here to help you get the most out of your **KIDS FIRST** experience.

Gary and Karen Roth, Owners

Why **KIDS FIRST** Swim Schools?

Simply put, **KIDS FIRST** Swim Schools offers the very best curriculum in the industry and is the most affordable option for your young family.

Why is the **KIDS FIRST**/Kick First Learn to Swim System the best in the industry?

While our competition is typically a recent phenomenon driven by a few large franchisors selling swim schools to investors, **KIDS FIRST** Swim Schools has been around for over 25 years. Our owner, Gary Roth, who has over 50 years of aquatic teaching experience, developed the copyrighted and critically acclaimed **KIDS FIRST**/Kick First Learn to Swim System based on his work with young children since the early 1970s.

Unlike the recent proliferation of investors hoping to get rich quickly, **KIDS FIRST** has stayed the course and taught children what nobody else is teaching. The **KIDS FIRST**/Kick First Learn to Swim System is based on developing a "six-beat" kick to complement the arms and hands that move at a slower "one-beat" pace. This "6-to-1" timing is the key to the system, and that's something that our competition does not teach.

Why are **KIDS FIRST** Swim Schools tuitions so much lower than the competition?

1. Because we are the largest family-owned swim school company in the industry. We have over 100,000 students attending our 20 locations annually. Our competition cannot claim this. This drives down our overhead and gives us significant purchasing leverage. We pass those savings on to you.
2. Our competitors (typically, investor-owned franchises) are solely driven by profits. At **KIDS FIRST**, owners, Gary and Karen Roth, have five grown children. They remember (fondly) the challenges of raising a young family, and have historically kept their prices affordable. Stay a loyal customer and we will find bigger and better means to remain the "best and most affordable option" for your young family. That's our promise to you!

Terms and Conditions

The following are the terms and conditions of our Customer Loyalty Program:

1. You must participate in automatic billing and have your credit card information stored in our secured system.
2. You must agree to all the terms and conditions of enrollment and acknowledge such in our system.
3. You must have been a customer of **KIDS FIRST** for the past two full months.

In exchange, you will receive:

1. Preferred rates that are a minimum 12.5% lower than our regular rates.
2. A 40% discount on Birthday Parties or other pool rentals at **KIDS FIRST** Swim Schools (based upon availability).
3. Free Family Swims every Saturday and/or Sunday nights (practice makes perfect).
4. Free invitations to special events such as our Thanksgiving recess and Christmas week and Easter break open swims.
5. A discounted rate on all merchandise.
6. Discounted rates from our corporate partners.

We offer this program because we truly wish to be forever associated with your child's journey toward a lifetime of swimming proficiency.



Terms and Conditions

Rate Structure

One of the many benefits that our loyal customers enjoy is preferred rates. While our tuitions are already significantly lower than the industry, our loyal customers enjoy a "preferred" rate that is easily the best value out there. That's right, you enjoy lower rates than our first-time customers. We have flipped the paradigm. The message is: stay with **KIDS FIRST** and you'll see that we truly appreciate your loyalty with our many benefits.

Training Pool Features

Many swimming lessons are conducted in general purpose multi-use pools. These pools are simply too deep and too cold for working with young children. Children are taught from the deck of these pools or on swim platforms that actually inhibit the learning process. **KIDS FIRST** pools are specially designed and maintained for teaching your child how to swim. We have depths that allow the children and instructors to always be in the water (where the learning happens). Our water and air temperatures are maintained at 90 degrees so that shaking and shivering will not occur. We have viewing areas for families behind one-way glass. Mom and Dad can be up close to the instruction, but you won't distract your child by your presence. Our 25 years in the learn to swim business have taught us how to maximize results, and everything we've learned is incorporated into our facilities.

Instructors

All our instructors are specially certified to teach our copyrighted curriculum before they are allowed to instruct your children.



Keep It Simple

In its simplest form, swimming is the combination of three primary skills: buoyancy, propulsion, and breath control. When mastered, even a two-year-old can navigate the waters (with parent participation, of course). It's as easy as one, two, three.

1. Buoyancy is the body's natural inclination to remain on the surface.
2. Propulsion is using the body's extremities (arms and legs) to move about the water.
3. Breath control is the ability to supply oxygen to the body to perform these movements over time.

The **KIDS FIRST**/Kick First Learn to Swim System

Our system requires that a swimmer (no matter the age) master a set of skills. The first steps are very basic. As they are mastered, a new set of skills are layered on top. Then, as they are mastered, another set of skills are added. And so it goes until the complete stroke is mastered. Truly mastering the skills is the trick so we do not rush through the process. Rather, we build a solid foundation.

Mommy and Me Program (of course, Dads, you're invited too!)

This "one of a kind" program teaches infants and toddlers the primary skills. We teach you (the parents) how to teach your child to hold their breath (the simplest form of breath control), to float (buoyancy), and to navigate the pool with a strong kick. Children are born with a natural affinity to water,



they come from an aqueous environment. In fact, some doctors advocate and practice water births. The sooner you reintroduce a child to the water, the easier they readjust to it.

Some of our schools offer an Advanced Mommy & Me program (depending upon demand) that allows us to separate infants and toddlers. Toddlers can be accelerated to the point that they can swim across the width of our pools with little assistance from their parents. They can also be taught safety techniques that an infant simply can't comprehend.

Level 1 - Water Exploration

The first step in our process is to get your child acclimated to the water. We need to get the student comfortable with water in their eyes, water in their ears, and water in their nose before we can teach skills. Therefore, we use several distraction techniques to get them through this phase. Songs and games work best in the beginning. Later, we introduce challenges like holding breath, bobbing, and diving for rings. It's often useful to let the students challenge each other, promoting competition and confidence. It's wonderful to watch a child move through this stage of instruction. It might look like fun and games, but if you watch closely, you will see the child's confidence building.

This is a level that parents can assist with their child's progress. Bath time is the perfect time to practice these skills.

Homework assignments:

- Humming
- Holding breath/making chipmunk cheeks (five seconds)
- Blowing out a candle
- Starfish position - relax (lying on front and back) (REMEMBER - when floating on tummy, look STRAIGHT DOWN, when floating on back look STRAIGHT UP)



Level 2 - Horizontal Position (Buoyancy) and Kick Development

The next step in the process is to teach your child to get their feet off the bottom of the pool and move into independent front and back float positions. The horizontal position is the most efficient for swimming. It reduces drag and lends itself to better propulsion. Mastering the position requires knowledge and the confidence that repetition produces.

The keys to buoyancy are increasing surface area, proper head position, and relaxation. Mass, the amount of matter in an object, cannot be created—a body's mass does not change with position. It's the surface area that's in contact with the water that increases when you spread out your arms and legs.

Surface area is increased by spreading the body out

Head position dictates the spine's position

It's easier to float when relaxed rather than tense

In this level we introduce proper kicking technique (propulsion). We teach short, fast kicks with the feet below the water surface. No splashing. We want to see the water churning behind the student.

We also start to develop rhythmic breathing through bobbing (breath control). It might seem like a small thing, but it is critical that the student learn to exhale (blow bubbles) when underwater. If they cannot do this, the entire rhythm of the stroke will be thrown off when rotary breathing is introduced in Level 5. So, it's breathe in, breathe out (blow bubbles!) as the child performs bobs.



Level 3 - Perfecting the Kick

Kicking is the essence of swimming. This level separates **KIDS FIRST** from most of the competition. The legs are the heaviest and strongest of our extremities. If used properly, they can propel a good swimmer at an amazing speed. If used improperly, they can slow a poor swimmer and even drag them down. This level cannot be rushed—it is the most important of all.

A proper "flutter" kick is done with a six-beat kick. For every complete arm cycle, the swimmer needs to kick six times. This is almost impossible to teach at a conscience level, so we teach it subconsciously. We stabilize the arms at the top of the stroke cycle with a noodle or kick board, while we teach the muscles in the legs to drive the stroke.

A proper kick is short and fast with about six inches of separation between the feet. The kick is done just below the surface, churning water. If you see lots of splashing, the feet are coming out of the water. Kicking air provides no propulsion!



This is also the time to teach streamlining. This is the position that the human body (and other objects) travels most efficiently through the water.

Finally, we start teaching the diving sequence with a simple sitting dive. The student must be taught to keep their hands at the top of the streamline position over an exaggerated period to train the muscles properly.

We continue to build the child's stamina for rhythmic breathing with more bobbing. Always exhaling (blowing bubbles) while underwater. Again, be patient as this level cannot be rushed. There is a lot of material delivered at this level.

Level 4 - Introduction of the Arms

While the kick drives the swimmer through the water, the arms assist in propulsion by pulling. The arm and leg muscles must be trained to move at separate speeds. In Level 3 we established a powerful six-beat kick. Now we add a powerful pull. The hands must be taught to start the pulling action from the very top of the stroke cycle. The hands don't naturally want to be there. They are much more comfortable hanging by your side. We began teaching the proper position in Level 3 when we stabilized the hands at the top of the stroke cycle with a kickboard or noodle. In Level 4 we teach the hands to start at the top and accelerate through the bottom, followed by a natural (non-rushed) recovery. It's the acceleration through the bottom of the cycle that creates the power and speed. This applies whether the swimmer is on their front or their back. They should always be in a streamlined position.

The simplest description of the arm cycle is that in the front crawl the arms move in a counterclockwise direction. In the back crawl the arms move in a clockwise direction. Both strokes start from the top and accelerate through the bottom. Dry land drills help the student learn and master this movement.

We also work on creating a little elevation in our diving sequence, by working with the student to master a kneeling dive. Here the child must learn to use their legs to properly execute the dive. The streamline position should be held throughout the dive.



Level 5 - Putting it all Together and Rotary Breathing

As the student has systematically built good front and back crawls, and has mastered diving fundamentals, we now put it all together. As we learned in Level 2, the head dictates the spinal column's position in the water. We want a proper horizontal position with minimal drag. Lifting to breathe is a cardinal sin. Instead, we need to learn to rotate the head (with no lift) to breathe. It's still "breathe in/ breathe out" as we learned through bobbing, but we need to rotate the head to breathe properly while swimming as doing so is the most consistent and effective technique.



In this level, we also move to the standing position for our diving sequence. The legs drive the motion, the hands are trained to enter in the streamlined position and maintain that position for a count of five. Have some fun here. Dive in, then point your

hands left. Dive in, then point your hands right. You will find that the body will follow the hands. They are your steering wheel. So, dive in and point at the bottom. **OUCH!** No, the proper dive has a **shallow angle entry** that points (steers) the student toward their target down the length of the pool.

In summary: putting this all together is quite a trick. Maintaining a proper six-beat kick with the arm stroke originating at the top of the stroke cycle and accelerating through the bottom. Suppling oxygen to the body in a natural and efficient way. I hope you can appreciate why it takes some time, but it is the right way to teach a child to swim!

At this point, the student normally decides to carry on with our Advanced Levels or to join our Developmental Swim Team. You have plenty of time to make this decision.

Advanced Levels

Level 6 - The child develops the ability to swim longer distances.

Level 7 - New methods of propulsion are introduced including breaststroke and sidestroke.

Level 8 - Primary Skills are refined, and the butterfly (dolphin) kick is introduced.

Developmental Swim Team

This program meets once each week starting in September and culminates in our Championship Swim Meet in May. The students learn racing starts and turns, the legalities of the competitive strokes, build stamina and confidence, and the team environment often leads to friendships that can last a lifetime. Practice meets are held throughout the winter with neighboring **KIDS FIRST** schools and the Championship Swim Meet is held at a special venue where the students get a chance to experience a true competitive pool. Past venues include Notre Dame Preparatory, the University of Delaware, and Towson State and Bowie Universities. This culminates a winter of hard work and learning, and more than prepares your child for their local summer swim team!



Answers to Your Questions

Registration: Lessons are sold on a monthly basis, however, students may join at any time of the month (based upon availability). Loyal customers are given preferred status in our existing schedule.

Credit Cards on File (auto renewals): **KIDS FIRST** will maintain your credit card information in our secured system. You will automatically be renewed each month until you tell us that you want to discontinue lessons.

Dropping Out or Taking a Break: We require 30-day notice. Why? Because typically, that decision is made in the final week of the month. It is neither fair nor practical for us to fill an open spot when you give us one week's notice. It's the fair and courteous thing to do. Let us know when your time with us is coming to an end.

Report Cards and Moving Up: Report cards are delivered in the final week of each month. You can receive an update at any time by asking your Manager. If your child is moving up a level, you might be required to move to another day or time (based upon availability).
Repeating Levels: Please do not be concerned if your child needs to repeat a level to master the skill set. This is quite normal. Moving from Level 1 to Level 5 can likely take a year or more.

Looking at it Another Way: Going from blowing bubbles to swimming freestyle or backstroke is quite a journey. Be patient. Be supportive. Always recognize and compliment progress. Get involved in your child's instruction by helping with homework assignments or providing practice time (come to Family Swims).

Please, No Parents on Deck: We have worked very hard to create the best learning environment for your child. Please do not interrupt it by entering the pool room.

Swim Diapers: Children that are not potty trained must wear a swim diaper for the protection of others.

Inclement Weather: We do not follow the local school system's schedule. We close when other businesses in the center find the need to close. Call us if you are uncertain.



In 2001, the Young family came to **KIDS FIRST**'s school in Perry Hall, Maryland. That's how we first came to know Hillary (age five) and Tucker (age three), two very talented youngsters. In no time, the two of them became young phenoms. So much so that we featured them in our earliest

TV commercials. They grew and flourished in our unique training pools. Hillary mastered her strokes quickly, and as a six-year-old, started competing for local swim teams. At that young age, she was competing against much older kids in the butterfly and breaststroke, as well as freestyle and backstroke. Tucker followed right on her heels. They both became local champions! And, later, they both worked for **KIDS FIRST** as instructors.



Today, Hillary is a mother of two children that are "spitting images" of the Hillary and Tucker we knew back then. Aria and Jameson are currently enrolled in lessons with **KIDS FIRST** in our Perry Hall location. Hillary firmly believes in the **KIDS FIRST** methodology. She knows how important it is for her children

to learn to swim whether they choose to follow in her competitive footsteps or not.

Tucker is now in the U.S. Coast Guard and is stationed in Hawaii where he serves as a diver/rescue swimmer. He applies the skills he learned at **KIDS FIRST** in his duties.

We are so proud of these two individuals and they serve as proof that **KIDS FIRST** Swim Schools is all about families, at times spanning multiple generations.



Testimonials

“ Our triplets were 2½ when they started with KIDS FIRST Swim Schools and we cannot believe the progress they have made in three short months. The staff has been AMAZING!!! All of the staff is well trained and you can tell they love teaching kids how to swim. We are looking forward to many more sessions at KIDS FIRST Swim Schools. Thanks for giving our kids a wonderful experience. ” - Kristen G

“ My daughter has taken swim lessons at KIDS FIRST Swim Schools since she was little. We have tried several other lesson programs, but none have provided the instruction as well as KIDS FIRST Swim Schools. I was initially skeptical about the KIDS FIRST/KICK FIRST® Learn to Swim System because I felt like my daughter worked for weeks to perfect her kick. However, my daughter is now on a competitive swim team. While her peers struggle with the kicking drills in practice, she completes the drills with little effort. Learning the basics first has provided her with the ability to excel on her swim team. And, I'm always happy to recommend KIDS FIRST Swim Schools! ” - Megan H

“ KIDS FIRST Swim Schools provides a personal experience that my child loves. The instructors take the time to know the kids to provide the best experience for them. ” - Deanna D

“ The most succinct swim training program I have ever seen. ”
- Mary B., 40-year Educator

“ I wish (as a kid) that I had been taught to swim like this! ”
- Meredith Eyler, Director of Training & Development at KIDS FIRST and Two-time Collegiate All-American Swimmer

Tips for Parents

- Practice the skills by doing the homework assignments
- practice in our pool at weekend family swim or in other pools.
- Goggles are not encouraged until the child has reached Level 3. We want the child to get accustomed to water contacting their eyes and face.
- Group lessons focus on all skills for that particular level for the entire six-week session private and semi-private lessons move at the child's pace once the child shows they have MASTERED the skills.
- Please show up on time each week and allow time for your child to change into their swimsuit.
- Talk to the school manager or front desk staff if you have questions about anything (e.g., your child's progress, skills in the levels, etc.) Please don't wait until the last week to make a suggestion/complaint. We can't address an issue unless we're made aware that it exists.
- Be patient we want to teach your child the RIGHT way to swim have patience with our curriculum we are helping your child develop the best swimming habits and a skill that will last a lifetime.



Scan to Get Started with Classes!