

Sports Parenting

If parents project personal hopes and aspirations into the child's swimming career, the pressure can become unbearable and a steady decline in performance could result. If parents permit the swimmer to keep late and irregular hours, this too will show up in diminished performance.

The watchword in any educational program, be it in sport or school, should be: GRADUAL PROGRESSION. The youngsters should be permitted to find their own levels. They should never be forced to proceed faster than they are ready to go. This permits steady goal-to-goal progress and provides goals, which in fact, are capable of achievement. It also gives opportunity for the swimmers to win peer approval because they are not expected to achieve beyond their capabilities. Positive reinforcement is assured and undue tension or emotional stress is avoided. The ideal situation is difficult to achieve when parents are over-anxious.

The role of the parents is essentially concerned with ensuring that the swimmer follows correct habits of diet and rest, receives positive encouragement, and has transport to attend practices regularly and punctually.