

## **Learn Optimal Push (1/1/2007)**

Interestingly, there is a positive side to the idea of 'parental pushing'. USA Swimming research conducted in 1996 shows that kids say parents can enhance fun in swimming by providing a push. Be careful, however. Remember that there is a fine line between pushing in a positive way and pushing to the detriment of kids' enjoyment. It seems a slight push from parents can enhance subsequent enjoyment and, as kids point out, is often needed. Optimal push shows love, support and caring without applying undue pressure. A parent who encourages a child to attend practice and who is ready, willing and able to drive the child shows that he cares about the child's interest and successful development. A parent who takes a "hands off approach" hoping to avoid pressuring the child may actually be sending the message "I don't care about you and your activities!" Be there, be available, be ready, willing and able to help. Sometimes we all need a little push to get us moving, to get us out of bed, into the car and into the pool. We need to know that someone cares. A child who says "do I have to go to swim practice?" may be very happy to have you make the decision by saying "yes." He may just want to see if you care.