

7 Swim Parent Tips to Stop Comparing Swimmers

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It's natural for parents to make comparisons with their child and other swimmers, whether it's a sibling or teammate. We use comparisons to evaluate progress. We may think by comparing our swimmers to their peers, we'll encourage our kids to try harder. With the best of intentions, we want to motivate our kids to be more competitive—but watch out—it might backfire. When we compare our kids, we may cause more harm than good.

Here's a list of why comparing kids is a bad idea and what we should do instead:

One

Every child has different interests and desires. We can't force our kids to have the same desires and drive as someone else.

Two

Comparisons may make kids think they aren't good enough and they can't make you happy.

Three

Children may feel discouraged and frustrated and want to give up if they believe they aren't as talented as their siblings or teammates.

Four

Constant comparisons may make your child jealous and promote rivalry rather than friendships and good sportsmanship.

Five

Kids grow and mature at different rates and comparing 11-12 years olds makes no sense when one child may be years ahead developmentally than others the same age.

Six

Always encourage effort and recognize your child's improvements—without making comparisons to others.

Seven

Unconditional support and love are more effective in encouraging your child than unwanted and damaging comparisons with others.

Have you seen parents compare swimmers on the pool deck? How do you think comparisons work out?



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