**Grand Haven Swim Club**

[**www.ghswimclub.weebly.com**](http://www.ghswimclub.weebly.com/)

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**Mission Statement and Objectives:**

* To provide excellence in coaching and programs that develop individuals to the best of their abilities to compete at all levels;
* To provide an atmosphere that inspires swimmers to achieve their maximum potential through a strong work ethic, discipline, self-motivation and self-esteem;
* To develop team unity where everyone encourages and assists each other at all levels of competition.
* To instill a love of swimming through enjoyment and accomplishment at all levels that will last a lifetime.

Welcome to the Grand Haven Swim Club. Here is a little information about us: We compete in the WMSL (West Michigan Swim League) [,](http://www.westmiswimleague.com/)<http://www.westmiswimleague.com> an 18 team league with various team sizes and structures. Please visit their website for policies, time standards, and rules. Many teams are USA Teams, ours is not. Our league runs two seasons, winter and summer, each with a season ending championship (1st weekends of February and usually the 2nd weekend after the 4th of July). We participate in local Invitational (small USA style) meets, and league division dual and tri meets. Athletes are expected to participate in both, and focus their season on the championship meet. The Championships are divided into 2 divisions, A&B, allowing athletes to compete against athletes of similar abilities and age. A‐meet participants will need qualifying times to participate or be a B-team member participating in a team relay. All those that do not make qualifying times will participate in the B meet. A team champion is crowned for the A meet, as well as for each individual event at each meet level.

The focus of our program is to teach competitive swimming. That is: racing, racing strokes, starts, turns and team participation and commitment. Practices will run evenings M-F. Meets will generally be on Saturdays. All swimmers must be able to complete 2 lengths of the pool, in some competitive stroke, without fear, struggling, or excessive stopping to be eligible to participate. This allows the coaches to divert their attention around the pool at times without putting anyone at risk. Our Aquatics Department has a strong swim lessons program to get athletes to that level.

Our program is about competitive swimming and team swimming, and as such, swim meets are mandatory, no one is here just to practice. We have several opportunities this season, and each athlete is expected to attend the majority of the meets. Work, continued education, other swim camps/programs, and the much needed family vacation are good reasons to miss a meet. Embarrassment, fear, reluctance and just wanting to be physically fit are not good reasons to miss a meet. Swimmers will not experience competitive swimming if they do not compete, and we will have no way of evaluating their success or improvement, nor our success with them, if they do not compete. Unexcused absences from meets and/or practices may lead to an interruption in practice schedule. I do not expect every athlete to make every meet, I am a parent too, with 4 kids, and realize the world revolves around something other than swimming. If your athlete wants to swim, but has a conflict with meets (not just a desire to avoid them), we can work something out.

We will have 4 groups, Sharks, Dolphins, Snappers and Minnows. Each will focus on teaching. Those in Sharks will experience significant training as well. The Dolphins focus after teaching, will be to learn that improved competition success comes with training, so they will begin to learn to train. Snappers are advanced beginners finalizing their learning for techniques. And the minnows will focus almost exclusively on stroke education and racing. For all kids under 10, we would like parents (or some designated friend/care giver) at practice and meets. Older kids may be left on their own if YOU feel they are responsible enough. Remember, kids left at the pool are to sit quietly in our stands. AND, kids are expected after practice to rinse and be dressed as quickly as possible. The coaches should be able to leave the premises 10 minutes after practice ends, and we cannot leave until your child has been picked up.

It is our goal for each athlete to improve, learn, and find success. It is my goal to do that with a smile, and to see them smile. We will make room for fun, we will make room for hard work, and we will be teaching all the time. I am looking forward to a great time, a great season, a great new batch of kids, and some great new friends.

See you pool side!

**Bill**