

# Swimming and lifesaving for juniors – Important start for a lifetime sport for all

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## Introduction

Swimming and lifesaving are important kinds of sport – in the fight against drowning and to reduce the number of drownings (world-wide 500,000 to 1 000,000 per year) – for improving the health of young and elder people.

## Method

1st Step:

It is recommended to start as early as possible with swimming lessons and train the risk prevention and self rescue methods with the young children.

After the babies and infants became familiar with the water, a basic knowledge can be taught in:

- Kindergardens
- Schools
- Clubs
- Holiday resorts, etc

2nd Step:

After this first education, it is very important to make swimming attractive for these children. This can be done by:

- A systematic further education in swimming, jumping and diving in conjunction with an award system
- Demonstration and training of various self rescue techniques
- Offer of swimming competitions as individual and team disciplines

3rd Step:

At the age of 10 to 11 years first elements of lifesaving should be added (aim: 'Junior Lifesaver'):

- Diving and simple searching under water
- Towing and transport techniques
- Techniques for leaving the water

4th Step

At the age of 12 to 13 years the education as (basic) Lifesaver \* can start. At the same time the further education and training in swimming must be continued.

Additional disciplines could be:

- Swimming with obstacles
- Towing of victims at different distances
- Simulated rescue cases
- First Aid and CPR

Also in this phase competitions are a popular incentive.

5th Step

A specific swimming training and the education as Lifesaver / Lifeguard should follow. This training includes attractive elements as:

- Skin diving
- Scuba diving (rescue diving)
- Simulated rescue case in pools, lakes, rivers and at the beach
- Paramedical education
- Rescue management
- Participation and practical experiences in the voluntary lifeguard service

Varied training and competitions complete the programme and make it attractive. Special awards are an additional incentive.

## **Result**

Swimming and lifesaving is a very attractive sport for juniors and can be age-based varied. New incentives can be involved at all time. Swimming and Lifesaving for Juniors is the start for an important lifetime sport for all. With such programmes the infants, children and adolescents are introduced in the humanitarian engagement by the means of sport, which they can practise lifelong.

Swimming and especially lifesaving sport for all with its attractive programmes for all ages offers the chance to:

- reduce the rate of drownings;
- health support; and,
- integration of different human groups.

Swimming and lifesaving is one of the best and most relevant lifetime sports for all.

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