



Updated: January 2026

1. Why did the City of Richmond transition from the Canadian Red Cross *Swim Kids* program to Lifesaving Society *Swim for Life* program?

The Canadian Red Cross announced that they ended their swimming and leadership programs to focus on surging humanitarian demands in other areas – such as disaster and pandemic response, opioid harm reduction and caregiving for seniors. As a result, the City of Richmond decided to offer the Lifesaving Society *Swim for Life* program.

2. How do I know which level to register in?

richmond.ca/SwimLessons provides a transition table from the Canadian Red Cross *Swim Kids* to the Lifesaving Society *Swim for Life* program.

3. If my child is currently in a higher level, e.g. *Swim Kids* 7, why do they have to register in a lower level, e.g., *Swimmer* 5?

The numbers associated with the levels do not align between the two swim programs, but this does not mean your child is in a lower level. The criteria in each level was used to determine the appropriate level for the transition.

4. Who do I contact if I have more questions about the transition between programs?

Moving away from Red Cross *Swim Kids* program was a big change. We're here to help you understand how the Lifesaving Society *Swim for Life* program compares. For more information:

- Registration Call Centre – 604-276-4300 (Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:00pm)
- richmond.ca/SwimLessons

5. When will children receive a *Swim for Life* report card?

Swim for Life report cards will be issued **after** a child completes their first set of lessons in the new program.

Note: *Swim Kids* report cards will not be replaced with *Swim for Life* report cards for past lesson sets, they will only be issued going forward.

6. Do I need to show my child's previous report card when registering them for a *Swim for Life* program?

If your child has been registered in Red Cross *Swim Kids* lessons with the City of Richmond, then your child's pre-requisites will be entered into the Xplor Recreation registration system with no requirement to show your child's report card.

If your child took lessons with another municipality, then proof of pre-requisites are required to be shown in-person at Minoru Centre for Active Living or Waterman to register in swim lessons.



7. What if my child doesn't have a report card or has never taken a swimming lesson?

If your child has some swimming abilities, a swim evaluation can be completed to determine the correct level for registration. Registration is not required for swim evaluations. Call to find out drop-in evaluation days and times at these facilities:

Minoru Centre for Active Living – 604-233-6225

Watermania – 604-448-5353

8. Have Instructors/Lifeguards been trained in the *Swim for Life* program ensuring a smooth transition?

Yes. All Instructor/Lifeguards are required to complete a transition course and do internal training to become fully versed in the *Swim for Life* program.

For general swimming lessons frequently asked questions, visit

https://www.richmond.ca/_shared/assets/frequentlyaskedquestionsswimminglessons59143.pdf



Swim for Life Lesson Descriptions

Parent and Tot Programs

SWIM - PARENT AND TOT 1 - JELLYFISH - (4-12 MONTHS) - PRESCHOOLERS

Learn holds and supports to swim safely together; and introduce toddlers to blow bubbles in the water and get faces wet with the help of a parent. Parent participation required. Pre-requisite: None.

SWIM - PARENT AND TOT 2 - GOLDFISH - (12-24 MONTHS) - PRESCHOOLERS

Learn how to enter and exit the water together; play games that encourage toddlers to blow bubbles in the water and get faces wet; and start to develop floating and kicking skills. Parent participation required. Pre-requisite: None.

SWIM - PARENT AND TOT 3 - SEAHORSE - (2-3 YEARS) - PRESCHOOLERS

Learn how to safely help toddlers enter the water wearing a PFD; Starfish and pencil floats; kicking skills using songs and games; and underwater skills that include submersion and eye opening. Parent participation required. Pre-requisite: None.

Preschool Programs

SWIM - PRESCHOOL 1 - OCTOPUS - PRESCHOOLERS

Cover getting in and out of the pool; blowing bubbles and submerging faces in the water; and floating and gliding. Pre-requisite: None.

SWIM - PRESCHOOL 2 - CRAB - PRESCHOOLERS

Cover how to safely jump into chest-deep water; swimming wearing a PFD; submersion skills; and further work on floating, gliding and kicking with buoyant aid. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Preschool 1 - Octopus - Complete; Red Cross - Sea Otter - Complete; or Red Cross - Salamander - Incomplete.

SWIM - PRESCHOOL 3 - ORCA - PRESCHOOLERS

Cover how to enter deep water safely wearing a PFD; submerging, exhaling and retrieving objects underwater; and the further development of floating, gliding and kicking skills. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Preschool 2 - Crab - Complete; Red Cross Salamander - Complete; or Red Cross Sunfish - Incomplete.

SWIM - PRESCHOOL 4 - SEA LION - PRESCHOOLERS

Cover deep-water entries and treading water wearing a PFD; retrieving objects from the bottom of the pool in chest-deep water; performing front and side glides; and the introduction of front crawl wearing a PFD. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Preschool 3 - Orca - Complete; Red Cross - Sunfish - Complete; or Red Cross - Crocodile Incomplete.



SWIM - PRESCHOOL 5 - NARWHAL - PRESCHOOLERS

Cover Swim to Survive® skills wearing a PFD; the introduction of front and back crawl; interval fitness training; treading water; and performing a vertical whip kick with a buoyant aid. Pre-requisite: Preschool 4 - Sea Lion - Complete; Red Cross Crocodile - Complete; or Red Cross Whale - Incomplete or Complete.

Swimmer Programs

SWIM - SWIMMER 1 - CHILDREN

Cover jumping into the water with and without a PFD; opening eyes, exhaling and holding breath underwater; and an introduction to floats, glides and kicking skills. Pre-requisite: None.

SWIM - SWIMMER 2 – CHILDREN

Cover jumping into deeper water; falling sideways into the water wearing a PFD; treading water; kicking skills; and an introduction to front and back crawl. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Swimmer 1 - Complete; Swim for Life Preschool 5 - Narwhal - Complete; Red Cross Swim Kids 1 - Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 2 - Incomplete.

SWIM - SWIMMER 3 – CHILDREN

Cover diving; in-water somersaults and handstands to develop weight-transfer skills; Swim to Survive® skills; whip kick on the back; and further development of front and back crawl. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Swimmer 2 - Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 3 - Incomplete or Complete.

SWIM - SWIMMER 4 – CHILDREN

Cover diving; treading water and swimming underwater; Swim to Survive® standard; development of breaststroke; and further development of front and back crawl. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Swimmer 3 - Complete; Red Cross Swim Kids 4 - Incomplete or Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 5 - Incomplete.

SWIM - SWIMMER 5 - CHILDREN

Cover mastering dives and swimming in deep water; Swim to Survive® skills; eggbeater kick development; further development of breaststroke and front and back crawl; and interval training and sprinting drills to continue to challenge swimmers. Pre-requisites: Swim for Life Swimmer 4 - Complete; Red Cross Swim Kids 5 - Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 6 - Incomplete.

SWIM - SWIMMER 6 - CHILDREN

Cover deep water skills including stride entries and compact jumps; lifesaving kicks such as eggbeater and scissor; further development of breaststroke and front and back crawl; head-up swims; interval training; and a 300m workout to develop strength and endurance. Pre-requisites: Swim for Life Swimmer 5 - Complete; Red Cross Swim Kids 6 - Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 7 - Incomplete.



SWIM - SWIMMER 7 - ROOKIE PATROL - CHILDREN

Cover further development of the breaststroke and front and back crawl; individual fitness to meet a timed 100m swim and 350m workout; water proficiency skills that include swimming with clothes on, ready position and feet-first/head-first surface dives; demonstrating the ability to conduct a primary assessment and calling EMS as part of First Aid skills; and victim recognition and throwing assists. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Swimmer 6 - Complete; Red Cross Swim Kids 7 - Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 8 - Incomplete.

SWIM - SWIMMER 8 - RANGER PATROL

Cover lifesaving sport skills with a lifesaving stroke medley, timed object support and a noncontact rescue with a buoyant aid; eggbeater kick; increased fitness levels to meet a 200m timed swim; and First Aid focused on unconscious victims and obstructed airway procedures. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Swimmer 7 - Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 8 - Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 9 - Incomplete or Complete.

SWIM - SWIMMER 9 - STAR PATROL

Cover completing a 300m timed swim, 600m workout and a 25m object carry; refining of strokes; lifesaving skills that include use of rescue aids, defense methods, victim removals and supporting a victim in shallow water; and First Aid that focuses on treatment of bone or joint injuries and respiratory emergencies. Pre-requisite: Swim for Life Swimmer 8 - Complete; or Red Cross Swim Kids 10 - Incomplete.

SWIM - TEEN 1 - YOUTH

Cover working towards a 10-15m swim on the front and back while learning safe entries into shallow and deep water; skills development while wearing a PFD; breath control and underwater skills; an introduction to floats, glides, flutter kick and vertical whip kick; improving fitness through interval training; and learning front and back crawl.

SWIM - TEEN 2 - YOUTH

Cover the development of fitness by working on two interval training workouts, sprints and front and back crawl; Swim to Survive®; and the further development of deep water entries/skills while wearing a PFD; the further development of the whip kick; and an introduction to breaststroke. Pre-requisite: Teen 1.

SWIM - TEEN 3 - YOUTH

Cover mastering breaststroke and front and back crawl; fitness training with a 300m workout, sprint challenges and interval training; eggbeater, diving and compact jumps; and the further development of treading water and underwater skills. Pre-requisite: Teen 2.

SWIM - TEEN FITNESS SWIMMER - YOUTH

Work to improve overall physical fitness in the water in this structured approach based on accepted training principles including stretches, interval training, sprints and distance swims.



SWIM - ADULT FITNESS SWIMMER - ADULTS

Work to improve overall physical fitness in the water in this structured approach based on accepted training principles including stretches, interval training, sprints and distance swims.

SWIM - ADULT 1 - ADULTS

Cover working towards a 10-15m swim on the front and back while learning safe entries into shallow and deep water; skills development while wearing a PFD; breath control and underwater skills; an introduction to floats, glides, flutter kick and vertical whip kick; improving fitness through interval training; and learning front and back crawl. Pre-requisite: None.

SWIM - ADULT 2 - ADULTS

Cover the development of fitness by working on two interval training workouts, sprints and front and back crawl; Swim to Survive®; and the further development of deep water entries/skills while wearing a PFD; the further development of the whip kick; and an introduction to breaststroke. Pre-requisite: Swim - Adult 1.

SWIM - ADULT 3 - ADULTS

Cover mastering breaststroke and front and back crawl; fitness training with a 300m workout, sprint challenges and interval training; eggbeater, diving and compact jumps; and the further development of treading water and underwater skills. Pre-requisite: Swim - Adult 2.