

## WHY CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN TO SWIM

Tumble turn, kick faster, your arms are like a chicken!!!!

Sound familiar, that's the sound of a swimming instructor.

Those words could save your life one day.

Swimming is a good and handy skill to learn and that's why I think children should learn to swim.

The main reason children should learn to swim is for SAFETY!!!!

New Zealand is surrounded by water, beaches, rivers and lakes. We are a water nation.

Already this year New Zealand has lost 57 people to drownings and its only May!!!!

Approximately 130 people drown in New Zealand every year and over 650 people are put into hospital as a result of water related injuries. That's a lot!!!

I have even had a scary moment when

I was caught in a rip down at Whangamata. Luckily for me my friend was able to help me out.

In many of these cases, the tragedy could have been avoided if the person simply knew basic swimming techniques such as breaststroke, freestyle or even doggy paddle.

It takes just a few seconds for a child to drown, unlike adults or teens, some younger children don't understand that water is dangerous and may never cry out for help or make any sounds of a struggle when they fall into water.

Confidence is a big part of learning to swim. Learning to put your face under the water and blowing bubbles is the beginning of a great friendship between you and the water. Before you know it, you will be swimming like a mermaid, or a merman!!!

I remember having lessons and feeling really good when I was able to do strokes and swim a length of the pool.

Learning to swim opens up a whole new world of activities for children

such as swimming comps, surfing, waterskiing , snorkeling and boating...

Children also learn social skills when they are learning to swim. They have the opportunity to join in with other students, take turns of leading the group, sharing and respecting each other.

They learn the importance of listening and paying attention along with being polite and waiting their turn. I bet parents didn't realise they get all THIS with each swimming lesson!!!!!!

Lastly swimming is a healthy form of exercise and helps children maintain excellent fitness. It gets kids up off the couch, away from the TV, computer and videos games for a little bit each week. Every child should get up off the couch and learn to swim!!

Children should learn to swim to keep safe, build confidence, make friends, get fit and most importantly to prevent a funeral soon.