Summary of Safe Swim Defense Guidelines



1. Qualified Supervision.

All swimming activity must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts: responsibility for the well-being and safety of those in his or her care, and who is trained in and committed to the eight points of BSA Safe Swim Defense.



2. Personal Health Review.

Require evidence of fitness for swimming activity with a complete health history from a physician, parent, or legal guardian. The adult supervisor should adjust all supervision, discipline, and protection to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions. In the event of any significant health conditions, an examination by a physician should be required by the adult supervisor.



3. Safe Area.

All swimming areas must be carefully inspected and prepared for safety prior to each activity. Water depth, quality, temperature, movement, and clarity are important considerations. Hazards must be eliminated or isolated by conspicuous markings and discussed with participants.



4. Response Personnel (Lifeguards).

Every swimming activity must be closely and continuously monitored by a trained rescue team on the alert for and ready to respond during emergencies.



5. Lookout.

The lookout continuously monitors the conduct of the swim, identifies any departures from Safe Swim Defense, alerts response personnel as needed, and monitors the weather and environment.



6. Ability Groups.

All participants are designated as swimmers, beginners, or non-swimmers based on swimming ability confirmed by standardized BSA swim classification tests. Each group is assigned a specific swimming area with depths consistent with those abilities.



7. Buddy System.

Every participant is paired with one other. Buddies stay together, monitor each other, and alert the safety team if either needs assistance or is missing.



8. Discipline.

Rules are effective only when followed. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe swimming provided by Safe Swim Defense guidelines. Applicable rules should be discussed prior to the outing and reviewed for all participants at the water's edge just before the swimming activity begins.