









Activity: Accomplishing Skills

Ages: 6-12 (Polliwog/Guppy)

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: Pool

Description:

- 1. If you have a student who is having trouble completing a skill, ask the other students for ideas to help accomplish the skill.
- 2. Share the ideas with the student having trouble and have the class encourage the student to keep trying.
- 3. Explain that it's a good idea to help the other students since they already know how to do a skill. This is a way to demonstrate caring for others.

Complements: Abundant Assets Alliance, Activate America











Activity: **Big Buddies**

Ages: 6-12 (Flying Fish/Shark)

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: Polliwog or Pike class

Description:

1. Bring your class to a Polliwog or Pike class.

2. Have them be their "big buddies" and help teach one-on-one.

Complements: Abundant Assets, Activate America











Activity: **Treading Water**

Ages: 6-12 (Minnow/Fish)

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: Pool

Description:

- 1. Explain to the students that while they are treading water, you will discuss a situation.
- 2. Ask them if they know someone who usually isn't treated very nicely.
- 3. Discuss what can be done to be nicer to that person.
- 4. Try to have the entire discussion without touching the side of the pool.











Activity: Treading Water

Ages: 6-12 (Flying Fish/Shark)

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: Pool

Description:

 Have the students tread water while the instructor calls out statements such as "I don't care if my brother gets dessert as long as I get mine," or "It doesn't matter what a person looks like, but rather what kind of person they are inside."

2. When the statement is a caring statement, they tread with their thumbs up and out of the water.

3. When the statement is not a caring statement, they put their thumbs down in the water.











Activity: Swimming with Care
Ages: 6-12 (Minnow/Fish)

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: Pool

- 1. The instructor gives a statement about not caring about something or someone: "My brother is sick, so I get to eat all his candy," or "It's okay if Marjorie is always last in line because she doesn't ever ask to be first."
- 2. All the students then begin to swim back and forth across the pool.
- 3. When they can come up with an answer as to why it wasn't a caring statement, they can stop.
- 4. The instructor will ask them to give their answers.











Activity: Diving with Buddies

Ages: 6-12 (Fish)

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: Deep end of pool

- 1. Divide students up into pairs of diving buddies.
- 2. Explain how to critique nicely.
- 3. Practice dives off the side with their caring buddies. When one student dives, the buddy tells the diver one good thing and suggests one thing to improve upon.











Activity: Summer Kick-Off

Ages: 10–14 Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: Pool, inner tubes, movie projector, movie, flyers and posters promoting

the party

Description:

 If you have a year-round facility, schedule a summer kick-off about a month before summer begins. Invite all the teens to bring two or three friends to a dive-in movie one evening.

2. The entry fee is a new swimsuit that will be given to an underprivileged child. (Friends don't have to bring a suit, but are encouraged to.)











Activity: Eliminating Fears

Ages: Polliwog/older youth

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: None

Description:

1. On the first day, have the students state their names and why they are taking lessons. By seeing others their age who still need lessons, they can empathize with each other and feel more comfortable in class.

2. Discuss their fears and how they can eliminate them with class support.

Complements: Abundant Assets Alliance, Activate America











Activity: Volunteering

Ages: 10-14 (Flying Fish/Porpoise)

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: None

Description:

1. If you have students who have become proficient, talk with them about volunteering with the Y and assisting in classes with young children. Talk about the benefits of giving something back to their community and YMCA.

Complements: Abundant Assets Alliance, Member Involvement











Activity: Summer Kick-off

Ages: All

Value(s): Caring

Facility and Equipment: Pool, collection barrel, equipment determined by games, posters and

flyers to promote party

Description:

1. If you have a year-round facility, do a summer kick-off about a month before summer begins. Invite all the students and their families to swim party on evening.

2. The entry fee (per family) is to bring a new swimsuit that will be distributed to an underprivileged child. Talk up the party. Have lots of fun games and activities planned for all ages.











Activity: Marco Polo

Ages: 6-12 (Polliwog)

Value(s): Honesty

Facility and Equipment: Shallow pool

- 1. Before you begin to play Marco Polo, talk about being honest. Is the game any fun if you cheat? Who thinks they can be honest when they play?
- 2. Play Marco Polo. Ask the swimmers what they learned about being honest.











Activity: Honest Abes

Ages: 6-12 (Minnow/Fish)

Value(s): Honesty

Facility and Equipment: Pool, four or five pennies per student

- 1. Divide the class into two groups. Each group should have four or five pennies per person on the deck with half of the pennies turned face down, half with Honest Abe turned up.
- Have the students tread water about four feet from the side. The instructor calls out a statement about being honest. The students rush out of the water to turn over one of their pennies. If it was an honest statement, all the Honest Abes must be showing, and vice versa.
- 3. The first team to turn all the pennies over correctly is the winner.
- 4. It's a quick game and can be played several times; just remember to turn half the pennies over before you begin again.











Activity: **Dive Sticks**

Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Honesty

Facility and Equipment: Pool, diving sticks, or discs with numbers on them

Description:

1. Put at least five dive sticks (or discs with numbers) on the bottom of the pool.

2. Give the students 30 seconds to pull up as many different sticks as they can. When they see the number, they drop the stick back into the pool.

3. After 30 seconds, the students come to the side and tell you how many points they got. Talk about being honest when adding up their points though there is no way anyone would know how many they got.











Activity: Wetball/Water Polo Pacing

Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Honesty

Facility and Equipment: Pool, water polo ball or small playground ball

Description:

1. Divide the class into teams. Have the students pass the ball and spell out h-o-n-e-s-t-y. They get one letter each time they catch the ball without dropping it. If they drop the ball, they have to start all over.

2. The first team to spell "honesty" is the winner.

3. Discuss why it's important to be honest. Ask, "Was everyone being honest when they were playing the game?"











Activity: Honest Bands
Ages: 6–12 (All levels)

Value(s): Honesty

Facility and Equipment: String bracelets or colored rubber bands

Description:

1. Give students honest bands. Tell them to wear the band until the next class. If they tell any lies (no matter how small), it has to come off.

2. See who still has theirs on by the next class.











Activity: **Dishonest Kicking**Ages: **Minnow and up**

Value(s): **Honesty**

Facility and Equipment: Kick boards

Description:

1. Kick across the pool and think about when you were dishonest. What were the consequences? Share them with the class when you get to the other side.

2. Discuss if there is a difference between white lies, not telling the whole truth, and lies.











Activity: Honest Ball
Ages: 8-12 (Shark)

Value(s): Honesty

Facility and Equipment: Beach ball or small playground ball

Description:

1. Divide the class into two groups.

- 2. Each group has a few minutes to come up with a water game using the ball. Decide on the rules.
- 3. Each group shares the game that will be played and the rules that need to be followed. Play the game for a few minutes.
- 4. After the games have been played, discuss the rules of the games. Were they followed? Did they change during the game? Why?
- 5. Discuss the importance of being honest and playing by the rules. Even if the rules need to be changed, many times it will come up during the game. Highlight when it was needed to change one of the rules or how a rule was changed during the game.











Activity: Goal Setting
Ages: 6-12 (Minnow)

Value(s): Honesty

Facility and Equipment: Paper, pencils for each student, goal setting sheets

Description:

- 1. Discuss goal setting at the beginning of class.
- 2. Hand out goal setting sheets.
- 3. Have students write down one goal that they want to accomplish that day and one that they want to accomplish by the end of the session. (If you have any students that cannot write what they want to say, write it for them or ask another student to help them.) Collect the sheets.
- 4. At the end of class, ask, "Who accomplished their goal today and who tried, but did not achieve it?" Talk about how it feels when you do not succeed, and what you should do about it. Set realistic goals.
- 5. At the end of the session, discuss the goals that were set for the end of the session.











Activity: Pool Clean-up
Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Respect

Facility and Equipment: Trash cans, lost and found barrel

- 1. Have your students stay after class to clean up for the other classes. The class can file, organize the lost and found, pick up trash and equipment, etc.
- 2. Explain that it is everyone's responsibility to keep the entire facility clean and it's their day to do a little extra. This is one way we show respect for the facility.
- 3. Ask them what they can do during the rest of the day to keep their environment clean.
- 4. At the next class, ask what things they did.











Activity: Synchro Chain

Ages: 6-12 (Flying Fish/Shark)

Value(s): Respect

Facility and Equipment: Deep end of pool

- 1. Have the students work on a synchro chain together.
- 2. Before they begin, explain that they need to work together to get it right. They need to help each other out, respect the students who might be having trouble, and help them until the chain is completed.











Activity: Respecting Others
Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): **Respect**

Facility and Equipment: None

- 1. Discuss "respect" at the beginning of class, and then have each student tell why it's important in swim class.
- 2. Tell them that one way of showing respect is to wait for their turn. Discuss other ways to show "respect" in class.











Activity: Pennies For Respect
Ages: 6–12 (Minnow/Fish)

Value(s): Respect

Facility and Equipment: Pool, three pennies per student

Description:

- 1. Put two of three pennies per student on each side of the pool. Call one side "respectful" and the other side "disrespectful."
- 2. The instructor gives a statement such as, "Just because someone has a different opinion than me doesn't mean I don't like them," or "Johnny is only 5 years old, so I don't have to listen to anything he has to say."
- 3. If the statement is respectful, they have to swim a penny from the disrespectful side to the respectful side and vice versa until all the pennies are on the respectful side.











Activity: **Diving For Respect**

Ages: 6-12 (Flying Fish/Shark)

Value(s): **Respect**

Facility and Equipment: Deep pool

Description:

- 1. Have all the students line up on the deck. (Play across the width of a pool.)
- 2. The instructor gives a respectful or disrespectful statement.
- 3. If the statement is respectful, the swimmers dive in and try to get to the other side of the pool first to get a point.
- 4. If the statement is disrespectful, they stay where they are. (If they didn't, they lose a point.)
- 5. The first person to get three or five points is the winner.











Activity: Hoop Jumping

Ages: 6-12 (Polliwog/Guppy)

Value(s): Respect

Facility and Equipment: Hula Hoop

Description:

1. Have all the students line up on the deck.

2. One at a time, they call out someone they respect and tell why.

3. If it is a good answer, they get to jump through the hoop.











Activity: R-e-s-p-e-c-t Skills
Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Respect

Facility and Equipment: **Pool, chalkboard, chalk**

- 1. Write _____ on a chalkboard by the pool. Assign each student a skill to work on (or they can do it with a buddy) and a letter. Ideas include: tread water with hands out for 15 seconds, get a letter "R" etc.
- 2. Once the student shows the instructor that he or she can do the skill, he or she gets to put the letter on the chalkboard.
- 3. When it is spelled out, discuss "respect."











Activity: Respecting Ourselves

Ages: All

Value(s): **Respect**

Facility and Equipment: None

Description:

1. Discuss how we need to respect people, including ourselves. Even if we feel discouraged, or if we're frightened or progressing slowly, we should respect ourselves and feel proud about our small accomplishments. Learning to swim can be a slow process, but by sticking with it and setting realistic goals, we will be successful.











Activity: Kicking For Respect

Ages: 6-12 (Minnow and up)

Value(s): Respect

Facility and Equipment: Pool, kick boards

Description:

1. Have the students kick back and forth across the pool. While kicking, they should think of why respect is important, who they respect, and how you show that you respect them.

2. Have them tell the class what they thought about when they come back.











Activity: Nationalities

Ages: 6-12 (Polliwog)

Value(s): **Respect**

Facility and Equipment: Pool, learn languages

Description:

- Discuss how there are all different nationalities in the world. When we realize children
 from other countries are just boys and girls like us, we can become friends. Sometimes
 it's difficult because people have different customs or languages, but that should be
 something fun to learn about, not a barrier to friendship.
- 2. Teach the students how to count in two different languages.
- 3. Pair them up to do bobs. As one partner does the bobs, the other partner counts for them in the new language.

Complements: Abundant Assets Alliance, International Involvement











Activity: Safe Fun

Ages: All

Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: None

Description:

1. Discuss what you would do at a party if your friends were not playing safe. Would you stop it? How? Is it your responsibility (since you know better) to do something?











Activity: Safety Day

Ages: All

Value(s): Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: None

Description:

1. Have a safety day. Discuss what people can do to ensure safety around aquatic environments such as pools, oceans, and lakes. What should they do to set a good example? What should they do if they notice something that is unsafe?











Activity: **Practice**

Ages: All

Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: None

Description:

1. Tell swimmers to practice on their own one extra time each week. They need to be responsible for getting themselves to the pool if they really want to learn.

Complements: Abundant Assets Alliance, Activate America











Activity: Swimming Responsibilities

Ages: 6-12 (Polliwog/Guppy)

Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: Deck space or classroom

Description:

1. Discuss the responsibilities you have before going swimming: applying sunscreen, knowing the rules, showering, knowing pool depth, etc.

2. Have swimmers explain why these are important











Activity: **Diving**

Ages: 6-12 (Minnow/Fish)

Value(s): Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: **Diving board**

Description:

1. Have students line up behind the diving board

2. Each diver has to tell the instructor one of his or her daily responsibilities before diving off the board.











Activity: Lifeguard Visit

Ages: **6-12 (Shark)**

Value(s): Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Deck space or classroom, lifeguard

Description:

 Have a lifeguard visit your students. Have the guard discuss what his or her responsibilities are around the pool. The guard can ask the students, "Why do you think I have these responsibilities?" or "What can you do to make it easier for me to accomplish my responsibilities?"

2. Allow students time to ask questions.











Activity: Student Instructor Day

Ages: 6-12 (Flying Fish/Shark)

Value(s): Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: **Pre-written assignments**

Description:

- 1. Assign each student to teach part of the next class. Give them time to ask questions.
- 2. Tell them that it is their responsibility to practice before class so that the other students will learn and have fun.
- 3. At the next class, the instructor should direct and help out each student as necessary.

Complements: Abundant Assets Alliance, Member Involvement











Activity: **Elementary Backstroke Homework**

Ages: **6-12 (Minnow)** Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: None

Description:

1. Have students practice elementary backstroke on deck at the end of class. Before ending class, tell them they need to practice this twice at home before the next class.

2. At the beginning of the next class, ask who practiced. Say, "Who was responsible and did their homework? Who does it hurt if you don't do your homework? Is this the same as school homework?"











Activity: Swim Class List
Ages: 6-12 (Polliwog)
Value(s): Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Handout: "What I need to bring with me to my Y swim class."

Description:

- 1. Give students the homework assignment at the end of class. Tell them to write down (or draw pictures of) what they are responsible for remembering to bring to the Y each day.
- 2. At the beginning of the next class, read the lists.
- 3. Talk about being responsible enough at home to get their stuff ready without help.











Activity: Responsible Bulletin Board

Ages: All

Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: Bulletin board, homework paper

Description:

1. Have each child take a paper home that has a place for their name and age on the bottom. On the top it says, "I am responsible for..." They can write or draw their responsibilities and bring it to the next class.

2. Discuss what they came up with and post them on the bulletin board or in the hallway.











Activity: Safety and Responsibility

Ages: **6-12 (Guppy)** Value(s): **Responsibility**

Facility and Equipment: 14 pieces of paper with one of the letters of "responsibility" on them,

safety equipment around the pool, tape.

Description:

1. Before class begins, tape a different letter on safety equipment around the pool.

2. Tell everyone in the class to go and find two letters and bring them back to class.

3. When everyone returns, have them explain where they found the letters and how to use that equipment.

4. Discuss why it's their responsibility to learn to help save lives and prevent accidents.











Activity: Scrabble

Ages: 6-12 (Minnow and up)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Pool, Scrabble, letters

Description:

1. Drop scrabble letters that spell one of the values into the pool.

2. Have students swim out and bring one of the letters back. Place the letters on the deck and have them try to figure out what the word is and spell it with the letters. Give them hints as necessary.

3. Do it with each of the values.











Activity: Values Review Ages: 6-12 (Guppy)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Pool

Description:

1. Use this as a review for values already discussed in class.

2. Give each of the values a skill assigned to it (caring: bobs, honesty: kicking on the wall; respect: blow bubbles; responsibility: back float).

3. The instructor calls out a value and the students have to try to remember what skill they do for that value.











Activity: **Diving Values**

Ages: 6-12 (Fish/Flying Fish)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility
Facility and Equipment: Pool, diving rings in the four value colors

Description:

1. Throw rings into the pool.

2. When swimmers bring their rings up, they have to say a statement about their value.











Activity: Value Relays
Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: **Depends on relays**

Description:

1. Use this as a review for values

2. Pair off students and give each of them a "value" name.

3. Have any type of relays, but when they cheer, they can't yell out the student's name. Instead, they cheer for their value name.











Activity: Rolling For Values

Ages: 6-12 (Shark)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Wood or plastic cubes

- 1. Make two square wood or plastic cubes. Put the numbers one through four on one cube and the values on the other cube. (Two sides will have duplicates.)
- 2. Students roll the die and kick the number of widths as they rolled. At the end of their widths, they have to give a value statement for the value that was rolled. (Example: they roll two and honesty, so thy kick two widths and then give a value statement about why it is good to be honest.)











Activity: "Let's Make a Deal" Doors

Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Cardboard with doors decorated on it, with values behind the doors

- 1. Take a piece of cardboard approximately 2' x 1' and cut out four doors. (You can decorate the cardboard to make it look more fun.) Tape a piece of paper with a value and a warm-up for that class day behind each of the doors.
- 2. At the beginning of each class, have a student choose a door to open. (Always change the order of the papers behind the doors.)
- 3. Discuss the value they chose and then do the warm-up to get class started.











Activity: Value Relay

Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: **Depends on relays**

- 1. Have any type of relay according to their skill level. Before each swimmer goes, he or she has to give a value statement.
- 2. The instructor will call out a value. The swimmer has to give a statement just before a teammate touches the wall. (Example: As team member 2 touches the wall, the instructor calls out "respect." Team member 3 has to give a statement before entering the race.)











Activity: Kick Board Values
Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility
Facility and Equipment: Pool, kick boards, permanent ink markers

- 1. Take a few kick boards and write all kinds of values on all of them. Include trust, integrity, respect, love, etc.
- 2. Have the students kick across the pool and see how many they can read. Then they should describe a way to demonstrate them.











Activity: Value Cards

Ages: 6-12 (All levels)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Laminated cards with values and skill on them

- 1. Laminate eight to 10 cards that have a value and a review skill on them. Each student draws a card and then has three to five minutes to practice the review skill while thinking about what the value means to him or her. (Example: Flutter kicking with a board is the review skill and "trust" is the value, so while kicking, they think about what trust means to them.)
- 2. After warm-up, ask them to share their values with the group.











Activity: Value Bubbles
Ages: 6-12 (Polliwog)

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Float belts, permanent ink markers

Description:

1. Write the values on the float belts in bright colored ink, so the students see them each time they use the equipment.











Activity: Balloon Dribble
Ages: Minnow and up

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: Balloons with value statements inside them

- 1. Blow up a balloon for each student. Write one of the values and a statement about it inside the balloon before you make a knot.
- 2. Put them in the middle of the pool and sit on the balloon to pop it. Then each swimmer has to read the value statement to the class.
- 3. Each swimmer has to get out of the pool and sit on the balloon to pop it. Then each swimmer has to read the value statement to the class.
- 4. Have one message be a special prize inside like, "Congratulations, you just won a free yogurt coupon!"











Activity: **Rescue**

Ages: Fish and up

Value(s): Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility

Facility and Equipment: None

Description:

- 1. Discuss rescues and values with the class after practicing reaching or throwing assists. One example of a scenario to use: a small group of kids was playing in the grass area by the pool. The ball fell into the pool. One of the kids jumped into the pool to try to retrieve the ball and started having trouble. One of the other kids ran over, yelled for help, and gave a pole to the kid in the pool and brought him in.
 - a. Perform the rescue. (Caring)
 - b. How did it really happen? (Honesty)
 - c. What rule was broken? (Respect)
 - d. What steps can be taken so it doesn't happen again? (Responsibility)