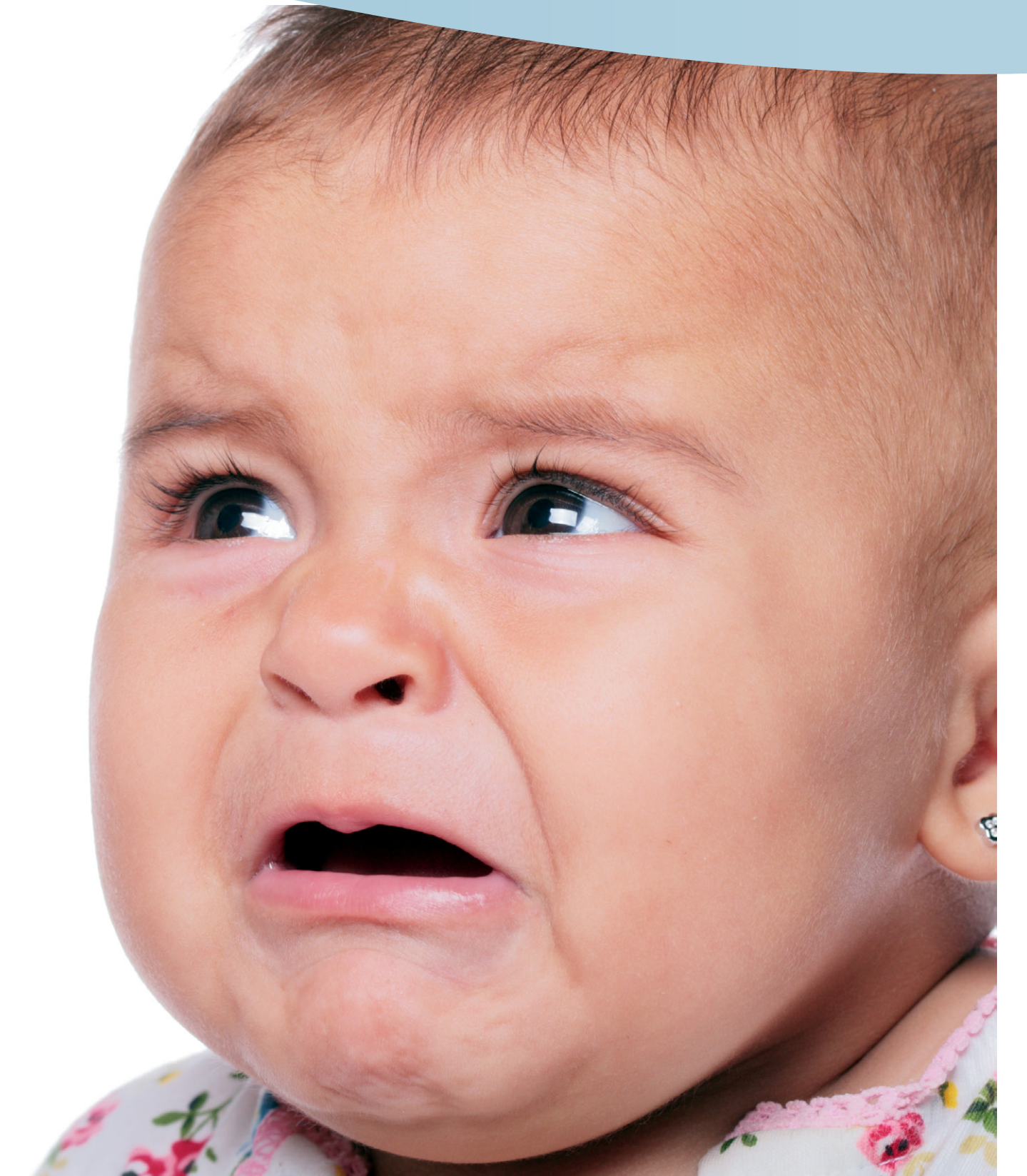


Crying During Lessons

It is sometimes difficult to know what to do when your child cries during swim class. Part of you wants to go rescue her, and another part of you knows that she needs this experience to become a swimmer and gain victory over her fear. Maybe you're feeling embarrassed to have a child who is so unhappy and you are hopeful that he does not disrupt the class too much!

Rest assured, crying in swim lessons is not uncommon around the swim school environment! Crying is a natural expression of her emotional discomfort due to separation from you, the new environment or not wanting to go under water or backfloat (or all three!)

We will work with your child to build trust, and ease her discomfort because her emotional comfort is necessary for her to learn new skills.



How can you help your child before, during and after swim lessons?:



1. Hand your child to the teacher/deck manager: If your child is fussing prior to swim lessons, walk your child out on deck and hand him over to the teacher. Then, calmly walk back to the viewing room with a pleasant expression on your face. Never make a teacher chase your child or tear your child off your leg (this will make your child fight to protect himself). By handing your child over to the teacher, you are "telling" your child that you trust the teacher.
2. Let us know about your child... you know your child best! If you have ideas on how to better handle the situation, let the deck manager know!
3. Hide in plain sight: If your child continually looks at you and calls to you in the viewing room, please break eye contact with him. This can easily be accomplished by looking at a magazine or book every time he looks at you. By breaking eye contact with your child during lessons, you will accelerate his dependency and bonding with the teacher. Feel free to take a peek at your child every once in a while when he's not looking at you. Remember to keep a pleasant expression on your face to show that you feel there's no reason for alarm.

What we will be doing:

1. Reading/observing your child and adjusting accordingly: At first, frightened children need confidence and protection more than they need swim skills. We will do our best to make certain each child is not pushed too fast in lessons. We want every child to feel loved, protected, and successful.
2. If they are a "runner"... they may be placed on the island and do the lesson from the island.
3. Piggy-back rides: Sometimes the teacher may place a crying child on his back while she teaches the rest of the class. This can be an effective tool because your child will learn to depend on the teacher and feel more at ease with the teacher as time passes. Very often, this type of physical dependency is more effective than verbal reasoning with an upset child. Plus, children learn from observing an activity in addition to doing the activity.



How long before my child stops crying?

Each child is an individual and progresses at his own rate. With that said, on average, swim students who cry have stopped between the third and fifth lesson. At the very least you should notice that the crying is diminishing with each lesson.



Be as comfortable in water
as you are on land.