



# BeInSynch

Education Newsletter

MARCH EDITION • 2022

**Welcome to the March 2022 Education Newsletter!**  
Our goal is to share information with you from experts, volunteers, coaches and officials. If you have suggestions to be included in future newsletters, please send them to [shari@usaartisticswim.org](mailto:shari@usaartisticswim.org).



- INSIDE THIS ISSUE**
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  - Artistic Swimming Fitness Recipe
  - From Swings to Sport: The Power of External Coaching Cues
  - Great Advice from Elizabeth Davidson, SNT athlete
  - Workout Fun with Fun Workouts
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## UPCOMING EVENTS

March 25<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
U.S. Collegiate Championships  
Columbus, Ohio

April 6<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
U.S. Junior & Senior National Championships  
Geneva, Ohio

April 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022  
Junior Natl Team Trials  
Geneva, Ohio

April 28<sup>th</sup>-May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022  
U.S. 13-15 Championship & 12&U Invitational  
Irvine, California

June 25<sup>th</sup>-July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022  
U.S. Junior Olympic Championships  
Gainesville, Florida

July 19<sup>th</sup> – July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022  
National Elite Camp  
Las Vegas, Nevada

July 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022  
Boys in Sync Camp  
Las Vegas, Nevada

*Thank you to everyone who participated in the  
2021 All-Star Camp & Coaches College!*

*There were a total of 70 athletes and 30 coaches in attendance.*

*And of course we could not have done it without our amazing clinicians:  
Anita Alvarez, Gail Emery, Inga Gillyer, Jen Koptie, Ou Liu, Tammy McGregor, Ludi  
Stsepaniuk, Roman Stsepaniuk, Monica Velazquez-Stiak and Linda Witter*

*"You are the only one who  
Can limit your greatness"*

## VERY IMPORTANT SAFESPORT MANDATE & COURSE INFO!!!

As mandated by The Center for SafeSport and the Board of Directors, ALL individuals listed on USA Artistic Swimming's required list (included on the last page of this newsletter), MUST complete the Full SafeSport course! **NOTE: all participants over the age of 18 will be required to complete the training courses regardless of if they practice or compete with minor athletes.**

The full SafeSport course is approximately 90 minutes long. New users will be presented with the single course automatically. Once the course is completed, you can attach your training to your sports engine account by connecting the email you used for your training. Participants that are new to the trainings will use this enrollment link: <https://safesporttrained.org?KeyName=NGBUSAAAS-cqZgvN2>. Instructions for previously enrolled members are attached.

IMPORTANT: The cycle for SafeSport trainings is 4 years. The first year, you will take core training, followed by 3 refreshers annually. Once you've completed the cycle, you will begin again with core training. All trainings can be found under the 'catalog' tab.

**Please watch your expiration dates for SafeSport! You are required to complete ONE Course per year. Refresher courses take approximately 15 minutes to complete.**



*USA Artistic Swimming is proud of a working partnership with the National Center for Safety Initiatives. It is a top priority of USA Artistic Swimming that all athletes are afforded the opportunity to learn and compete in a safe environment. USA Artistic Swimming and the USA Artistic Swimming Foundation are committed to providing a safe place for our athletes and we hope you are too.*

*According to USA Artistic Swimming's revised application of the United States Olympic Committees athlete safety policy, Background Screens are now a requirement to be a member of USA Artistic Swimming in the category you are currently registered. Life Members that act in any of these capacities must also adhere to this requirement.*

## RoadMAAPP

The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policies (MAAPP) aim to help young athletes feel safe, supported, and strengthened—by limiting one-on-one interactions between adults and children, requiring abuse prevention training for certain adults, and promoting environments in which misconduct is less likely to occur. This animated series introduces the purpose of the MAAPP, as well as key definitions and requirements NGB members must adhere to. For more information about the Center's efforts to end abuse in sport, visit [uscenterforsafesport.org](https://uscenterforsafesport.org).

Click [HERE](#) to view the series of six easy-to-understand animated episodes.

## Train Like a Champion

15 Minute Cardio Jump Rope Workout – click [HERE](#)

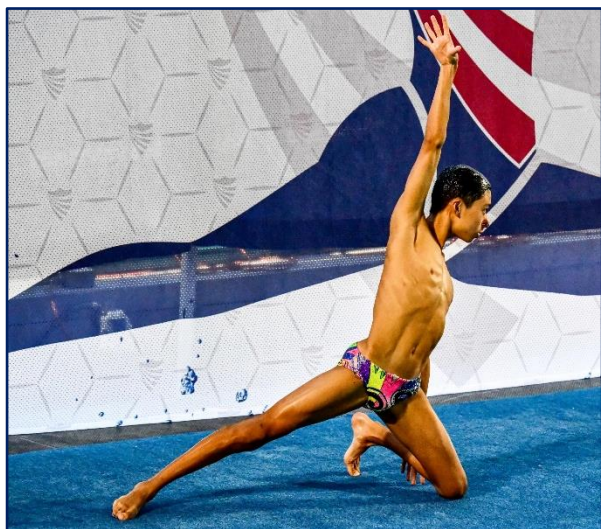
20 Minute Jumping Jack Cardio Workout – click [HERE](#)

15 Minute Core & Abs Workout (20 Plank Variations)  
– click [HERE](#)



2022 Senior, Junior National Team and Junior Elite Camp Trials will be held on April 10th & 11<sup>th</sup> after the Junior/Senior National Championships.

The 2022 Boys in Sync Camp has been moved to Thursday, July 21<sup>st</sup> through Saturday, July 23<sup>rd</sup> in Las Vegas. More information & registration coming soon.



Michael Chan, member of Freedom Valley YMCA Synchro & 2021 13-15 National Team  
Photo cred: James Rokop Photography

## TAKE A LISTEN



Podcasts/Webinars worth your time:

“Helping Athletes Let Go of Mistakes”, by Dr. Patrick Cohn and Dr. Megan (Get Psyched for Sports podcast) click [HERE](#)

“The Downside of Compliments in Youth Sports”, by Michaela Renee Johnson, click [HERE](#)

“Train Your Mind for Athletic Success” by Dr. Jim Taylor, click [HERE](#)



## Great Reads

“The Language of Coaching” by Nick Winkelman (book on Amazon)

“3 Crucial Ideas on Better Coaching, Cueing and Athlete Performance” by Just Fly Sports, click [HERE](#)

“The Power of Coaching Cues” by John Portch, click [HERE](#)

## Videos to Enjoy



“The Role of Parents in Sports” from PCA, click [HERE](#)

“Being a Great Teammate”, from Kerri Walsh Jennings, click [HERE](#)

“The Power of Relentless Positivity” from Matt Hayden, click [HERE](#)

**DON'T STOP UNTIL YOU'RE PROUD!**

# FIVE TIPS FOR BUILDING AND MAINTAINING CONFIDENCE

By Dr Michael Gervais

This article emphasizes the importance of confidence, defined as one's belief in one's ability to successfully execute a specific task. It also reveals common misconceptions about confidence and elaborates on these five tips:

1. Stop trying to feel confident and start "thinking" confident.
2. Take ownership of your confidence and devise strategies that make confidence on competition day an expectation rather than a hope.
3. There are many different types of confidence that underpin your overall confidence. Understand and develop these types of confidence and overall confidence will take care of itself.
4. Understand where your confidence comes from. Once your sources of confidence are understood, then you can begin to take more ownership over your overall confidence.
5. Whenever seeking to build overall confidence it is best to start at the bottom and work up. This is achieved by targeting sources of confidence rather than overall confidence

The full article can be found [HERE](#)

## Videos and Podcasts by Dr. Michael Gervais

"How to Build Self-Confidence" - Click [HERE](#)

"How to Build an Elite Mindset" - Click [HERE](#)

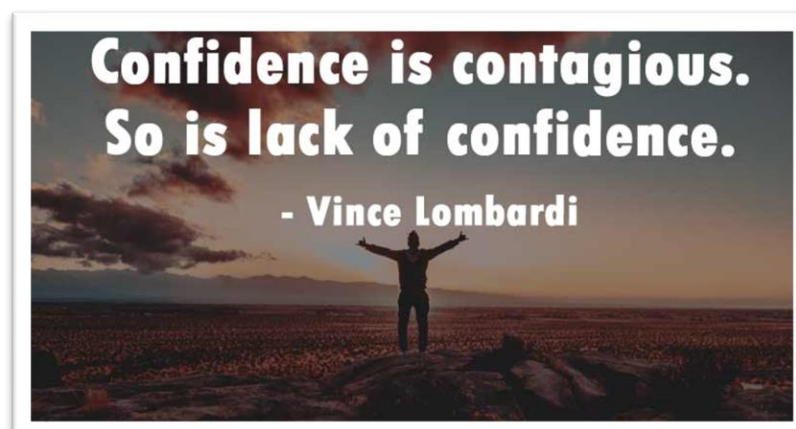
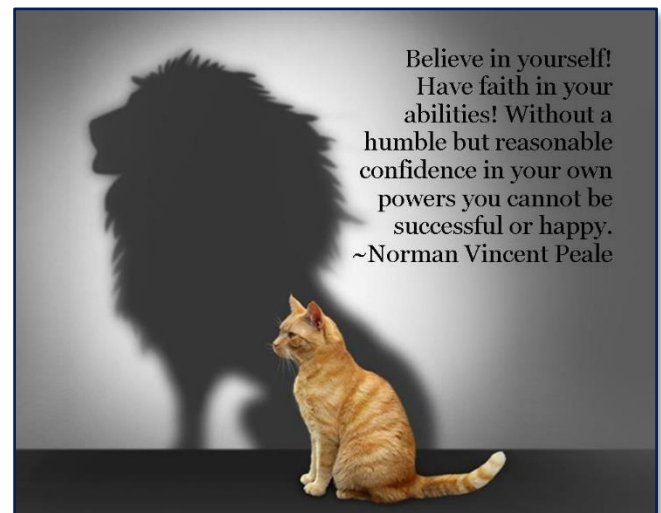
"Your Ultimate Guide to Performing Under Pressure" - Click [HERE](#)

"Training Your Mind" - Click [HERE](#)

"Know What Drives You" - Click [HERE](#)

"The Mental Game, Part 1" - Click [HERE](#)

"The Mental Game, Part 2" - Click [HERE](#)



# ARTISTIC SWIMMING - FITNESS RECIPE

An excerpt from *Preparing for Competition*  
E-Guide written by Barb Nesbitt, H2o Performers

For you to prepare for your competitive season, competitive 'fitness' needs to be a focus, but what does it mean to be 'fit'? Let's dust off that handy dandy dictionary for a little vocabulary review.

**Fitness** – (noun) the condition of being physically fit and healthy.

**Fit** – (adjective) in good health, especially due to regular physical exercise.

**Healthy** – (adjective) in good health.

**Health** – (noun) the state of being free from illness or ailment.

Well, that's weird... None of these definitions give us a clue as to the what or how when it comes to being fitter or healthier.

A deeper dive and some further research drove me to an exercise physiology-compiled list of physical skills by Jim Crawley and Bruce Evans, professional coaches and the founders of Dynamax, a leading brand in fitness equipment. Their list provides the exact answer to my quest, the recipe for the perfect, well-rounded athlete. A picture-perfect image of fitness!

Interestingly enough for a sport as unique as artistic swimming, this list speaks in direct correlation to the demands of our sport; vastly different movement qualities in multiple planes at different velocities, in and out of the water. *Wild!*

*So, what does it take to be artistic swimming 'fit,' you ask?*

According to Dictionary.com, you need nothing other than good health and a body free of injury or ailment. According to Jim Crawley and Bruce Evans of Dynamax (and Barb Nesbitt), you may need a few other things as well!

The full article can be found [HERE](#).



For more on this topic and more, check out my website: [www.h2operformers.com](http://www.h2operformers.com)

# FROM SWINGS TO SPORT: THE POWER OF EXTERNAL COACHING CUES

By Darren Wensor, from  
*Coaching Young Athletes*

I was at a set of playground swings with my 3-year-old daughter the other day. I pushed her for a while to the demands of “Higher Daddy! Higher!”. I had recently been trying to teach her how to keep herself going once I stopped pushing. These less-than-successful efforts had consisted of telling her to kick her legs up and out on the forward swing and to tuck them in on the backward swing.

She had always struggled with these instructions, particularly with getting the timing of the movement right. This would quickly lead her to become frustrated and discouraged. Fortunately, a few days before, I had seen another dad in my situation stand in front of a swing and hold his hands up as a target for his son to kick.

I gave my daughter one final push and then stood back to watch where her feet reached on the forward swing. As she swung back, I stepped in and held a hand up. “Try to touch my hand with your feet”. She swung her feet up towards my hands and touched her toes to my palm. “And again!” I said.

She did it again . . . and again. She was now generating her own momentum. Soon it became a game to see how hard we could slap the bottom of her feet to my hands. This, of course, resulted in more momentum. The instruction – or cue – soon changed from “Touch my hand” to “Slap my hand”. As I moved my hand slightly higher, she had to try harder, exaggerating her swing even more.

She was suddenly achieving things we had worked on many times before without much success. All it took was a change in my teaching approach; specifically, how I cued the movement. I changed from using internal cues to using a simple external cue.

## The Power of External Cues

*Internal cues* focus attention on an individual’s own body movement or muscle action. (i.e. “Kick your legs up; tuck them in”). *External cues* focus attention away from the body or are targeted beyond the body on an external object. (i.e. “Touch my hand with your feet”). Research indicates that external cues are better than internal cues for learning and performance. Knowing this and being able to apply this knowledge can be a game-changer in coaching.

## From Swings to Sport

*Externally cueing my daughter’s movements provided a number of advantages that worked to provide the result that eventuated. The experience demonstrated a few important principles and lessons that can be applied to coaching young athletes in a range of sports skills.*

### **#1 – One Good External Cue = Less Cues Required**

Work towards using a single cue in preference to a series of cues. Say more with less.

### **#2 – External Cues are Simpler Cues**

Choose simple cues that can be quickly processed.

### **#3 – The Effectiveness of a Specific External Reference Point**

Where possible, provide focused, specific targets at which a young athlete can direct their attention and movement. Choose specific in preference to general. If relevant to the particular sport and movement, consider whether a physical object can be provided for the athlete to touch, strike, slap or provide force against.

### **#4 – The Language of the Cue**

Choose language that reflects the speed, direction and shape of the movement required.

### **Recommended Action**

Be mindful and purposeful with your use of language when coaching a skill. Strive to use external coaching *cues that:*

1. *Reduce – the number of cues, words, etc.*
2. *Simplify – the language, concepts, etc.*
3. *Specify – the focus of attention, direction of force, etc.*
4. *Capture – the speed, direction and shape of the movement.*

The full article can be found [HERE](#)

# GREAT ADVICE!

Senior National Team member Elizabeth Davidson, shares her thoughts on her journey.

Like many others, when I started synchro I wanted to compete in college and represent the USA on national team. I started synchro when I was 6, swam for different clubs in California, and competed on national team before I was recruited to swim at OSU. I moved to Ohio where I was able to pursue my degrees, swim for OSU, and also compete for USA. In my senior year, I made it onto (what I thought would be) my final national team. I was very happy with my final year of synchro - we won the 30th National Championship for OSU, my duet partner and I won duet for OSU for the first time in 7 years, and we were team finalists at World Championships in Budapest. This same year I graduated with 2 Bachelor's Degrees, and having completed a fulfilling synchro career I decided to pursue my Master's degree.



In my final year of my graduate program, I realized that while I was proud of the things I was doing, there was something missing. It had been almost 4 years since I retired, but I decided to try out for national team in August of 2020. Because of COVID it was difficult to find a pool, and after about a collective 3 hours of practicing I knew I wouldn't make the team but decided this was my chance to stop thinking about how much I missed synchro and to take the first step to come back. I was right - I didn't make the team, but I knew this was the beginning. With the help of my former OSU coaches, I was able to get some pool time to prepare for the next tryout. I recorded myself on my phone and sent videos to coaches. My training wasn't ideal, but it was enough. After participating at the petition event, I was named to the senior national team squad, left my job in Ohio, moved home to California, and have since been training with the senior national team.

I questioned myself a lot, thinking I was crazy for coming back after so many years away and for being way too old for this team. I'm glad that I ignored the insecurities because I realized that after college is the ideal age to compete at an elite level, and I am able to swim now in a much different way than I could before. I hope my journey can inspire others to realize that it's not too late to pursue their goals.

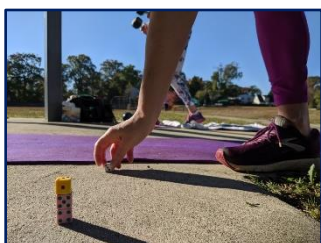
## TOWER OF REPS

Equipment needed: Dice and flat surface

Line all athletes up and place a big pile of dice about 10 yards away. Pick an exercise such as push-ups, burpees, crunches, etc. Set a time limit for the race – suggested is 2-3 minutes. Repeat with different exercises

1. RUN to the dice pile to get a die and run it back.
2. ROLL the die.
3. REP – do double the number they rolled.
4. STACK the die in a tower.

If at any time an athlete's stack tumbles down, they lose one die and put it off to the side, rebuild their tower and continue.



## WORKOUT FUN WITH FUN WORKOUTS!

### DRYLAND GAMES FOR SWIMMERS

Red Light, Green Light – Click [HERE](#)

Push Over – Click [HERE](#)

React Up – Click [HERE](#)

Visual Cue Simon Says – Click [HERE](#)

### CORE WORKOUTS

3 Minute Partner Ab Workout – Click [HERE](#)

6 Partner Exercises for your Abs – Click [HERE](#)

Partner Workouts with Medicine Ball – Click [HERE](#)

# Figures & Numerical Values





## What are they & why do they matter?

What do those judges talk about when they sit down and read through figures at a figure panel? Judges will read through description of the figures, the major desired actions as described in the FINA Manual, the height chart and the numerical values for each figure.

Everything is pretty straight forward, but what exactly are numerical values? Every figure is composed of positions and transitions. Positions are back layout, vertical, surface front pike, surface arch, etc. Transitions are those movements between positions, for example: back layout to bent knee back layout, vertical descent, front layout to surface from pike, surface arch to back layout, etc. The numerical value is based on an equation which considers sculling proficiency, center of gravity and buoyancy, kinesthetic and spatial perception, airborne weight, water resistance and joint flexibility.

On pages 47 – 53 in the FINA Manual you will find all transitions and their related numerical values. When you look at the description of a figure, for example the Straight Ballet Leg (page 62), you will find a line that reads “NVT”, this is the numerical value, and another line titled “PV”. PV is the percentage value. NVT does not add up to any particular amount, but the PV should always add up to 10 (100%). Looking at the Straight Ballet Leg example below, you will see that the transition from Back Layout to Ballet Leg is worth 18.5, Ballet Leg to Bent Knee Back Layout is worth 22.0 and Bent Knee Back Layout is worth 10.5. So, the first transition is considered the most difficult. With that the judges will be giving more emphasis on the score for that portion of the figure than for the other two transitions.









### Straight Ballet Leg

				<b>Total</b>
NV =	18.5	11.0	10.5	40
PV =	4.63	2.75	2.63	

*Worth 46.3% of the entire figure*

Now let's look at the Rio. You will find that the Thrust and the Continuous Spin 720° are worth almost 50% of the entire score!

### Rio

								<b>Total</b>
NVT =	10.5	11.0	13.0	13.0	15.0	31.0	30.0	123.5
PV =	0.85	0.89	1.05	1.05	1.21	2.51	2.43	

*Worth 49.4% of the entire figure*

Hopefully this helps explain another part of the judging process.



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When athletes are in the learning stages of new routines safety needs to be a priority. Hammer Head takes safety to the next level!

Adam Andrasko, CEO of USA Synchro

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Olympic Gold Medalist, Rowdy Gaines



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