

How do we at Hubbard Family Swim School feel about floaties and life vests?

If you're on your boat, cruising on the lake or sailing across the gulf stream, we love life vests. **If your child is playing in the pool in them, we don't.**

1. Teach respect for the edge of the pool. Children should learn not to enter the pool unless they can get themselves to safety. Let the child step off the edge of the pool, go under and learn to grab the wall or turn back to the step. Better yet, teach the child to roll over and float.
2. Floaties teach a child to tread water and to pop up to breathe. We disagree with pop up breathing because as a child becomes tired they have no choice but to panic or sink. It is often very difficult for a child who has spent many hours sitting high in the water in a vertical position while wearing a life jacket or floaties to accept the fact that they can lie horizontally and float.
3. "Floaties" are also called "Children's Water Confidence Products" because they give kids great amounts of confidence when they should not have any! They aren't swimming, they are floating around the pool.

We have lifeguarded camp situations and watched 5 year olds jump into the pool and go straight to the bottom in the excitement of heading out to free swim - they forgot to put their floaties on! They can't swim – they just think they can.