

LEARNING TO SWIM – NEW IMPACT SURVEY FROM STA



International Learn to Swim Week 2022 (9th – 15th May 2022)

In November 2021, STA, a national governing body for swimming, carried out an industry-wide survey which revealed that UK swim schools had lost 50% of their teaching staff during the pandemic – and this has resulted in many thousands of children now having to join long waiting lists for swimming lessons.

For International Learn to Swim Week 2022, STA has turned to parents with children under 16 years this time, to gauge their feedback on the situation – and according to the 1065 parents surveyed by Opinion Matters in April 2022, it's not just the teaching shortage that is currently preventing their children from learning to swim.

Top 10 Learn to Swim Headlines

- 86% agreed that swimming is an excellent way to look after your mental health
- 1 in 3 children do not know how to swim – the East of England, East Midlands, West Midlands, South East, and Northern Ireland being the worse hit regions
- Nearly 1 in 5 children can't do any basic swimming skills (a frightening 41% in Northern Ireland)
- Nearly two-thirds (62%) said their child does not attend swimming lessons
- Nearly 100% agreed it is important for a child to learn how to swim
- Parents aged 16-24 years had the lowest rate of their children attending swimming lessons (22%)
- A third agreed that the teacher shortage is affecting their child accessing swimming lessons – Northern Ireland, Greater London, North East, and North West scored the highest
- Over 1 in 3 agree the pandemic has meant that their child has not been able to attend swimming lessons
- Nearly a quarter would like to take their children swimming, but the nearest pool with availability is too far away
- 73% agreed that swimming is an underrated skill (41% strongly agreed).

Extra-Curricular Activities – Participation

- Attend one activity per week – less than a third
- Attend two activities per week – nearly 1 in 3
- Swimming lessons were the top activity (38%), followed by football and dance
- Of those children in swimming lessons pre-pandemic, more than three-quarters resumed lessons when pools reopened
- Parents aged 16-24 had the lowest participation with their children, and only 22% of their children have been to a swimming lesson.

Cost of Living Impact

- Over a third have cut back on the number of extra-curricular activities their child does per week
- Over half (54%) agree they have had to cut back on things to help pay for an extra-curricular activity
- Nearly a third will only let their child do extra-curricular activities if they are within walking distance of their home.



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