



An Introduction to AquaSquirts Too for Water Safety Instructors

Welcome!

As a trained AquaSquirts Instructor and WSI you are already familiar with the philosophy and method of teaching AquaSquirts. Play to learn and providing a fun, safe experience in the water are some of your goals when you teach. AquaSquirts Too offers 10 more sessions of creative ideas for you to be able to use to increase the fun and learning in your Red Cross classes. AquaSquirts Too was developed for the swimmers who were repeat AquaSquirts customers; they've now got ten new themes to experience, as do the swimmers who are not quite yet ready to move on to the next Swim Kids level.

These notes are meant to provide you with a quick overview of the new program. Some of the similarities and differences between the two programs are highlighted along with a few teaching tips. (Please note that a more complete description on skill teaching tips is found in the "Instructor Notes" section of the Workshop Facilitator package.) If you have any questions, or teaching tips you would like to pass on, please e-mail info@aquasquirts.ca.

How Does AquaSquirts Too differ from AquaSquirts?

AquaSquirts Too offers 10 new themes, and it builds on the skills introduced in AquaSquirts. These differences provide new and exciting challenges for swimmers, while continuing to develop their swimming skills through play.

- Session 1: Kaleidoscope Magic
- Session 2: Pirate Surprise
- Session 3: Circus Tricks
- Session 4: Wild Weather
- Session 5: Anchors Away
- Session 6: Adventures in sport
- Session 7: Oceans Alive
- Session 8: Mirror Images
- Session 9: Oh Canada!
- Session 10: Show Time

Using Imagery and Imagination

The above sessions have been created using well defined themes. If you do not have the equipment /pool space, etc. that is suggested in the session, just take these ideas as a starting point and then use your imagination. Adding a creative background to any skill practice can make it more enjoyable, and in terms of the philosophy of this program, very necessary!

Key Skills

The following skills are found in both the AquaSquirts and AquaSquirts Too programs:

Sculling, Stationary * Sculling, Head First * Eggbeater * Dolphin Kick

The Mini-Sequence * Change Signals

In AquaSquirts Too, some of the new skills include Sculling, head first, adventures in sport activities, along with different upside down options and increased opportunities to work with a partner. As with the first instructor guide, AquaSquirts Too provides the WSI with clear explanations and teaching tips. The following information highlights some of the changes.

Signal change underwater

- ▶ As in AquaSquirts, if you want swimmers to receive an instruction underwater, you can create a change signal by either tapping on a metal ladder or placing a pole in the water and tapping on it. You can also use a piece of PVC plastic

(rigid tubing) on the pool edge without damaging it. Remember that sound carries well under water, so don't tap too much or you'll disturb other classes.

Patterns

As stated in AquaSquirts, it's important for safety reasons for swimmers to get used to being aware of the people around them in a pool setting. ASToo provides pattern options and uses visuals such as noodles to set the picture before the swimmers give it a try.

Upside down Skills

- ▶ There are some additional upside down skills in ASToo. Session #2 introduces weight transfer with handstands. Session #3 progresses toward more advanced skills, such as the 'big top', which is similar to the first movement in a headfirst surface dive, but the swimmer stops after the head is toward the bottom and the legs are still on the surface.
- ▶ Just a reminder - **nose clips** are important if you want swimmers to try these upside down skills without discomfort!

Linking Skills

- ▶ ASToo offers more opportunities to try skills with a partner. Some of these involve mirrors, but some involve physically holding onto another swimmer. The key part of these attachments is that each swimmer needs to hold themselves up in their floating position, and not rely of their friend to support them!
- ▶ When holding ankles of another swimmer,
 - the palm of the supporting hand should be facing the ceiling
 - the elbow should be tucked in tightly against the swimmers side
 - the hand should lightly support the others ankle from underneath
- If a swimmer is tucking their toes under another swimmer's chin (tugboat connection) it must be done gently- also watch for long nails on hands or toes that could cause damage!
- To change position once swimmers are connected movements must be smooth and controlled, and each swimmer must still think about using their own body muscles to stretch and support themselves.
- If swimmers are sinking, you could have them use pullbouys between their legs or put a lifejacket on their for extra support

Instructor Guide

Probably the biggest difference you will notice between AS and ASToo is that the Instructor Guide is thicker! There is more information provided for you in each session, so you will have to read through each session in advance to be prepared to teach.

The information is not more difficult, but more detailed, providing you with options from which you can "springboard", creating your own ideas to meet the needs of your class and the pool facility. Developing your own 'cheat sheet' with a summary of the skills you'll teach in each session, will also allow you to teach from the water yet easily reference 'what comes next'! We hope you enjoy these new sessions, and that you can use the ideas and skills in many different ways to enhance your teaching experience.

How to Order

To order a copy of the new AquaSquirts Too Instructor Guide, contact your local Red Cross Water Safety Advisor. And don't forget to order the new certificate for your swimmers! Visit www.aquasquirts.ca for more information about the program!