In the Puffers swim class, children build confidence in the water, and learn the basics of kicking and floating. Most often, they are timid and sometimes frightened to be in the pool without their mom or dad. This is common and expected. Our instructors are familiar with how to engage this age group in fun activities that teach them to be comfortable in the water and enjoy the lesson. With the beginning swimmer, our goal is to establish a love of the water!

This is a class of no more than four children between the ages of six to twelve years old. The benefit of small group swim classes is that children can see their peers learning the same thing and also experience group socialization. Parents may feel that private lessons would be more beneficial to their scared or timid child. We have often found the opposite – it can be calming to have some friends in class who are doing the same thing and who are successful at it and having fun! A little gentle peer pressure goes a long way and can be constructive in some settings. Our instructors work with each child to ease his or her anxieties and move the child to the next level as soon as possible.

The Goals of the Puffers Class:
1. Develop a high comfort level underwater
2. Independently float a short distance face down in a relaxed state
3. Develop a relaxed independent back float

We achieve these goals through various games, songs and swimming patterns. Using these games and songs, there is room to accommodate individual skill levels. It is possible to work with both a frightened child and a student who is almost ready to move up. We actively work to have children put their own face in the water and swim to the instructor. Each game and song is focused towards the swim. Children learn by watching other students attempt the same skills.

Children progress in swimming at their own rate and develop their own style. This is not according to any timetable an instructor or parent sets up for them. Pressure to perform can often be the biggest roadblock to progress. While our program challenges each swimmer, we try to remove the pressure and make it fun. What we do not want to see is regression! Year-round consistency also plays a role in preventing regression.

The requirements to move to the Stingrays class are: High level of comfort underwater; floating independently face down three to five feet; back floating with minimal assistance; and demonstrating a safety swim.