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## Parents shun lifesaving swim lessons

**A concerning amount of Queensland children will not learn lifesaving swimming skills despite summer being the peak season for drowning, a new report reveals.**

Sophie Chirgwin, The Courier-Mail  
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A concerning amount of Queensland children will not learn lifesaving swimming skills despite summer being the peak season for drowning, a new report reveals.

Shocking findings have come out of the Swim Safer Report, commissioned by Swim Australia, which found 58 per cent of Queensland children do not attend swimming lessons, and 33 per cent of parents have no intention of enrolling their child.

Despite these numbers, 32 per cent of Queenslanders have themselves, or had a family member have a bad experience in the water, and 14 per cent admit to having poor swimming skills.

Today marks the start of SwimSAFER Week (November 16th – 22nd), which has been supported by icons in the water including former World Champion Jade Edmiston, who said it's "never too early for parents to invest in swimming lessons".

"Learning to swim should be a vital part of every child's upbringing, especially in the earlier years as this is when they establish the lifesaving skills like learning to float, being comfortable to breathe while in the water and easy ways to get themselves out of a pool safely," Ms Edmiston said.

"It's never too early to start. My kids started when they were 6 months old. It needs to become a non-negotiable in every home across Australia."

The findings have prompted Swim Australia to launch a new campaign called 'Swim It Forward' to get more kids in the pool learning essential, lifesaving skills.

Australians are encouraged to donate one swimming lesson, or \$20, in a bid to help more families access lessons while supporting the swimming industry.

There are over 500 swim schools celebrating SwimSAFER Week across Australia with a range of events. People can find their closest swim school at [www.swimsafer.org.au](http://www.swimsafer.org.au) and are invited to visit and find out more about what their child will learn through swimming lessons.

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Donations for 'Swim It Forward' initiative can be made via the website.

**Swim Australia findings:**

- (58%) of Queensland kids do not attend swimming lessons, and a third (33%) of parents have no intention of enrolling their child despite summer being the peak drowning season.
- 32% of Queenslanders have themselves or had a family have a bad experience with water
- 14% of Queenslanders admit to having poor swimming skills
- Half (49%) of Queenslanders didn't have swimming lessons at a swim school when they were younger, with a third (29%) admitting they taught themselves
- More than half (55%) of Queensland children are currently not enrolled in swimming lessons, with a third (34%) of Queensland parents admitting they cannot afford lessons
- More than half (52%) of Queensland parents say they will not put their child into swimming lessons coming into the summer months