

Learn-to-Swim Programs for NYS Children's Camps

Fact Sheet – January 2026

(Go to health.ny.gov to view most current certification list)

[Subpart 7-2](#) of the State Sanitary Code allows non-swimmers to enter water that is chest deep or greater when participating in a learn-to-swim program that has been determined to use a supervision protocol which protects campers from injury or drowning. The following programs have been determined to be acceptable:

Acceptable Programs*
American Red Cross
Ellis & Associates
Orchard Park Recreation
PADI
Scouting America (Boy Scouts of America/BSA)
Starfish Aquatics
YMCA

- Instructors must possess current certification as a [progressive swimming instructor](#) (PSI) in the program being utilized to teach swimming.
- Qualified lifeguards must supervise learn-to-swim programs. A PSI may not perform lifeguard duties unless currently certified as a qualified lifeguard (see "[Aquatic Certifications](#)" fact sheet) and he/she is not concurrently performing teaching duties.
- A Buddy System and Board System (or equivalent) of supervising and checking bathers must be implemented during all swimming activities including learn-to-swim programs.

* Children's camps may utilize learn-to-swim programs that are not listed above to teach swimming at camp; however, non-swimmers must be restricted to water that is less than chest deep at all times.