

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

My child is 12 today (born 5 October), what age group will he be in?

The age group that your child is calculated to be in is the age they are as at 30 September – your child was 11 on 30 September (turned 12 on 5 October) and therefore is classed as being in the U12 age group (even though they are 12). A child who has their twelfth birthday on 30 July would be placed in the U13 age group.

Does my child change age groups if their birthday is during a season?

No. The age group for children is determined by their age as at midnight 30 September i.e. if a child turns 8 on 30 September, they would be in U9s for that season. If a child turns 8 on 1 October, they would be in U8s for that season.

My child's friend's birthday puts him in different age group and they want to be together.

Sorry, the rules are that children are placed in the age groups where their birthday falls – it may be good for them to be in different age groups; they can make new friends and still socialise before and after the training sessions.

How often do I bring my child to the beach?

Each club has designated training sessions each week, most are once per week on Sunday mornings (check with your club). Some clubs offer specialised training, i.e. swimming, boards, march past, on other days throughout the week.

What does my child need?

Bathers/togs, a club cap, water bottle, long sleeved t-shirt or long sleeved rash top, sun hat, a towel and sunscreen. It is also mandatory for all nippers to wear a high visibility rash vest. Most clubs have stocks of club-branded apparel – speak to the relevant person for prices etc.

Note: For all Surf Life Saving Clubs north of Agnes Water SLSC (Gladstone region), nippers are required to wear a stinger suit.

What do children in Surf Life Saving do?

Depending on their age group, children will cover beach sprints and flags, swimming, board paddling, wading, basic CPR/ first aid skills, junior development and lots of fun activities. They will also learn surf lifesaving skills, surf awareness, and intrinsically develop personal and emotional skills.

How does surf lifesaving provide a safe environment for my child?

With safety being a core value at SLSQ, we are serious about providing a safe environment for our Nippers. We aim to provide children and young people with positive and nurturing experiences while involved in our activities and programs. Our clubs have clear strategies to ensure your child remains safe on and off the beach. Our volunteers must satisfy Working With Children Checks in addition to abiding by a Code of Conduct, which guides the care of your child. For more information, ask your club about their Statement of Commitment to Children and Young people. Surf Life Saving Queensland has an endorsed Sun Safe policy in place, and through our education curriculum and training programs, we teach children to be beach safe and water safe.

Junior Awards – what are these for my child?

Each age group award has sessions they participate in to acquire relevant skills and knowledge. They will need to attend and participate in all of the compulsory sessions to attain the award. They must also complete the pool and beach evaluation to obtain their Junior Age award.

Does my child have to be able to swim?

Yes, each age group has specific requirements for swimming ability. All children will complete a pool evaluation including a swim and a float, which clubs conduct. This is carried out before participating in any Junior Activities session to assess their swimming and self-survival ability in the water. This will determine whether they can progress to Junior Activities. They will then be required to complete a beach evaluation (run-swim-run). The next step is for them to train to complete the competition evaluation consisting of an ocean water swim. This allows them to compete at inter-club carnivals. Only those who wish to compete are required to complete the competition evaluation.

Is this a “learn to swim” program?

NO. Although your child will benefit enormously and increase their confidence from exposure to open water-based activities, including swimming and board paddling, we do not provide specific learn-to-swim training or stroke correction. This is strongly encouraged to be taken up externally.

What can I do to help?

Parents can become involved in many areas of club activity. Areas can include helping with training, coaching, being a team manager, officiating, fundraising, providing water safety (if you gain your Surf Rescue Certificate or Bronze Medallion), cooking the club BBQ etc., but most of all supporting your child in their Junior Activities. [Click here](#) to find your pathway in surf lifesaving.

What happens when my child finishes all the various Junior Activities age groups and awards?

The Junior Development Program is designed to gradually introduce your child into the role of a qualified surf lifesaver and assist in patrolling the beaches. They can continue to be involved in a variety of competition events if desired. They will undertake various other awards and learn many facets of community service involvement. They can be taught specialist areas of competition and compete both at a state and national level. Clubs are also encouraged to conduct development and bridging programs to assist with transitioning to the senior club. Contact your club's Youth Development Officer for more information.

What equipment can my child use?

A member is permitted to compete in SLSA surf boat competition when they are in the U17 age category; in addition, members under the age of 15 are not permitted to use surf skis. All members operating crafts must be qualified to operate the particular craft (e.g. IRB—must hold a current Bronze Medallion, as well as IRB Driver's certification). Clubs provide modified equipment for all Junior Activities. Refer to Policy 1.02 Use of SLSA Equipment and Bulletin 8/06-07: Use of Association Equipment Clarifications Surfboard.

Must I join a club as a parent?

It is to the club's discretion whether a parent of a junior member must also join. It is recommended by SLSQ that as a minimum, parent's join as an Associate Member of the club.

