

EVERYONE IN THE POOL PROGRAM 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Drowning is an epidemic that hits low-income families and children of color the hardest, with Black children aged 5-19 five and a half times as likely as White children in the same age group to die from drowning. In Detroit, nearly 80% of children residing in households with incomes below \$50,000 do not know how to swim and a substantial 70% of youth have little to no swim experience.

That is why the Huron-Clinton Metroparks is committed to improving water safety so that more Michiganders in our region can safely and confidently enjoy the pools, lakes and rivers our state has to offer. 2024 was the first full year of implementation for the Metroparks', board

approved, [Everyone in the Pool 5-year plan](#). We were able to expand the number of partnerships, as well as the number of lessons, to serve 3,128 participants in 2024. We were also able to expand our reach to a wider range of people by offering adult swim lessons for the first time with our partners at YMCA of Metro Detroit locations and Whitmore Lake Community Recreation Center.

The Everyone in The Pool program continues to operate under the framework of the Metroparks Strategic Plan goal to listen and connect. We have taken community feedback from survey efforts and created customized partnership programs that deliver services in under-resourced communities and beyond. In addition, the Everyone in the Pool plan continues to increase the Metroparks services in equity emphasis area zip codes and builds community collaborations through

partners doing great work aligned with our goals.

In 2024, the Metroparks exceeded first year goals by expanding school year swim lesson programming, adding adult focused swim lessons and piloting lifeguard training and school day lessons opportunities. In 2024, 10 partner organizations were able to offer free water safety and swim lesson programs to 3,128 participants across Livingston, Oakland, Macomb, Washtenaw, and Wayne counties at 20 locations.

52% Participants left with average or high skill level in back float (only 5% left with No skill level)

87% Participants left with average or high skill level in entering and exiting the water independently

10 PARTNERS

20 LOCATIONS

3,128 FREE SWIM LESSONS

KEY FINDINGS

- All goals for 2024 outlined in the 5-year plan were met or exceeded.
- 3,128 total free swim lessons offered – Over and above the goal for 2024 by 1%.
- 52% of lesson participants left with average or high skill level in in back float. This skill is a vital component of water safety as it allows people to keep their heads above the water and float to safety.
- Only 5% of lesson participants left with “no skill level” in back float.
- 87% of lesson participants left with average or high skill level in entering and exiting the water independently.
- 57% of lesson participants left with high or average skill level in being able to bob five times. This swimming skill teaches them to breathe under unexpected or accidental submersion by exhaling underwater and inhaling after they emerge.
- \$127,359 in additional funding secured.
- 80.8% of free swim lesson participants were from equity emphasis area zip codes.
- Adult swim lessons were added and youth lessons during the school day were piloted for the very first time in 2024.
- 6 new lifeguards were certified through 2024 recruitment and training efforts. Another 6 lifeguards were certified at Annapolis High School to build capacity for lessons with this new partner in 2025.

Percentage of participants from equity emphasis zip codes **80.8%**



PROGRESS TOWARDS 5-YEAR GOALS

BACKGROUND

In 2021, the Huron-Clinton Metroparks collaborated with the consulting firm Councilman Hunsaker to conduct a regional survey identifying barriers to swim instruction and gaps in water safety. The findings revealed numerous barriers, with the most significant being the prohibitively high fees associated with swim lessons. This financial burden posed a particular challenge for families of color and Detroit residents, where studies indicate that 70 percent of children had limited to no swim experience.

From 2021 to 2023, the Metroparks, in collaboration with its community partners, provided more than 4,600 children with life-saving swim lessons free of charge. Demand and interest for free swim lessons remained high, as evidenced by registration for 2023 lessons filling up within 24 hours of opening to the public.

At the end of 2023, the Metroparks board approved the Everyone in the Pool 5-year plan with 2024 being the first year of implementation. The expansion of the Everyone in the Pool initiative is part of the Metroparks' broader regional effort toward a future in which we have reversed the staggering statistics in southeast Michigan and at least 70% of residents possess essential swimming skills.

PROGRESS IN EACH GOAL

GOAL: *Expand the Everyone in the Pool program to support at least 6,000 swim lessons annually by 2028. This expansion is part of our broader regional effort to reverse the existing statistic, striving towards a future in which 70% of residents in southeast Michigan possess essential swimming skills.*

Objective 1: *Increase the amount of free swim lessons regionally by working with additional partners and supporting additional sessions of lessons.*

The Metroparks will expand the Everyone in the Pool program by supporting an additional 1,000 lessons each year (minimum) to reach 6,000 free swim lessons offered annually by 2028.

Number of Lessons Offered Annually		
Year	Goal	Actual
2024	3,100	3,128
2025	4,100	
2026	5,100	
2027	6,100	
2028	6,100+	

Objective 2: Expand the number of school year swim lessons the Metroparks support by at least 20% yearly in each of the five counties.

Looking at participant zip codes from youth swim lesson programs offered in January-May 2024 and September-December 2024, we were able to assess where participants are from in the five counties served by the Metroparks. The goal number in each county is based on being 20% higher than the 2023 (pre-five-year-plan) baseline. That is why each county is different. This assessment helps us focus our attention for 2025 in developing new partnerships during the traditional “school year” to continue to serve more swimmers in each of the five counties throughout the year and to ensure all efforts are not focused only on summer.

This data is reported in two ways. This is because there are a number of zip codes in our region that cross county lines. When counting participation from an individual county, we had to make some decisions on which zip codes to count within each of the counties. The charts with those two different calculations are as follows. Using both calculation methods we were within a few participants of the goal or exceeding the goal.

Of the 217 zip codes intersecting the five counties Metroparks serves, 58 of them are in at least 2 counties. 5 of those are in 3 counties.

Lessons Supported During School Year										
<i>Intersection Method</i>										
	Livingston County		Macomb County		Oakland County		Washtenaw County		Wayne County	
Year	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
2024	48	169	190	247	30	378	175	192	557	958
2025	58		228		36		210		668	
2026	69		273		43		252		801	
2027	82		327		51		302		961	
2028	98		392		61		362		1,153	

Using “Intersection Method”, a zip code is counted within a county if it is contained wholly within that county AND if it crosses over and is partially within the county. Therefore, any zip code that has any piece within a county is counted in that county. This means that if a zip code crosses over a county line it is counted in BOTH counties in the above chart - leading to a higher overall total in this chart than actual overall. This chart should ONLY be used to look at the impact we had in an individual county, not the program overall numbers.

Lessons Supported During School Year										
<i>Centroid Method</i>										
	Livingston County		Macomb County		Oakland County		Washtenaw County		Wayne County	
Year	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
2024	48	51	190	184	30	118	175	167	557	824
2025	58		228		36		210		668	
2026	69		273		43		252		801	
2027	82		327		51		302		961	
2028	98		392		61		362		1,153	

Using “Centroid Method”, every zip code has a center point that is the total center geographically of that zip code. A zip code is counted in a county if the center point of that zip code is contained within the county boundary. This means each zip code overall is only counted once because a center point can only exist in one location. This chart shows an under count because there is one zip code we serve where the center point falls outside the boundary of one of our five counties.

We have defined “school year” as programs offered during the months school is traditionally in session, so for 2024 this was January-May and September-December. Some of these lessons occur during the actual school day and some are offered after school or on weekends, but they all occur in indoor pools during the “traditional school year”. The numbers in our zip code analysis for this goal include both adult and youth lessons offered in the school year.

In 2024, Metroparks was able to work with partners and offer lessons during the school day for the very first time. We had two partners that offered these lessons in 2024. Whitmore Lake Public Schools was a new partner for 2024. In addition to hosting adult swim lessons (spring/summer/fall), we partnered to offer free swim lessons to all 1st and 2nd graders at Whitmore Lake Elementary school during the school day for a two-week session for a total of 10 lessons. Bus transportation was included in the budget costs. This was a pilot program for school day swim lessons, and it was very well received. After the success of the pilot in the fall 2024, our partner expanded to more grade levels in the winter of 2025.

“Our WaveMaker swim program here at Whitmore Lake Community Recreation has grown incredibly over the last two years. From an average of 50 kids per session to well over 100, we know that the work of having certified instructors, lesson plans, games and parent involvement in safety nights has all been well worth it.

At the same time, our community has economic diversity that means we (were)are missing a lot of kids in our community! With the support of the Huron-Clinton Metroparks Everyone in the Pool grant, we are now reaching every 1st through 4th grade student in our district! What an amazing opportunity to meet the kids in the pool during the school day! Now every child in this lake community is being taught the basic skills to be safe in and around the water. Thank you, Huron-Clinton Metroparks.” -Ann Kehn, Recreation and Aquatics Director, Whitmore Lake Public Schools

Additionally, we worked with AquaLyfe and South Lake High School and YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit – Detroit Swims program to secure CDC Foundation grant funds that were aimed at supporting free lessons that had school partners. Through our two instructing partners (AquaLyfe and Detroit Swims) we were able to support after school lessons in South Lake School District and school day lessons at Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) schools. This grant and partnership will continue into 2025 to reach additional DPSCD schools and Center Line schools as well.

Objective 3: Establish a formal data collection and reporting structure for all free water safety and swim lessons organized through the Everyone in the Pool program

The Metroparks utilize different methods of formal data collection and reporting, including a skills assessment evaluation, demographic data collection, and an annual reporting process.

The skill assessment evaluation compares pre-lesson and post-lesson analysis, based on American Red Cross Swim Skills (level 1). This analysis allows us to see what skills are being taught and what percentage of participants are moving from no or low skill level to an average or high skill level. In most partnered locations, the parents of participants are completing the pre-lesson skills assessment, and the instructors are completing the post-lesson skills assessment. We recognize that this leads to the possibility for inaccurate data, but this was a constraint at our partnered sites who felt burdened by completing the forms twice. Additionally, each season of lessons we see that not all of the pre and post assessments are completed for participants, and that will be noted in the data in the following sections. We are continuing to work with partners on improving the accuracy of these assessments AND the percentage of them that are completed.

In addition to skills data, we are gathering demographic information including zip codes and ages. This allows us to know where participants come from and what age ranges we are most closely serving.

We are committed to conducting an annual review of our data collection process, making necessary revisions as needed. For example, we have identified a need to streamline the tracking of this data collection and have established new internal tracking methods for 2025.

To maintain transparency and accountability, our annual report of the Everyone in the Pool program will be presented annually to the Metroparks Board of Commissioner's.



GOAL: Increase the number of certified lifeguards and swim instructors in southeast Michigan so that by 2028 Metroparks facilities and partner swim lesson facilities remain fully staffed all summer long.

Objective 1: Launch Pilot collaborative Lifeguard Training Program with YMCA in Wayne County

In partnership with the YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit, we were able to launch a pilot Lifeguard Training program in 2024, training 6 lifeguards. This pilot program was structured so that applicants interested in becoming lifeguards could apply for a lifeguard position at Metroparks without their lifeguard certification. They could then receive a code from us to register for a certification course at the YMCA at no cost to the participant. These courses took place indoors and therefore could be completed prior to the Metroparks busy summer season. Once they passed and were certified, they worked at Metroparks aquatic facilities. In 2024, the YMCA decided to waive the fees during this pilot program and therefore Metroparks did not have to reimburse the costs of these trainings.

This pilot was in addition to Metroparks staff in the Southern District offering free lifeguard courses after school lets out locally at the start of busy season in Metroparks pools, which has been done for a number of years.

Through these two efforts, Metroparks was able to open Turtle Cove on June 15, seven days a week, without capacity limitations for the duration of summer - the first time since the start of the pandemic.

Objective 2: Expand lifeguard training program pilot to include all five counties we serve and explore program opportunities for junior lifeguarding and ongoing career opportunities.

In 2024, in addition to the recruitment pilot with YMCA, we started work with a new partner, Annapolis High School, who has a pool and was interested in building capacity and eventually offering swim lessons in their community. Their barriers included funding availability and lack of instructors and staff capacity to facilitate lessons. They fall within an equity emphasis area in Wayne County that could highly benefit from these efforts.

Metroparks was able to secure grant funding through Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan to help build this capacity with them. We worked with our existing partner, YMCA, to bring an instructor to Annapolis High School and train 6 lifeguards. Then we coordinated with our partner at Whitmore Lake Public Schools to schedule a Water Safety Instructor course that will take place in 2025. With lifeguards and water safety instructors in place, Annapolis high school will be able to offer free swim lessons to Dearborn Height students in 2025, and we are exploring a partnership with them that could include school day and after school lessons going forward.

As we look at the next four years, our goal is to increase lifeguard training in two counties for 2025, three counties in 2026, four counties in 2027, and all five counties in 2028.

GOAL: Increase Water Fitness Programs at the Metroparks by 20% yearly through 2028.

2024 was the year for us to establish baseline data points for the number of water fitness programs offered in Metroparks. This allows us to establish future growth goals for 2025 and beyond. Though the original goal is written to look solely at the number of water fitness programs offered, we are also looking at capturing number of program participants served.

In 2024, we were able to offer 3 water fitness programs: two sessions of Water Aerobics at Lake St. Clair Metropark, Race the Rapids 5k at Lower Huron Metropark’s Turtle Cove, and River Walkers at Lower Huron Metropark’s Turtle Cove. Our goal for 2025 will be to offer 4 water fitness programs at the Metroparks. Below shows the total number of participants in 2024 water fitness programs and where we will look to grow in 2025.

Water Fitness Programs Numbers		
<i>Year</i>	<i>Goal of Programs/Participant Numbers</i>	<i>Actual Programs/Participant Numbers</i>
2024	<i>Establish baseline data</i>	3/226
2025	4/272	
2026	Will be based off 2025 actuals	
2027	Will be based off 2026 actuals	
2028	Will be based off 2027 actuals	

Looking at the number of registered water fitness program participants from 2023 to 2024, we saw an overall growth of 74% in registration. Race the Rapids at Lower Huron grew 52%, serving 99 participants in 2023 to 150 participants in 2024. Water Aerobics at Lake St. Clair grew 77%, serving 26 participants in 2023 to 46 participants in 2024. River Walkers at Lower Huron grew 500%, serving 5 participants in 2023 to 30 participants in 2024.

In line with this goal, we plan to expand our water fitness programs over time to encompass the water facilities at Lower Huron, Willow, Lake St. Clair, and Lake Erie Metroparks, as well as the beaches at Kensington, Lake St. Clair and Stony Creek Metroparks.



GOAL: Secure external funding of at least \$500,000 annually by 2028 to expand free Everyone in the Pool Program and regional lifeguard training programs.

ANNUAL EXTERNAL FUNDING		
	<i>Annual Goal of dollars secured in grant, corporate, and philanthropic funding</i>	<i>Actual dollars secured in grant, corporate, and philanthropic funding</i>
2024	\$100,000	\$127,359
2025	\$200,000	
2026	\$300,000	
2027	\$400,000	
2028	\$500,000	

Metroparks was awarded grant funding through the Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan (CFSEM) and the CDC Foundation in 2024. Both of these grant sources are reimbursement grants and have work that carries over into 2025.

CFSEM awarded \$77,320 for specified programming through September 2025 to help increase adult lessons, lifeguard trainings, and water safety instructor trainings with YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit and Dearborn Heights School District #7. In 2024, we were able to provide 103 adult swim lessons with YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit, half of the CFSEM grant funded adult swim lessons, while the remaining 100 adult swim lessons will be scheduled for May-September 2025 with YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit. With new partner Dearborn Heights School District #7, we were able to collaborate with YMCA to offer trainings to build up staff and instructor capacity to offer lessons. Six new lifeguards were trained at Annapolis High School. We are collaborating to also train eight Water Safety Instructors and will be offering youth lessons here in 2025 for the first time through this grant source.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Foundation awarded \$50,039 through April 2025 to support swim lessons for youth ages 6-15 through partnerships within schools. We are working with Aqualyfe and South Lake High School and YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit – Detroit Swims, DPSCD and Center Line School for these lessons.



GOAL: Create a Southeast Michigan Swim and Water Safety Coalition by end of 2025

In 2024, partners identified hiring and training to be an area of need that a larger regional coalition would be able to work on and address. In 2025, we will actively seek new partners, funders, and stakeholders who are interested in participating in this coalition and establish an initial meeting format and schedule.

In line with the Metroparks' Strategic Plan, the coalition will prioritize listening to and engaging with our community stakeholders when it comes to regional water safety and swim lessons. This collaborative approach ensures that our coalition's efforts align with the needs and interests of the people we serve.



2024: BY THE NUMBERS

Overall, we were able to serve 3,128 swimmers in 2024 across 20 sites with 10 partners. 2024 included our first ever adult-focused swim lessons and school day swim lessons.

The demand and interest for free swim lessons remains high, as evidenced by registration for each of the sites filling up quickly, typically within 24 hours of it opening to the public, and as little as an hour in some cases. We continue to improve the process for registration and have improved communication with advanced notices and step-by-step instructions to give more support for using the registration platform. The Metroparks continue to use a text message reminder and waitlist process to help reduce absences and no-shows and maximize attendance at full capacity of the water safety and free swim lesson programs.

Additionally, to continue to determine the impact and skill progression of the participants, all partnered sites utilized a standard form to collect pre-lesson and post-lesson assessments for each swimmer. We had a 27% completion rate of pre-assessments overall and a 66% completion rate of post assessments overall. We attribute the low per-assessment completion rate to parents and guardians not completing it as instructed. In 2025, we will continue to implement new ideas and processes to increase the number of complete assessments captured, and the accuracy of those collected.

ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

All partnered sites in the Everyone in the Pool program used consistent skill assessment forms in 2024. The skill assessment evaluation compares pre-lesson and post-lesson abilities, based on American Red Cross Swim Skills (level 1). This analysis allows us to see what skills are being taught and what percentage of participants are moving from no or low skill level to an average or high skill level.

In most partnered locations, the parents of participants are completing the pre-lesson skills assessment and the instructors are completing the post-lesson skills assessment. We recognize that this leads to the possibility for missing and inaccurate data, but this was a constraint at our partnered sites who felt burdened by completing the forms twice.

Additionally, each session we see that not all of the pre and post assessments are completed for participants. The dataset below includes 853 pre-lesson skills assessments (27% completion rate compared to total lessons offered) and 2,056 post-lesson skills assessments (66% completion rate compared to total lessons offered) from all 2024 seasons of swim lessons that totaled 3,248 lessons offered.

The full details of these skills assessments analysis can be found in Appendix 1 on page 30.

The skills assessments look at the following skills as defined:

- Enter Independently - Swimmer can avoid injury and build confidence by learning how to sit and slowly move into the water.
- Exit Independently - Swimmer should know how to quickly get out of the pool, whether that's using the steps or pulling themselves up and out in areas where ladders aren't available. A swimmer needs to be strong enough to exit a pool independently or be aided until they can accomplish the skill independently.
- Blow Bubbles - Blowing bubbles is the start of learning breath control. By getting into a pattern of breathing in when your face is out of the water and blowing out when your face is in the water, oxygen keeps flowing to the muscles while you swim. A swimmer should: Be comfortable with water on the face and blowing bubbles in the water.
- Bob 5 times - A perfectly executed bob is when a swimmer, who is holding on to the edge of the pool with two hands, takes a BIG breath in through their mouth and then submerges their head fully underwater while releasing air out their nose. The air exhaled through the nose becomes bubbles once your child is submerged underwater.
- Retrieve Submerged Object - Open eyes underwater and retrieved submerged objects.
- Front Glide – Perform a front glide and recover to a vertical position. In front glide position, your head is face down in the water and aligned with your arms above your head, biceps at your ears, drag is significantly decreased. Vertical: The swimmer's body is fully extended and perpendicular to the surface, with legs together and head facing downward. The head - most notably, the ears - hips and ankles are aligned.
- Back Float – Back float for 5 seconds. A floating position on one's back with arms extended out to the sides and face upward. A swimmer can lay on their back, press down toward the bottom with your shoulders and chest, and allow your belly button to float as if it is being pulled by a string. Body is completely relaxed.
- Roll from Front to Back - **BACK FLOAT**- Lay on back, press down toward the bottom with shoulders and chest, allow belly button to float as if it is being pulled by a string. Body is completely relaxed. ****FRONT FLOAT**- Lay down face first in the water. Rollover: A swimmer can use their arms and legs to roll from front float to back float and back float to front float. This helps swimmers to be prepared if they jump or fall into the water and there isn't a wall nearby. The jump rollover float allows the swimmer to roll over and catch a breath.
- Tread Water - Swimmer is moving the legs in a bicycle motion while holding the arms out and rotating them with cupped hands. As children become stronger in the water, treading and floating become essential skills to help them swim independently.
- Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on front - Swimmer is able to lie on stomach and flutter your legs THEN alternate the arms in a windmill motion. Swimmer propels themselves forward with moderate speed in a specific direction.
- Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on back - Swimmer is able to use one arm pulls through the water from an overhead position to the hip, the other arm recovers above the water from the hip to the overhead position and vice versa. THEN flutter legs.

- Combine arm and leg actions on front - Also known as the front crawl, this is the classic swimming posture. Lie on your stomach and flutter your legs while alternating the arms in a windmill motion. You propel yourself forward with moderate speed in a specific direction.
- Combine arm and leg actions on back - The backstroke, or back crawl, uses alternating and opposite arm movements. As one arm pulls through the water from an overhead position to the hip, the other arm recovers above the water from the hip to the overhead position and vice versa.

ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS FOR 2024			
Swim Skill	<i>Percentage of participants STARTING with No or Low Skill Level</i>	<i>Percentage of participants LEAVING with No or Low Skill Level</i>	<i>Percentage of participants LEAVING with Average or High Skill Level</i>
Enter Independently	15.71%	12.74%	87.11%
Exit Independently	16.65%	12.69%	87.16%
Blow Bubbles	52.75%	39.79%	60.07%
Bob 5x	60.49%	42.41%	57.44%
Retrieve Submerged Object	65.65%	46.40%	53.50%
Front Glide	69.40%	48.93%	50.92%
Back Float	68.46%	47.57%	52.24%
Roll from Front to Back	75.15%	56.81%	43.04%
Tread Water	78.08%	64.30%	35.55%
Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on front	75.50%	56.52%	43.34%
Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on back	78.55%	60.55%	39.30%
Combine arm and leg actions on front	77.02%	59.24%	40.61%
Combine arm and leg actions on back	79.60%	64.45%	35.41%

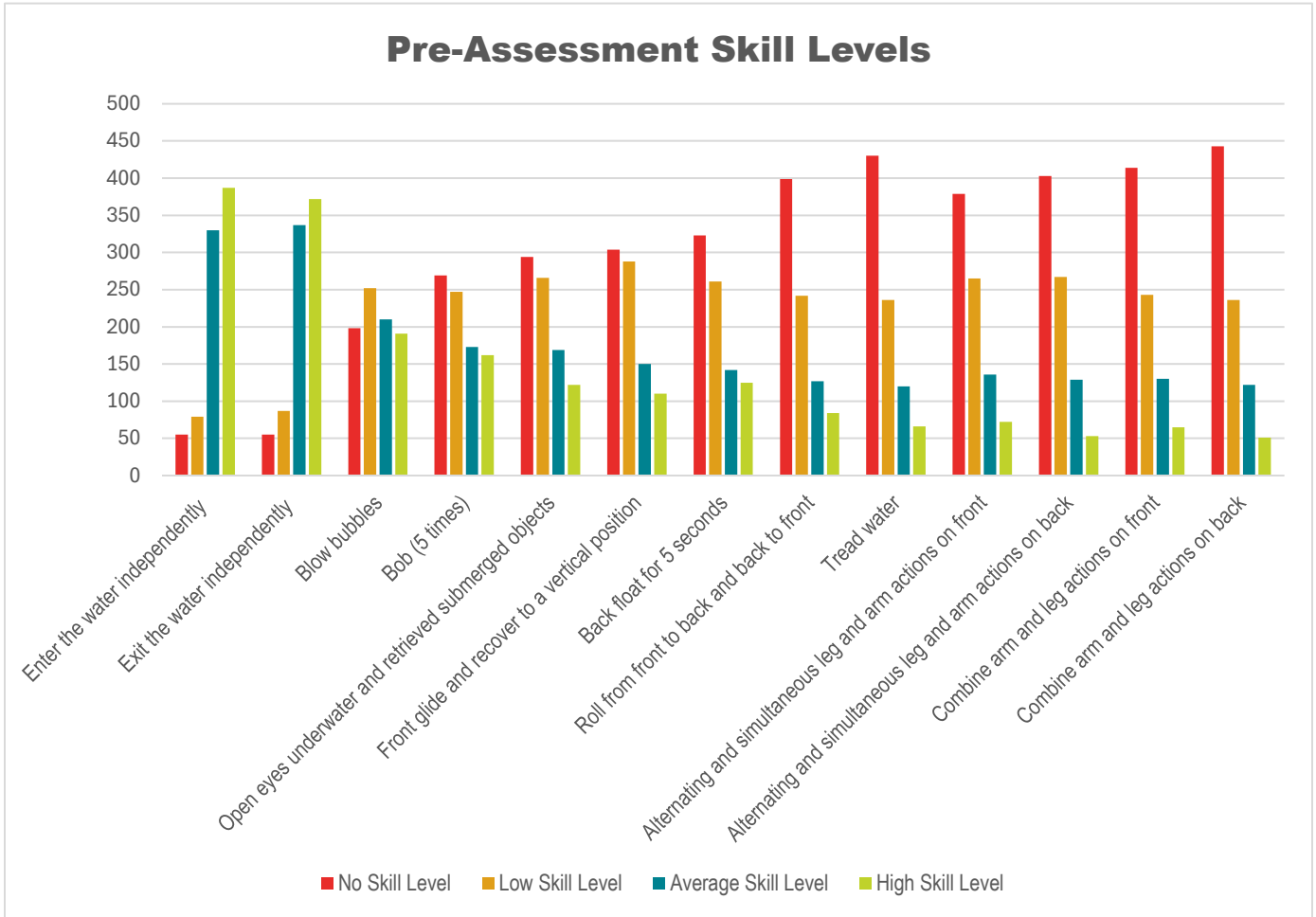
Data Notes:

- The dataset includes 853 pre-lesson skills assessments (27% completion rate compared to total lessons offered) and 2,056 post-lesson skills assessments (66% completion rate compared to total lessons offered) from all 2024 seasons of swim lessons that totaled 3,248 lessons offered.
- AquaLyfe and YMCA – Detroit Swims did not use Metroparks’ pre and post skills assessments in fall lessons because those lessons were funded through a grant from CDC Foundation that required us to use a CDC provided assessment. It was not

intended for partners to have to complete to assessment forms, so only the grant required form was used.

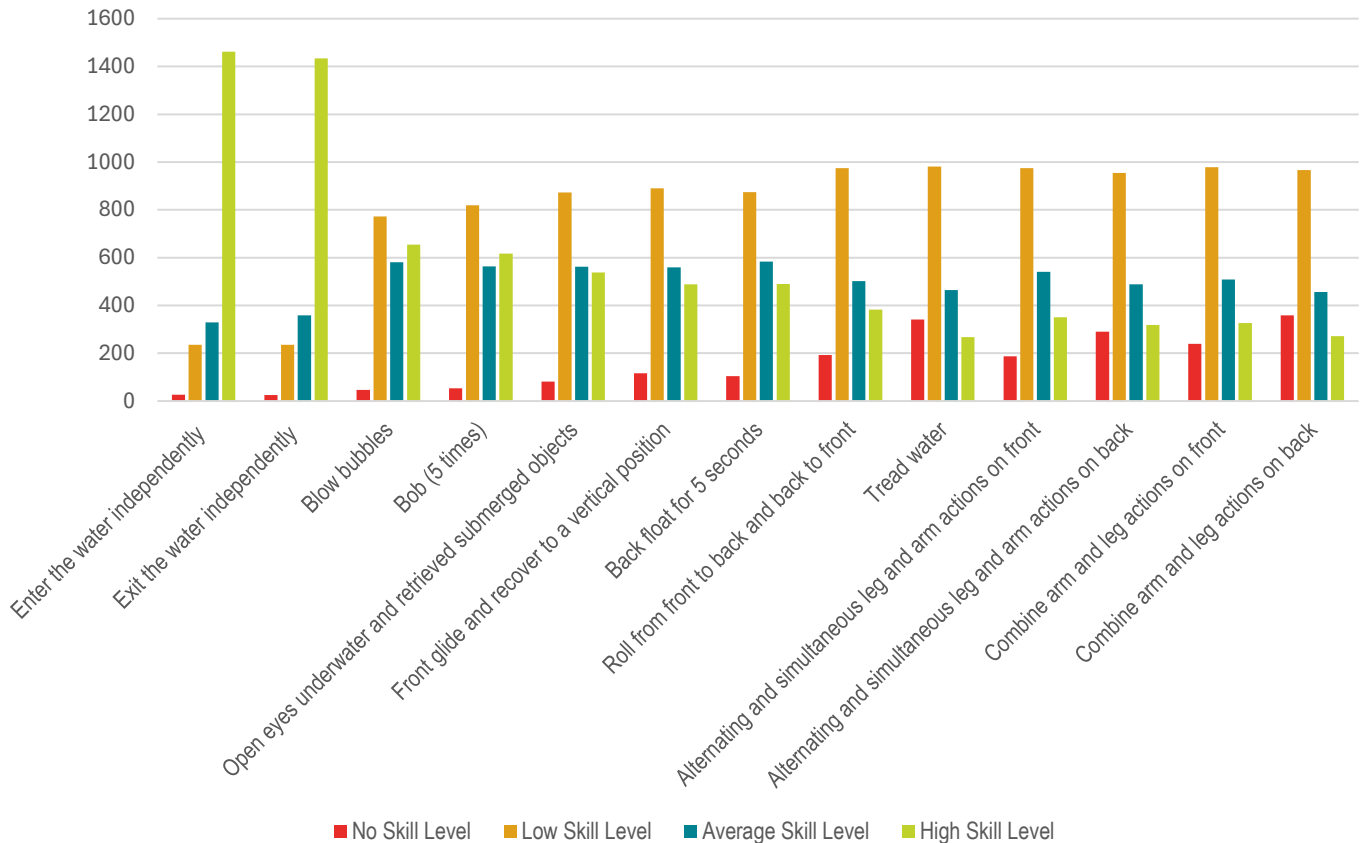
- We recognize that the low completion rate of pre-lesson skills assessments skews our ability to analyze the change from start to finish in 2024. We will work to improve this in 2025.

The graphs below show the overall breakdown of skill level of each skill reported in pre and post lesson skills assessments. In the pre-assessment graph, you will notice that as skills get more difficult across the horizontal axis, more participants at low and no skill levels. This is to be expected.



In the post-assessment graph on the next page, you notice the skill levels to be a little more evenly distributed in each skill, but if you look at the “No Skill Level” red bars across the horizontal axis you will see that very few participants left with no skill level. In fact, only 27 and 25 students (1%) out of 2,056 completed post-lesson assessments, left with no skill in the easiest skills of entering and exiting the water; and only 359 students (17%) out of 2,056 completed post-lesson assessments, left with no skill in the hardest skill.

Post Assessment Skill Levels



KEY FINDINGS:

- In every skill in the assessment, we noticed the number of participants with “no” or “low” skill level was fewer at the end than the beginning of lessons. This tells us that even though not all participants are leaving at high skill level, they are making progress and ending in a better place than they started – i.e. low/no skill level numbers are decreasing.
- Only 27 and 25 students (1%) out of 2,056 completed post-lesson assessments, left with no skill in the easiest skills of entering and exiting the water; and only 359 students (17%) out of 2,056 completed post-lesson assessments, left with no skill in the hardest skill.
- 52% of lesson participants left with average or high skill level in in back float. This skill is a vital component of water safety as it allows people to keep their heads above the water and float to safety.
- Only 5% of lesson participants left with “no skill level” in back float.
- 87% of lesson participants left with average or high skill level in entering and exiting the water independently.
- 57% of lesson participants left with high or average skill level in being able to bob five times. This swim skill teaches them to breathe under unexpected or accidental submersion by exhaling underwater and inhaling after they emerge.

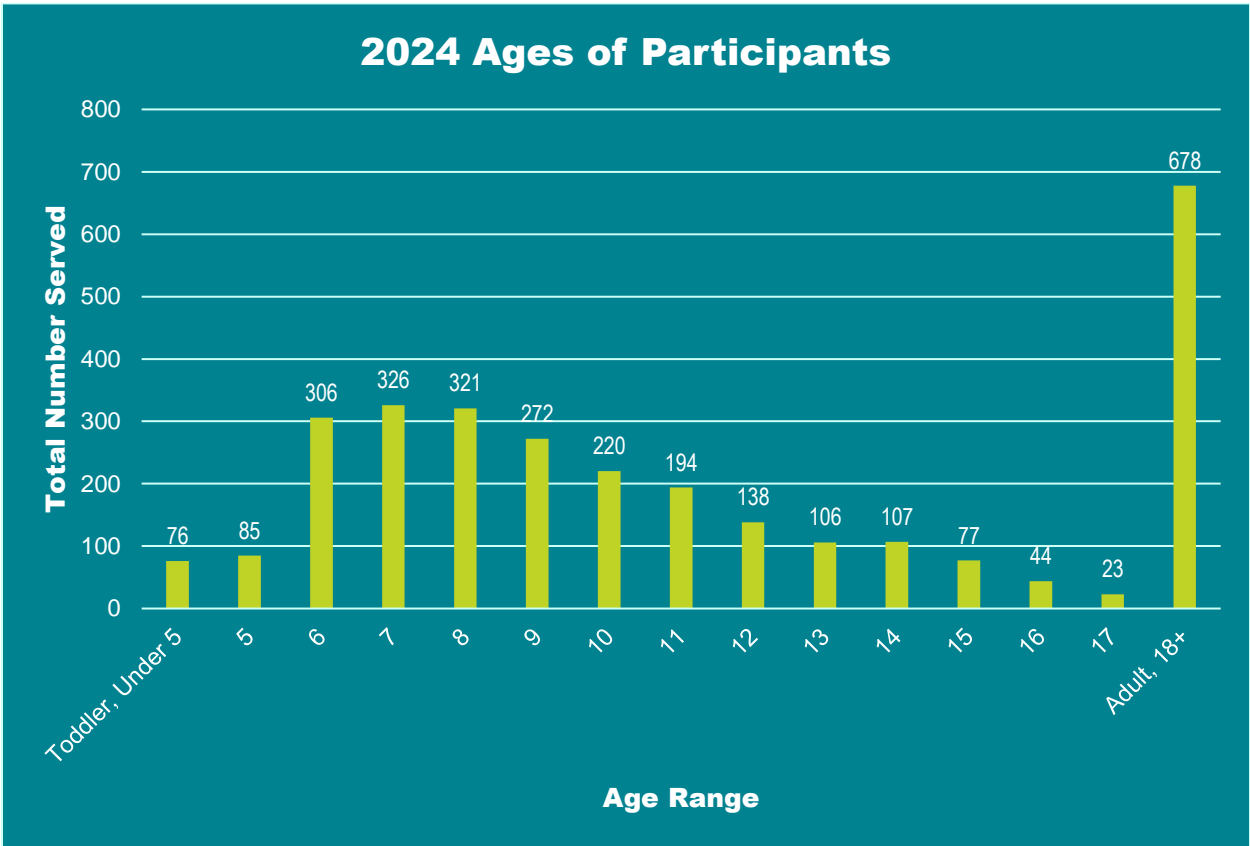
- 60% of participants left with average or high skill level in blowing bubbles. This swim skill helps teach breath control and works to alleviate the fear of face submersion and is critical to water safety to properly learn to inhale through your mouth when your face is above water and exhale through your mouth or nose with your face is underwater as opposed to holding your breath or aspirate.



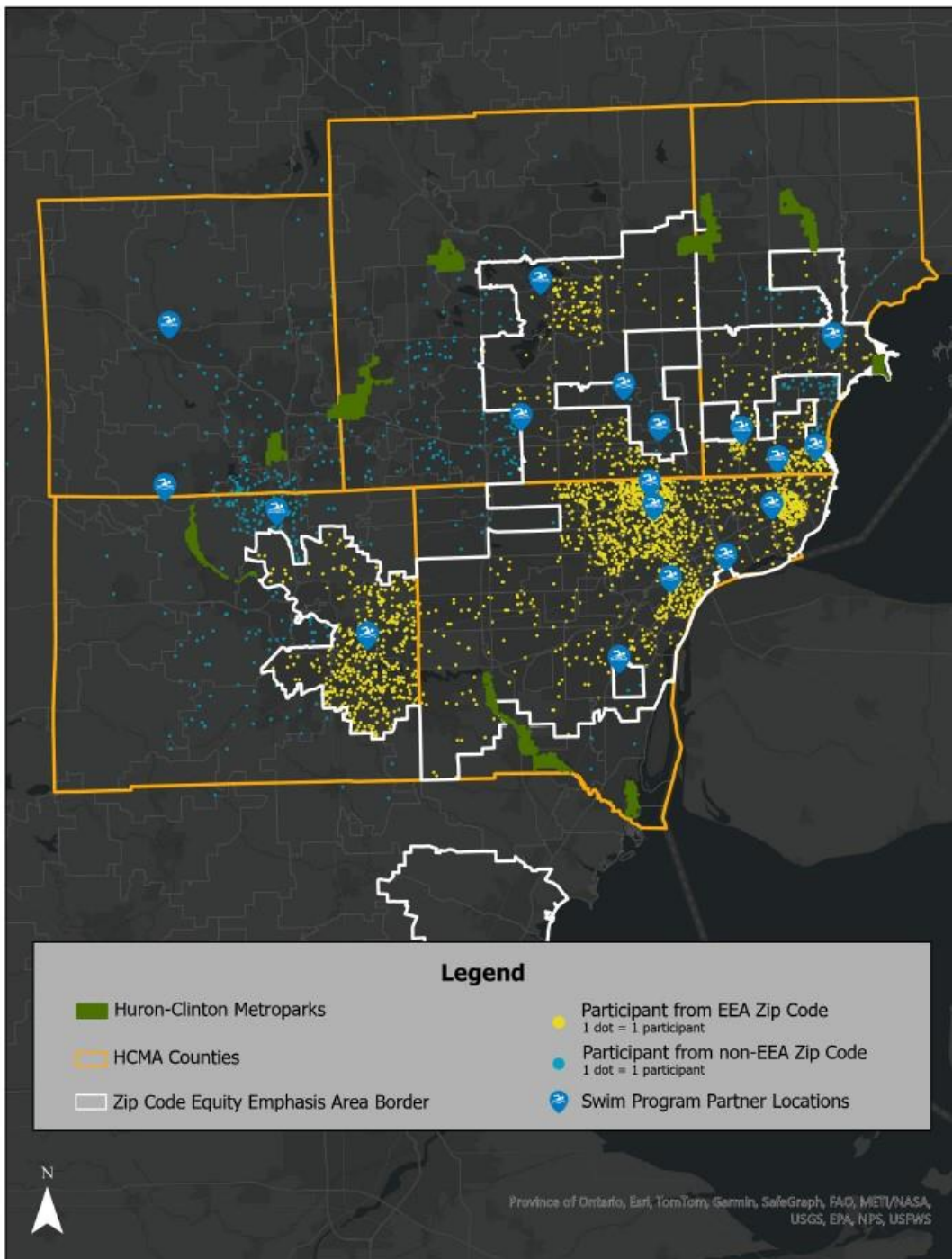
ZIP CODES & AGES SERVED

We collected zip codes and ages from participants in all partnered locations. It is important to note that we did not receive back all the demographic data from partners. We received 95% of participants ages and zip codes, so the findings and charts on the following pages are missing 5% of participants, but still show an accurate representation of participants served in these lessons. Some of the “missing” data can be attributed to participants who registered and didn’t show up and/or only participated in one lesson, while some of it could just be that data wasn’t collected in error.

The majority of youth lessons Metroparks supports are geared to 5-14 year olds, but they will accept other ages. 2024 was the first year serving adults, with 678 lessons provided to participants 18 years old and above. Our oldest Everyone in the Pool participant was 83 years old. The graph below shows the participation from various ages. All adults have been grouped together in one bar and youth ages are represented as individual bars by age. We can see that ages 6-11 are the most popular ages to enroll in swim lessons. This is consistent with prior data from the [regional swim study](#) in 2021 that cited elementary ages being a critical age for swim lessons and water safety learning.



Below is a map that visually represents where participants came from. It is mapped by reported zip code of where participants live. You will notice they are primarily concentrated around lesson locations, which supports the swim study finding that travel distance is a barrier to participation. Additionally, you will notice that participation is concentrated in equity emphasis zip code areas. In fact, 80.8% of participants resided in equity emphasis areas. This supports the Strategic Plan objectives of delivering customized programming to under-resourced communities by meeting the following objectives: creating listening opportunities that help the Metroparks understand resident needs; increase access to Metroparks services for Wayne County and the City of Detroit with a physical presence and customized programming; increase engagement with Metroparks services; and, increase access to Metroparks services for underserved communities with customized programming.



KEY FINDINGS:

- Though it is increasingly important to support the development of youth swimming skills, the demand for adult swim lessons was used to add adult lessons in 2024, and lessons were filled every time they were offered. These lessons served 678 adults.
- The average age of youth participants in 2024 was 9 years old.
- Ages 6-11 are the most popular ages to enroll in swim lessons. This is consistent with prior data from the regional swim study in 2021 that cited elementary ages being a critical age for swim lessons and water safety learning.
- 80.8% of participants resided in equity emphasis areas and lived near the site locations of lessons.



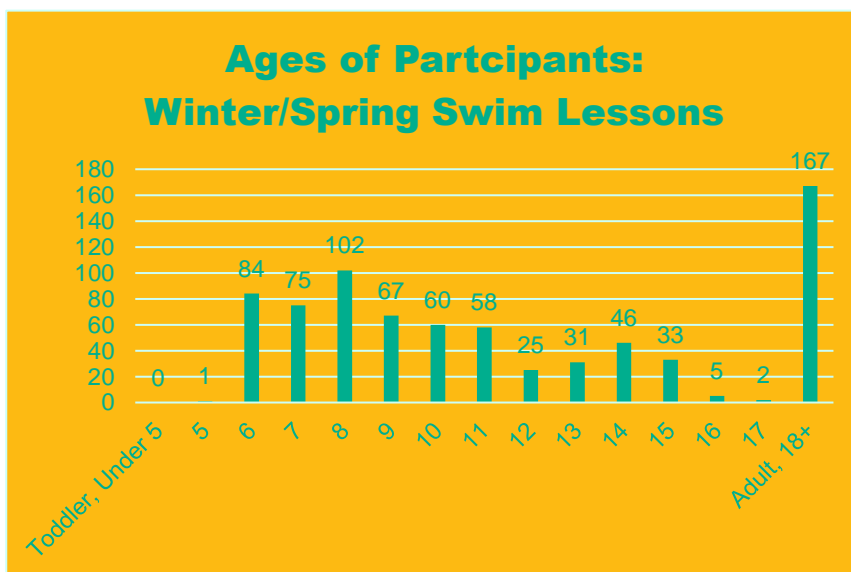
2024 WINTER/SPRING DATA

WINTER/SPRING SWIM LESSONS

We have defined winter/spring as lessons that occurred January - May 2024. During the winter/spring season of January - May, 673 participants were served through 4 partnerships. The following data is specific to those lessons.

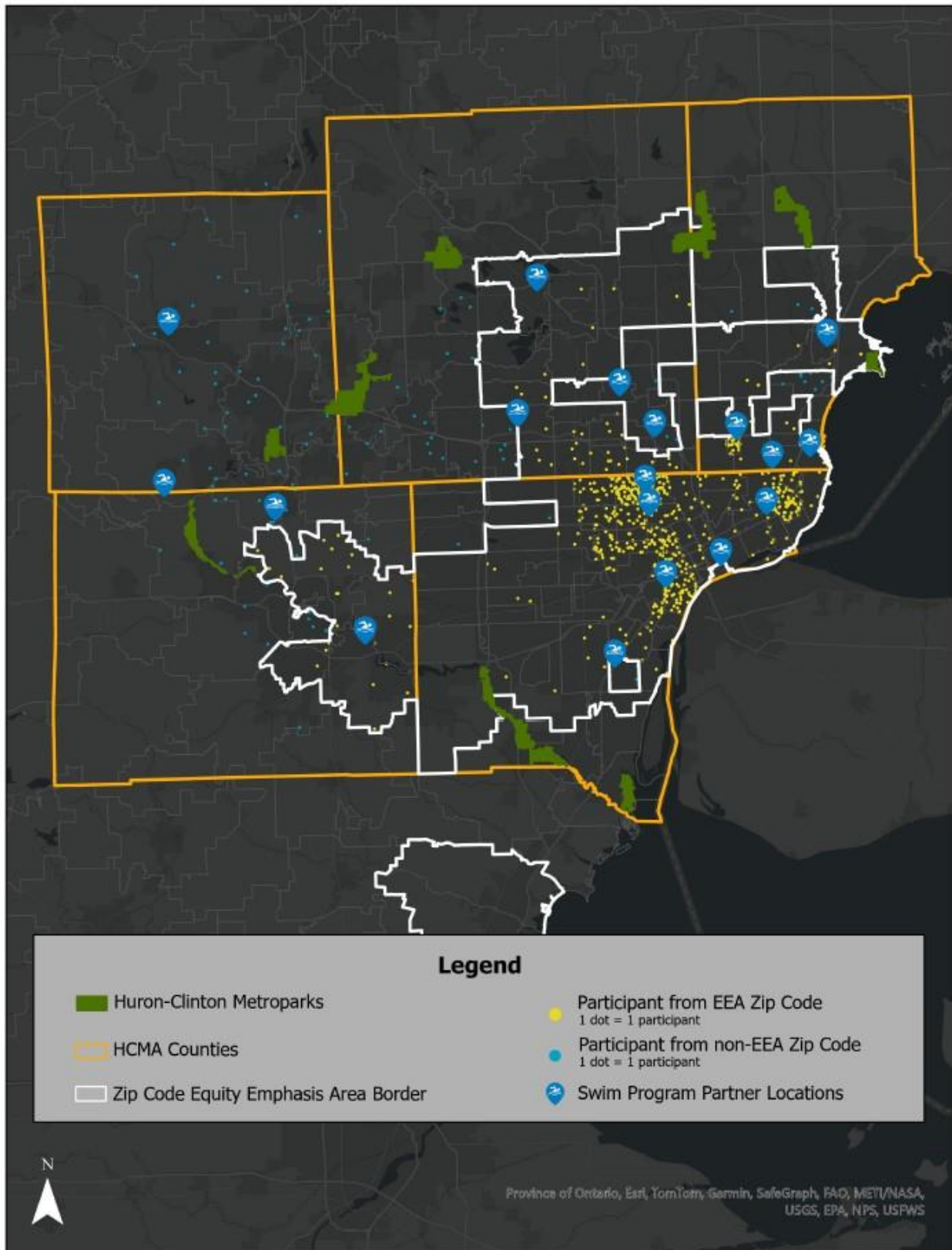
Total Number of Swimmers Per Location Winter/Spring 2024			
Partner	Location(s)	County	Total number of swimmers
City of Detroit Parks & Recreation	Adams Butzel, Patton, Heilmann, & Northwest Community Centers	Wayne	350
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit – Detroit Swims	Center Line High School	Macomb	175
Howell-Highlander Aquatic & Fitness Center	Highlander Aquatic & Fitness Center	Livingston	48
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit – Adult Lessons	Macomb, Boll, Downriver, Farmington, Birmingham, and South Oakland Family YMCA's	Macomb, Wayne, Oakland	100

AGES OF PARTICIPANTS



The winter/spring season in 2024 was the first where we were able to offer adult swim lessons. Remember that we received 95% of participant demographic information back from partners, so the total numbers here in this graph are of reported zip codes and differ slightly from the total lessons offered numbers above. We served 589 youth participants and 167 adult participants. The average age of participants in this season was 9.62.

ZIP CODE ANALYSIS – WINTER/SPRING



2024 SUMMER DATA

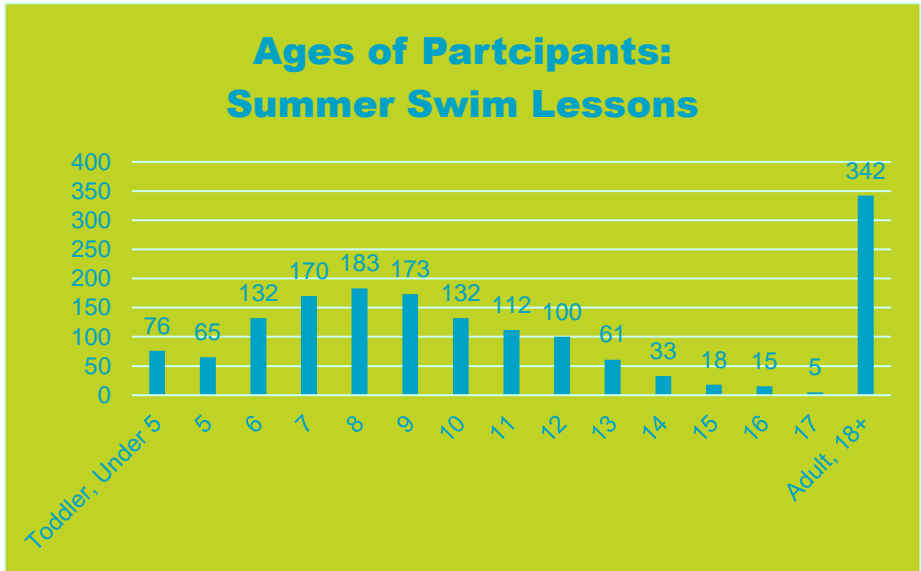
SUMMER SWIM LESSONS

We have defined winter/spring as lessons that occurred late May – early September 2024. During the summer season, 1,587 participants were served through 9 partnerships at 18 locations.

Total Number of Swimmers Per Location Summer 2024			
<i>Partner</i>	<i>Location(s)</i>	<i>County</i>	<i>Total number of swimmers</i>
City of Detroit Parks & Recreation	Brennan, Adams Butzel, Patton, Heilmann, & Northwest Community Centers	Wayne	350
Chandler Park & AquaLyfe	Chandler Park Family Aquatic Center	Wayne	80
Friends of Rutherford Pool and Washtenaw County Parks	Rutherford Pool	Washtenaw	514
Oakland County Parks and Oakland County Sherrif PAL	Waterford Oaks	Oakland	240
Howell-Highlander Aquatic & Fitness Center	Highlander Aquatic & Fitness Center	Livingston	48
Ann Arbor YMCA	YMCA Camp Birkett	Livingston	20
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit – Youth Lessons	Macomb Family YMCA	Macomb	175
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit – Adult Lessons	Macomb, Boll, Downriver, Farmington, Birmingham, and South Oakland Family YMCA's	Macomb, Wayne, Oakland	100
Whitmore Lake Public Schools – Adult Lessons	Whitmore Lake Community Pool	Livingston, Washtenaw	60

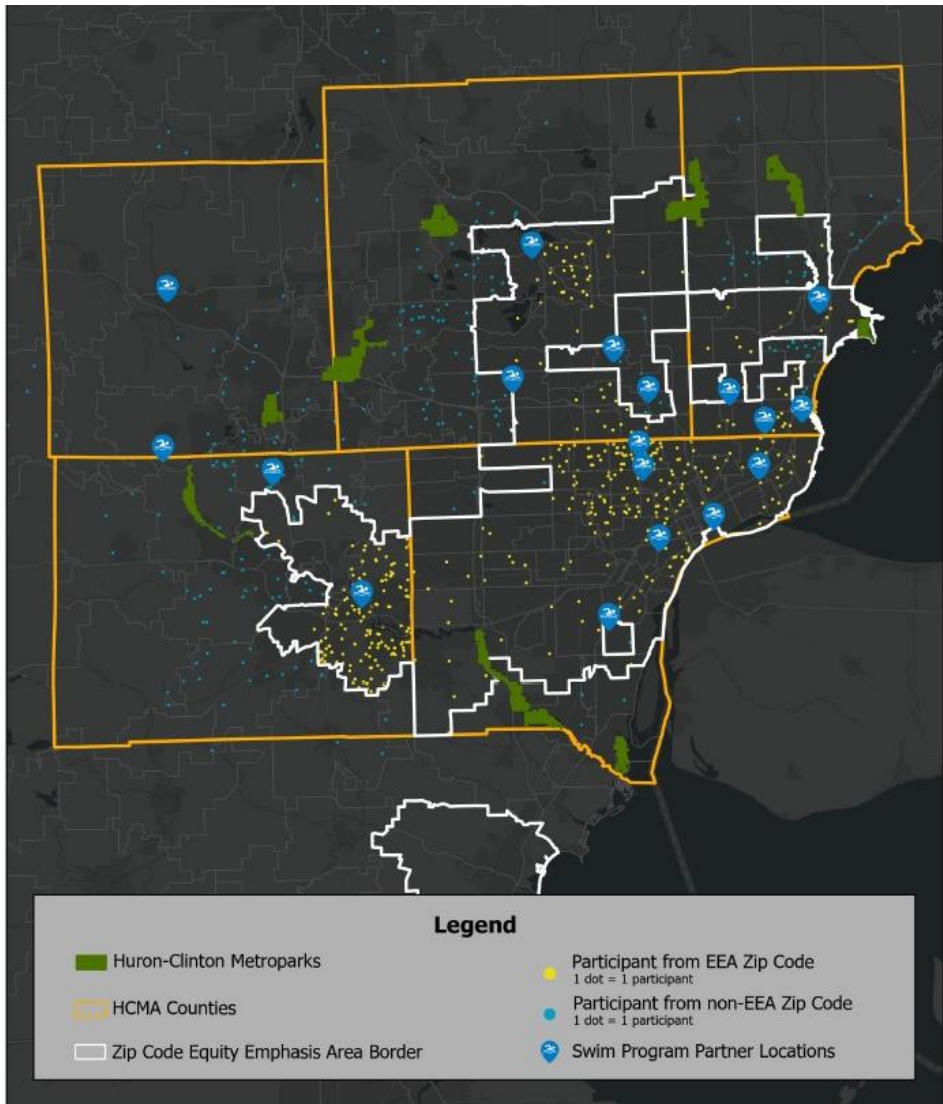


AGES OF PARTICIPANTS



Remember that we received 95% of participant demographic information back from partners, so the total numbers here in this graph are of reported zip codes and differ slightly from the total lessons offered numbers above. In Summer 2024 we served 1,275 youth participants and 342 adult participants. The average age of participants in this season was 8.95.

ZIP CODE ANALYSIS – SUMMER



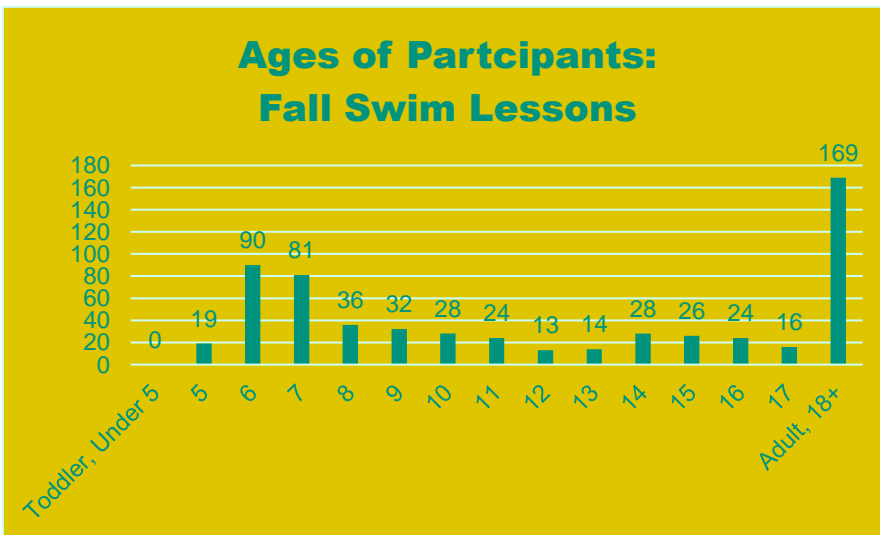
2024 FALL DATA

FALL SWIM LESSONS

We have defined Fall as lessons that occurred late September - December 2024. During the fall season, 868 participants were served through 7 partnerships.

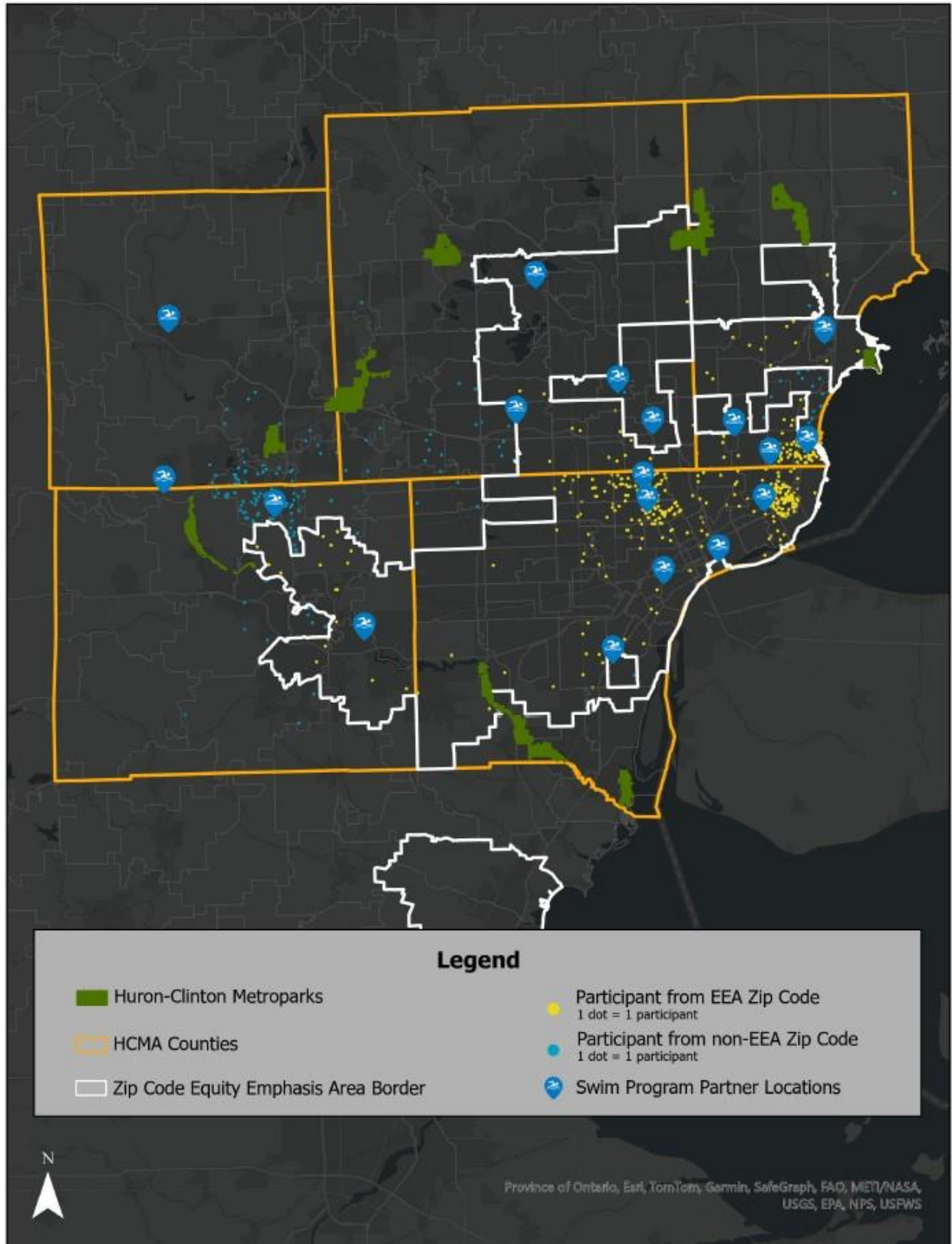
Total Number of Swimmers Per Location Fall 2024			
Partner	Location(s)	County	Total number of swimmers
City of Detroit Parks & Recreation	Adams Butzel, Patton, Heilmann, & Northwest Community Centers	Wayne	350
AquaLyfe	South Lake High School	Wayne	120
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit – Detroit Swims	DPSCD Schools	Wayne	78
Howell-Highlander Aquatic & Fitness Center	Highlander Aquatic & Fitness Center	Livingston	48
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit – Adult Lessons	Macomb, Boll, Downriver, Farmington, Birmingham, and South Oakland Family YMCA's	Macomb, Wayne, Oakland	100
Whitmore Lake Public Schools – Youth Lessons	Whitmore Lake Community Pool	Livingston, Washtenaw	100
Whitmore Lake Public Schools – Adult Lessons	Whitmore Lake Community Pool	Livingston, Washtenaw	72

AGES OF PARTICIPANTS



Remember that we received 95% of participant demographic information back from partners, so the total numbers here in this graph are of reported zip codes and differ slightly from the total lessons offered numbers above. In Fall 2024 we served 431 youth participants and 169 adult participants. The average age of participants this season was 9.66.

ZIP CODE ANALYSIS



2024 TESTIMONIALS

ADULT SWIM LESSONS

"I am loving my swim classes. I have learned so much. At first I was scared, worried, nervous, etc. I wanted to learn to swim, but was worried I couldn't keep up or would hold others in my classes back, but the instructors have helped me to feel more at ease in the pool. They have helped me to want to try harder and do more to enjoy swimming. I feel more comfortable in the pool. I'm understanding that I have ways to be safe in the water by floating, doing the backstroke and relaxing and breathing.

I like the size of the classes..not so big...so everyone can get some individual attention. The instructors are awesome. Ann, Katie, Joyce, etc. have helped me to feel more comfortable in the water. They encourage us to get more practice which is a vital part of gaining proficiency in the water. The instructors are great at showing us different ways to improve. I'm slowly learning not to panic if I can't touch the bottom of the pool. I need more practice and more instruction to keep improving that's why I'm signing up for the Sunday classes starting in September.

I want to thank Huron-Clinton Metropark for their initiative. Finding these classes has given me the push to finally learn how to swim at 77 years old. This is something I've wanted to do for years so now is my chance. Thank you to Ann, WLHS and all involved in this great program."

- Mary

"I wanted to drop you a quick note to say thank you for the great swimming classes!

As you know, I started swimming last Fall through the Umich (KCP) class at Whitmore Lake Community Pool. Though that other class has been great - and I have them to thank for helping me find an exercise that I actually enjoy - even their beginner class was a little too advanced for me. I am glad I came to the WLCR/Metroparks class because I got a chance to learn and practice the basics to actually swim well!

I appreciate having so many top-notch instructors in class, as that allows for more personalized instruction and feedback. Not to mention, it makes me feel safer in the water. I love the drills we do in class - they are hard, but very helpful! Every instructor is just so amazing and kind, so it's no surprise that every student wants to go on to another season.

Also, I know that you put a ton of work into WLCR programs. I mean, you practically live at the aquatic center! :D Please know that your work is very much appreciated, and that you are having a positive impact even beyond Whitmore Lake.

I was truly impressed with myself today, finally being able to make it across the whole pool - not once, not twice, but three times! It's so rewarding. :) Yet, I know I still have a lot to learn, so I plan to attend the next season."

- Gabriel Mongefranco

YOUTH SCHOOL-DAY SWIM LESSONS

"Our WaveMaker swim program here at Whitmore Lake Community Recreation has grown incredibly over the last two years. From an average of 50 kids per session to well over 100, we know that the work of having certified instructors, lesson plans, games and parent involvement in safety nights has all been well worth it.

At the same time, our community has economic diversity that means we are missing a lot of kids in our community! With the support of the Huron-Clinton Everyone in the Pool grant, we are now reaching every 1st through 4th grade student in our district! What an amazing opportunity to meet the kids in the pool during the school day! Now every child in this lake community is being taught the basic skills to be safe in and around the water. Thank you, Huron-Clinton Metroparks."

-Ann Kehn, Recreation and Aquatics Director, Whitmore Lake Public Schools



APPENDIX 1: **SWIM SKILLS** **ASSESSMENTS DATA**



ASSESSMENT RAW DATA

Included in this appendix is the raw data of skills assessments that feed the findings in the previous report sections.

PRE-ASSESSMENT DATA

Partner	Number of Pre-Assessments Completed	Total Lessons Offered	Percentage of Completed Pre-Assessments
City of Detroit Parks and Recreation	158	1050	15%
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit	134	475	28%
Centerline - YMCA Detroit Swims	70	253	28%
Chandler Park	25	80	31%
Howell-Highlander	85	144	59%
Rutherford Pool	64	514	12%
Oakland County Parks - Waterford Oaks	89	240	37%
Whitmore Lake Public Schools	228	232	98%
Ann Arbor YMCA Camp Birkett	0	20	0%
South Lake High School - AquaLyfe	0	120	0%
TOTAL	853	3128	27%

Data Notes:

- The dataset includes 853 pre-lesson skills assessments (27% completion rate compared to total lessons offered) from all 2024 seasons of swim lessons that totaled 3,248 lessons offered.
- AquaLyfe and YMCA – Detroit Swims did not use Metroparks’ pre and post skills assessments in fall lessons because those lessons were funded through a grant from CDC Foundation that required us to use a CDC provided assessment. It was not

intended for partners to have to complete to assessment forms, so only the grant required form was used.

- We recognize that the low completion rate of pre-lesson skills assessments skews our ability to analyze the change from start to finish in 2024. We will work to improve this in 2025.

Number of participants reporting certain skill levels at the start of lessons.

	Enter the water independently	Exit the water independently	Blow bubbles	Bob (5 times)	Open eyes underwater and retrieved submerged objects	Front glide and recover to a vertical position	Back float for 5 seconds	Roll from front to back and back to front	Tread water	Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on front	Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on back	Combine arm and leg actions on front	Combine arm and leg actions on back
No Skill Level	55	55	198	269	294	304	323	399	430	379	403	414	443
Low Skill Level	79	87	252	247	266	288	261	242	236	265	267	243	236
Average Skill Level	330	337	210	173	169	150	142	127	120	136	129	130	122
High Skill Level	387	372	191	162	122	110	125	84	66	72	53	65	51
Total	851	851	851	851	851	852	851	852	852	852	852	852	852

Percentage of participants reporting certain skill levels at the start of lessons.

	Enter the water independently	Exit the water independently	Blow bubbles	Bob (5 times)	Open eyes underwater and retrieved submerged objects	Front glide and recover to a vertical position	Back float for 5 seconds	Roll from front to back and back to front	Tread water	Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on front	Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on back	Combine arm and leg actions on front	Combine arm and leg actions on back
No Skill Level	6%	6%	23%	32%	34%	36%	38%	47%	50%	44%	47%	49%	52%
Low Skill Level	9%	10%	30%	29%	31%	34%	31%	28%	28%	31%	31%	28%	28%
Average Skill Level	39%	40%	25%	20%	20%	18%	17%	15%	14%	16%	15%	15%	14%
High Skill Level	45%	44%	22%	19%	14%	13%	15%	10%	8%	8%	6%	8%	6%

POST-ASSESSMENT DATA

Partner	Number of Pre-Assessments Completed	Total Lessons Offered	Percentage of Completed Pre-Assessments
City of Detroit Parks and Recreation	958	1050	91%
YMCA of Metropolitan Detroit	141	475	30%
Centerline - YMCA Detroit Swims	86	253	34%
Chandler Park	20	80	25%
Howell-Highlander	101	144	70%
Rutherford Pool	266	514	52%
Oakland County Parks - Waterford Oaks	267	240	111%
Whitmore Lake Public Schools	205	232	88%
Ann Arbor YMCA Camp Birkett	12	20	60%
South Lake High School - AquaLyfe	0	120	0%
TOTAL	2056	3128	66%

Data Notes:

- The dataset includes 2,056 post-lesson skills assessments (66% completion rate compared to total lessons offered) from all 2024 seasons of swim lessons that totaled 3,248 lessons offered.
- AquaLyfe and YMCA – Detroit Swims did not use Metroparks’ pre and post skills assessments in fall lessons because those lessons were funded through a grant from CDC Foundation that required us to use a CDC provided assessment. It was not intended for partners to have to complete to assessment forms, so only the grant required form was used.
- We recognize that the low completion rate of pre-lesson skills assessments skews our ability to analyze the change from start to finish in 2024. We will work to improve this in 2025.

Number of participants where instructors reported certain skill levels at the end of lessons.

	Enter the water independently	Exit the water independently	Blow bubbles	Bob (5 times)	Open eyes underwater and retrieved submerged objects	Front glide and recover to a vertical position	Back float for 5 seconds	Roll from front to back and back to front	Tread water	Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on front	Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on back	Combine arm and leg actions on front	Combine arm and leg actions on back
No Skill Level	27	25	46	53	81	116	104	193	341	187	290	240	359
Low Skill Level	235	236	772	819	873	890	874	975	981	975	955	978	966
Average Skill Level	329	358	581	564	562	559	584	502	464	540	489	508	456
High Skill Level	1462	1434	654	617	538	488	490	383	267	351	319	327	272

Percentage of participants where instructors reported certain skill levels at the end of lessons.

	Enter the water independently	Exit the water independently	Blow bubbles	Bob (5 times)	Open eyes underwater and retrieved submerged objects	Front glide and recover to a vertical position	Back float for 5 seconds	Roll from front to back and back to front	Tread water	Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on front	Alternating and simultaneous leg and arm actions on back	Combine arm and leg actions on front	Combine arm and leg actions on back
No Skill Level	1%	1%	2%	3%	4%	6%	5%	9%	17%	9%	14%	12%	17%
Low Skill Level	11%	11%	38%	40%	42%	43%	43%	47%	48%	47%	46%	48%	47%
Average Skill Level	16%	17%	28%	27%	27%	27%	28%	24%	23%	26%	24%	25%	22%
High Skill Level	71%	70%	32%	30%	26%	24%	24%	19%	13%	17%	16%	16%	13%

