



Halliwick Association of Swimming Therapy

Policy on Physical Contact

Agreed by Halliwick AST Executive on 15 September 2018

Physical contact is an essential aspect of using the Halliwick Concept and the acceptance of this contact must be seen by both parties as a privilege.

To guard against any misunderstanding both the swimmer and the instructor should know what support is appropriate for Halliwick activities. By joining a Halliwick session, the swimmer is deemed to accept this degree of contact. If the instructor thinks it necessary to deviate from the support usually advocated, he/she must first gain the permission of the swimmer and discuss the problem with the Chief Instructor and Training Instructor as soon as possible.

The swimmer or carer must be encouraged to say if they find a particular support unacceptable.

Acceptable supports

Both the instructors and the swimmers hands should be flat. This gives the maximum area of contact, aiding balance, and discourages gripping.

Support is often given with the instructor's hands either side of the swimmer's pelvis. For ease, this is referred to as hands on hips, though it is not technically on the hip joint.

Vertical support - Facing Swimmer

1. Full support. Instructor's hands on swimmer's shoulders. Swimmer's hands on instructor's shoulders
2. Hands on elbows / forearms
3. Hands on hands
4. Instructor supports either side of the swimmer's hips for some activities

Vertical - Behind Swimmer

1. Hands at either side of swimmer at hips, fingers pointing towards the toes. In some activities, there may be some body contact. Keep this to a minimum.
2. Hands on hands. This support is sometimes required, but has the effect of restricting the swimmer's own control of vertical balance. Ensure that the swimmer's hands are forward of their body, i.e. in the normal 'chair position'. This may necessitate the instructor's body being very close to, or making contact with, the swimmers.

Support in a Back Float

Hands at either side of swimmer at hips, fingers pointing towards the toes.

Support for longitudinal rotation.

Face the swimmer. Support either side of hips. Take care that the fingers are not intrusive.

Straddle support

This method of support is rarely needed, but is very useful in certain circumstances. The swimmer's permission must be obtained and the chief instructor consulted. The instructor must ensure there is the maximum distance between the two.

This policy was written by Hull Optimists Swimming Club

Please refer to addendum on the following page



Addendum Note to Policy on Physical Contact

Some swimming organisations recommend that instructors and helpers working in the pool should wear a tee-shirt or similar when working with people in the pool. This is on the grounds of professionalism and safeguarding. This may be something that you consider appropriate in your particular club or group and, if so, you may wish to include this in your policy on physical contact.

Halliwick AST has a variety of merchandise available for purchase, including tee-shirts, and you can view what's available at <https://halliwick.org.uk/resources-for-halliwick-ast/halliwick-ast-merchandise/>.