

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Triathlon ACT (TACT) offer a Kids Series each summer and winter so that kids can experience the sport of triathlon in a safe, fair and fun environment. The emphasis of these events is PARTICIPATION not performance.

Some kids may have done the Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon or another junior triathlon event, however no experience is necessary for your child to participate in a TACT kids race.

WHAT DO I NEED TO DO AS A PARENT/SUPPORTER?

BEFORE THE RACE

- Encourage your child to compete in events that are within their ability. Note the distances of each leg (swim, cycle and run) and practice these before the race. Starting slowly is a good idea!
- If your child is doing a race for the first time take him/her to see the venue before the race day.
- Make sure your child has a good nights sleep before the race.
- Get to the race well before start time to register, get a number and organise your gear.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- Swimsuit
- Goggles
- Swim Cap - sometimes provided as part of the race entry
- Towel - to dry off after the swim
- T-shirt - for the run
- Bike Helmet - with ASSA approval (see if the sticker is on the helmet)
- Water Bottle
- Bike - in good working order (can be a road, mountain or BMX bike)
- Running Shoes - elastic laces are an idea for ease of putting on shoes
- Socks (optional)
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Bike Pump
- Warm Clothing - for after the race
- Snack - for after the race
- A Positive and Supportive Attitude!

PREPARATION AT THE RACE SITE

- Be calm and reassuring. Remind your child that this is about having fun!
- Make sure your child is hydrated before the race, has a hat and wears sunscreen.
- Encourage your child to do some stretching and warm-up before the race.
- Remind your child (and yourself) that the Marshals are there for safety and should be listened to at all times - do not argue with the Marshals.
- Make sure your child's helmet fits securely and your child can do up and undo the strap easily.

- Check your child's bike setup. Tyres should be correctly inflated. Recommended inflation levels can be found on the sidewalls of tyres. Some garages have pumps that reasonably accurately inflate tyres to the recommended levels. Carry a pump. Carry a 'shifter' too. If you have Allen keys all the better - carry them too.
- If your child's bike has gears, choose a suitable gear for jumping onto the bike. If the gear on a single speed bike is too big - for example, for riding up a hill - speak to a bike shop about changing the rear sprocket or the cranks.
- Help set up your child's equipment in the transition area and rack the bike. Have your child practice taking the bike off the rack and putting it on again.
- Vacate the Transition Area once it is closed and wait until the Race Commentator announces its re-opening before you re-enter. Marshals in the Transition Area will assist your child.
- Encourage your child to listen very carefully to the Race Briefing which will take place just before the race.
- Help others - you and your children can make some good friends.
- Be an encouraging supporter - children love to hear their name called when racing. Make sure you stay clear of the course!

THE RACE

What happens during the event?

Your child will be either swimming/cycling/running (triathlon), or running/riding/running (duathlon). It may take them a while to work out how much effort to put into each leg. They will learn for themselves.

Teams

Team entry may be a good way to get started in triathlon. At each race specific instructions are given to Teams.

Swimming Stage 1

Children should be encouraged to look up every few strokes to check they are going in the right direction. Canoes will be present in the water to assist any child who needs assistance. Participants will:

- Start in waves according to their age
- Follow the course marked by buoys

Transition from Swimming to Cycling Stage 2

Participants will:

- Run or walk from the water to the Transition Area
- Dry off with their towel (and have a drink if they wish)
- Put on a t-shirt or running singlet (their torso must be covered for the cycle/run)
- Put on socks if they wish to run with socks on
- Put on running shoes with shoelaces tied
- Put on their helmet and secure the strap before moving their bike

- Run their bike to the transition exit - children do not ride their bikes in or out of the Transition Area

Cycling Stage 3

Helmets must be worn during the cycle.

Normal road rules apply to cycling ie keep to the left and pass on the right hand side.

Educate your child to ride in a straight line (ie, not weave all over the road) and that 'cutting off' is dangerous and inappropriate.

Participants will:

- Follow the signs around the bike course
- Follow the directions of Marshals
- Dismount from the bike before entering the Transition Area

Transition from Cycling to Running Stage 4

Participants will:

- Rack their bikes
- Remove their helmets
- Have a drink, put on a cap for the run
- Run out of the Transition Area

Running Stage 5

Markers show the run course and Marshals will help direct participants.

Children should be encouraged to look up and not at the ground when running.

There should be no pushing on the run.

Participants will:

- Follow the markers around the run course
- Follow the directions of Marshals
- Stop just past the Finish Line

The Finish

Congratulate your child and others on their achievement in finishing the race.

Move away from the finish area.

Make sure your child has a drink of water.

Encourage a warm-down stretch or jog.

Wait until the Race Director or Race Commentator advises that the Transition Area is open before collecting your bike and other gear - this will happen when all competitors have completed the race.

Take the texta number off your child (if he or she will let you!) with Methylated Spirits or soap when you get home.

REMEMBER FUN, SAFETY AND FAIRNESS ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS OF JUNIOR TRIATHLONS!