

DEAR AMY,

WHEN I FIRST HEARD ABOUT ISR (THROUGH THE WOMEN AT "PLAY AWAY"), I HAVE TO ADMIT, I TRULY THOUGHT THE WHOLE THING SOUNDED A LITTLE NUTS. TEN MINUTES A DAY, EVERY DAY FOR 6 WEEKS. IS THIS WOMAN CRAZY? WHAT COULD SHE POSSIBLY TEACH MY CHILD IN TEN MINUTES? AND BESIDES THAT, WE HAVE A POOL BARRIER, SO OUR KIDS WILL BE SAFE (RIGHT). AND FURTHERMORE, I HAD GROWN UP AROUND WATER AND I TURNED OUT OKAY, I DIDN'T DROWN.

WELL, SHORTLY AFTER I HAD FIRST LEARNED OF ISR, A FAMILY FRIEND OF OURS LOST THEIR GRANDSON TO A POOL DROWNING ACCIDENT. THE WHOLE FAMILY WAS THERE AND EVERYONE THOUGHT SOMEONE ELSE WAS WATCHING THIS LITTLE BOY, AND IN REALITY, NO ONE WAS WATCHING HIM AND HE LOST HIS LIFE BECAUSE OF IT. SINCE THEN, I HAVE HEARD SO MANY NEWS REPORTS ABOUT CHILDREN DROWNING IN POOLS.

THIS HITS VERY CLOSE TO HOME BECAUSE I HAVE TWO LITTLE BOYS I COULD NOT IMAGINE LIVING WITHOUT. I QUICKLY DEVELOPED A STRONG FEAR OF WATER AND WANTED TO DO WHATEVER IT WAS GOING TO TAKE TO KEEP MY KIDS SAFE. IT WAS AT THAT POINT THAT I PICKED UP THE PHONE TO GET SOME MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROGRAM.

AMY, YOU WERE SO WARM ON THE PHONE AND SO RECEPTIVE TO ALL MY QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS. YOU FILLED ME IN ON EVERYTHING I NEEDED TO KNOW AND FIT ME INTO YOUR SCHEDULE RIGHT AWAY.

AS YOU HAD WARNED ME, THE FIRST DAY WAS A LITTLE ROUGH. NO MOM LIKES TO HEAR THEIR CHILD CRY AND NOT BE ABLE TO CALM THEM. ALL OF A SUDDEN THE TEN MINUTES I FELT WAS SUCH A RIDICULOUSLY SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, SEEMED LIKE AN ETERNITY. FORTUNATELY AMY, YOUR PERSONALITY IS SO SWEET, GENTLE, AND CALM THAT IT WAS ACTUALLY COMFORTING TO KNOW AIDEN WAS IN YOUR HANDS. YOU ALWAYS WELCOMED HIM INTO THE POOL WITH A SMILE ON YOUR FACE AND MADE SURE HE WAS COMFORTABLE BEFORE BEGINNING THE LESSON. YOU NEVER GOT FRUSTRATED AND YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THERE TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS. YOU WERE NOT JUST A SWIM TEACHER, YOU WERE A FRIEND. WITHIN A COUPLE LESSONS, AIDEN WAS ALREADY DOING MORE THAN I EVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE. HE WAS MORE COMFORTABLE IN THE WATER THAN I HAD EVER SEEN HIM, AND HE ADORED HIS "MISS AMY". BY THE END OF THE SIX WEEKS, YOU HAD WORKED YOUR MAGIC AND AIDEN COULD SWIM, FLOAT SWIM TILL HIS HEART'S CONTENT.

THE SWIM LESSONS I HAD ONCE THOUGHT OF AS EXPENSIVE, WERE NOW PRICELESS. NOT ONLY DID YOU GIVE AIDEN THE SKILLS TO SWIM AND FLOAT, YOU GAVE HIM A NEW SENSE OF SELF CONFIDENCE, A LOVE OF WATER, AND HIS NEW SPECIAL FRIEND "MISS AMY."

WHEN IT WAS TIME FOR AIDEN'S REFRESHER COURSE I WAS LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING HOW MUCH AIDEN WOULD REMEMBER. HE HADN'T BEEN IN THE POOL ALL WINTER AND I WAS NOT SURE OF HIS ABILITIES. I WAS ONCE AGAIN AMAZED BY HOW WELL AIDEN DID WITH YOUR TEACHING. HE GOT RIGHT IN THE WATER AND AFTER A LITTLE WHISPER IN HIS EAR, HE WAS OFF AND SWIMMING. YOU HAD HIM BACK SWIMMING EVEN BETTER THAN THE SUMMER BEFORE IN A MATTER OF TWO WEEKS. INCREDIBLE!!

NOW YOU ARE WORKING WITH QUINTEN, AND I AM EVEN MORE IMPRESSED THAN BEFORE. HE IS SO LITTLE! YOU WOULD NEVER THINK THAT A BABY OF 10 MONTHS COULD LEARN TO FLOAT, BUT THEY CAN, AND IT'S AMAZING TO WATCH. I LOOK FORWARD TO EVERY LESSON, TO SEE THE GROWTH AND CONFIDENCE HE'S BUILDING IN THE WATER.

ON TOP OF TEACHING MY CHILDREN, YOU HAVE BEEN A FRIEND TO ME AND I CHERISH OUR FRIENDSHIP. THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE, AMY. THE CHANGES YOU HAVE MADE AND CONTINUE TO MAKE IN AIDEN AND QUINTEN'S LIVES ARE PRICELESS.

ALWAYS,

STEPHANIE ROSENTHAL AND FAMILY

