



Skills within reach

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WHEN her son **Michael** nearly drowned in a swimming pool last year, **Heidi Curry** realised that learning to swim was a must for her two sons.

But the cost of lessons was just out of reach for the Elizabeth Downs family.

Now a new \$200,000 partnership between State Swim and The Smith Family is allowing Mrs Curry's sons **Jacob**, 11, and **Michael**, 9, to learn to swim for free.

"The free swimming lessons have been awesome," Mrs Curry said.

"It's given the boys a lot of confidence and it has also improved their fitness."

Jacob and Michael are among 80 disadvantaged northern suburbs children receiving a free weekly swimming lesson at the Clovercrest and Golden Grove State Swim centres.



TEACH ME: Jacob, 11, and Michael, 9, are delighting in their swimming lessons. Picture: Roy Vandervegt H0359964

"After a lifeguard had to jump in and save Michael last year I have come to realise how important it is for all kids to learn how to swim," Mrs Curry said.

"Now knowing they are learning to swim gives me a lot of peace of mind."

The Smith Family's programs manager, **Richard Melvill**, said more than 220

children would participate in the program statewide.

"All the children who are participating are children who are at a significant financial disadvantage," Mr Melvill said. "Swimming lessons can cost a lot of money and that puts them out of reach of some families."

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