



GLAD BUDDIES

LAUNCHING EARLY 2027

EVERY KID DESERVES A FIRST BREATH UNDERWATER.

Gladwater and Dive World Austin have partnered together to offer pro bono PADI Discover Scuba Diving experiences to kids in basic foster care, ages 10 to 18.

**GO. LEARN. ADVENTURE. DIVE.
MAKE BUDDIES.**



The door to a lifetime of adventure: the pool at Dive World Austin.

WHAT IS GLAD BUDDIES?

Glad Buddies is how Gladwater and Dive World Austin bring PADI Discover Scuba Diving to kids in foster care. A kid learns basic diving skills, enjoys the special feeling of breathing underwater, then gets free time to play on scuba with an instructor right beside them.

WHY DISCOVER SCUBA?

Diving can be an empowering, centering, healing experience. Few opportunities exist in our busy lives that bring us fully present and in tune with our bodies the way scuba does. From drawing breath underwater, to experiencing weightlessness, to making new friends who can relate to how that feels, scuba diving opens the mind, body, and soul to a beautiful new world. Many divers experience heightened confidence, autonomy, ability to manage anxiety, and improved self-efficacy as a result of skills gained in the water. Discover Scuba Diving offers the first step to exploring an absolutely unreal underwater world, filled with beautiful aquatic life, exploring other cultures, and a life of world travel.

WHAT A DAY LOOKS LIKE

1

ARRIVE AT THE SHOP.

We meet at Dive World Austin and go over what to expect.

2

LEARN THE BASICS.

A short talk on breathing, signals, staying calm, what I offer you, and what you bring to the water.

3

GET IN THE WATER.

We fit gear and ease our way into Dive World Austin's heated, clear pool.

4

TAKE THE FIRST BREATH.

Slowly, with me next to you, you learn basic scuba skills and discover the amazing, freeing world of weightless breath underwater.

5

DECIDE IF SCUBA IS FOR YOU.

We conclude the experience, and you know what it looks like to become a diver.

COMMON QUESTIONS

DOES THE CHILD NEED EXPERIENCE?

No. The program starts from the first breath.

HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE?

The entire DSD experience, from arrival at the shop to completion, takes about 3 hours.

WHAT DOES IT COST?

Nothing. Dive World Austin and Gladwater cover it.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Kids in basic foster care, ages 10 to 18, who are medically cleared to participate.

SAFETY

Glad Buddies follows PADI's standards for Discover Scuba Diving.

- ✓ **A PADI Instructor leads it.** A PADI Instructor and Master Scuba Diver Trainer, teaching through Dive World Austin, a PADI Five-Star training facility with small classes.
- ✓ **Age.** PADI sets 10 as the minimum age for Discover Scuba Diving. Glad Buddies is for ages 10 to 18.
- ✓ **Depth.** The dive stays within PADI's limit for a Discover Scuba Diving pool session: 6 meters (20 feet). Dive World Austin's pool is 12 feet deep.
- ✓ **Medical screening.** Every participant completes the PADI medical questionnaire before getting in the water, and a parent or guardian signs for a minor. If any answer is yes, a physician must evaluate the child and sign off before the dive.
- ✓ **Gear.** We fit all the gear, so a child doesn't need to bring or buy anything.
- ✓ **The child is in control.** If at any time a child wishes to end the experience, we end it, no questions asked.
- ✓ **An experience, not a certification.** Discover Scuba Diving is a chance to try diving, not a certification course.

HOW TO ENROLL A CHILD IN GLAD BUDDIES

A foster parent or caseworker can start the process. We have opportunities on weekdays all through the summer and select weekends and evenings during the school year. Contact me directly to ask about the program.

CHRISTY MCFERREN

PADI Instructor #543238
christy@gladwater.com
dive.gladwater.com

Text, call, or WhatsApp

512-557-1463

