

# Anti-Bullying Policy

## Statement of Intent

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all our members so they can participate in sport in a relaxed and secure environment.

## Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our club.

If bullying does occur, all members should be able to tell and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a **TELLING** club. This means that anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell any club Coach and or Board Member.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress of the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting(e.g. threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexual abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Cyber-All areas of the internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse-Mobile threats by text messaging & calls misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

## Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying

Bullying hurts! No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

The club has a responsibility to respond promptly to issues of bullying.

## Objectives of this Policy

- All club members, coaches, volunteers and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is
- All club members, coaches and volunteers should know what the club policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported
- All players and parents should know what the club policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying occurs
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- **BULLYING WILL NOT BE TOLERATED!!**

## Signs & Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Is frightened of walking to or from school
- Doesn't want to go on the school/public bus
- Begs to be driven to school
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobia)
- Begins to taunt
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Starts stammering (speaks with sudden involuntary pauses and a tendency to repeat the initial letters of words)
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Feels in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school
- Comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises

- Comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen)
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

## **Procedures**

1. Report bullying incidents to the club Coaches, member of the club or committee or an adult you can trust.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be referred to the Board of Directors
3. In serious cases parents should be informed and asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
5. The bullying behavior or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully(bullies) change their behavior
7. If mediation fails and the bullying continues the club will initiate disciplinary proceedings according to the club orientation

## **Recommended Club Action**

If the club decides it is appropriate for them to deal with the situation they should follow the procedures outlined below:

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails/not appropriate a small panel should meet with the parent and child alleging the bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity, which should be agreed by all as a true account.

3. The same 3 persons should meet with the alleged bully and parent(s) and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken and agreed upon.
4. If bullying has in their view taken place the individual should be warned and put on notice until further action i.e. temporary or permanent suspension if the bullying continues. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
5. In some cases the parent of the bully or the bullied party can be asked to attend training sessions, if they are able to do so, and if appropriate. The club committee should monitor the situation for a given period of time to ensure the bullying is not being repeated.
6. All coach(es) involved with both individuals should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning

## **Outcomes**

1. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologize. Other consequences may take place.
2. In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
3. If possible, the pupils will be reconciled
4. After the incident/incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

## **Prevention**

1. The club will have a written constitution, which includes what is acceptable and proper behavior for all members of which the anti-bullying policy is one part
2. All club members and parents will sign to accept the consultation upon joining the club
3. The Club Coaches and Board of Directors will raise awareness about bullying and why it matters, and if issues of bullying arise in the club, will consider meeting with members to discuss openly and constructively.

This policy is based on guidance provided to schools by Kidscape. Kidscape is a voluntary organization committed to help prevent child bullying.

You may also wish to access any of the following websites designed to give advice and guidance to parents and children who are faced with dealing with bullying.

## HELP ORGANIZATIONS:

### Drop in Centres:

|                                  |              |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| <a href="#">Cool-Aid Society</a> | 780-532-9004 |
| Grande Prairie Friendship Centre | 780-539-7514 |
| Saint Lawrence Centre            | 780-228-5734 |

### Emergency Services

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Police, Fire, Ambulance | 911 |
|-------------------------|-----|

### 24-Hour Crisis Support

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| AHS Addiction & Mental Health Helpline | 1-866-332-2322 |
| <a href="#">Bullying Helpline</a>      | 1-888-456-2323 |
| Caribou Child & Youth Centre           | 1-780-814-7223 |
| Child Abuse Hotline                    | 1-800-387-5437 |
| Family Violence Helpline               | 1-780-310-1818 |
| <a href="#">Kids Help Phone</a>        | 1-800-668-6868 |
| PACE Sexual Assault Centre             | 1-888-377-3223 |
| PACT (Police & Crisis Team)            | 911            |
| Odyssey House Crisis Line              | 1-780-532-2672 |

### Counselling and Support

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| <a href="#">Child &amp; Youth Intervention Program</a> | 1- 780-830-7094 |
| Child & Youth Intervention Program Outreach            | 587-297-0700    |

### Health

|  |                |
|--|----------------|
| AIDS & STI Information   | 1-800-772-2437 |
| Alberta Health Link  | 1-866-408-5465 |
| <a href="#">Alberta Health Services - Addiction Services (Youth Detox)</a> | 1-780-538-6330 |

Alberta Health Services - Mental Health

780-538-5160

Alberta Health Services - Sexual Health

780-513-7551

HIV North Society

780-538-3388

Pregnant and Parenting Teens

780-538-3854