



## Action Plan for Bullying

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### **PURPOSE**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at PLANET SWIM AQUATICS and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Club is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt promptly and effectively.

Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, or a member of Planet Swim staff.

### **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct prohibits bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying in 304.3.7. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more USA Swimming members of oral, written, electronic or other technological expression, image, sound, data or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;

- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a member club or LSC).

## **REPORTING PROCEDURE**

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents;
- Talk to a Club Coach or other designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to the Club Coach or other designated individual;
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure, but every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

## **HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING?**

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

If bullying is occurring at our club or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT**

**HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

### **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED**

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the kids involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene.

#### **1. First, we get the facts.**

1. Keep all the involved children separate.
2. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
3. Listen without blaming.
4. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.

\* *It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyberbullying. Collect all available information.*

**2. Then, we determine if it's bullying.** There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.

1. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
2. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
  - What is the history between the kids involved?
  - Have there been past conflicts?
  - Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted

child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.

- Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?
3. Remember that it may not matter "who started it." Some kids who are bullied may be seen as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
  4. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.

### **3. Support the kids who are being bullied**

1. Listen and focus on the child. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the child that bullying is not their fault.
2. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child. The child, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input.