**BULLDOG AQUATIC CLUB ACTION PLAN TO ADDRESS BULLYING** The USA Swimming Code of Conduct and the Bulldog Athlete Code of Conduct prohibit bullying. Specifically, the BAC Athlete Code of Conduct requires that athletes show respect to all staff members, other swimmers, and adults involved with the BAC. BAC athletes agree not to bully physically or verbally or take unfair advantage of another swimmer. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents should know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach or board member.

 **What is Bullying?** Generally, bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more BAC athletes of oral, written, or other means of communication and/or a physical action directed at any other BAC athlete that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of: (1) causing physical or emotional harm to the athlete or damage to the athlete’s property; (2) causing reasonable fear of harm to the athlete or damage to the athlete’s property; (3) creating a hostile environment for the athlete at any USA Swimming activity; (4) infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
(5) materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any USA Swimming activity.

 **Reporting Procedure.** A BAC athlete who feels that he/she may have been bullied should talk to his/her parents and talk to a BAC Coach or Board Member. If the athlete or athlete’s parents believes that the athlete has been bullied and the matter has not already been resolved, BAC requests that the athlete or athlete’s parents submit a letter or email to the BAC President. In accordance with USA Swimming policy, athletes may also make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff. Every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of a BAC Coach or Board Member as soon as possible so that an effective investigation can occur and so that any bullying behavior can be addressed as soon as possible. BAC cannot address a problem that the Coaches or Board Members have not been made aware of.

 **Bullying Protocol.**  (1) If bullying is determined to be occurring during team-related activities, BAC coaches will stop the bullying by intervening, separating the athletes if necessary, making sure everyone is safe, and taking care of any immediate needs of the athletes. (2) Allegations of bullying will be investigated. The investigation will include fact gathering from those involved and any witnesses. (3) If bullying is deemed to have occurred, BAC will take appropriate action which will depend upon the particular circumstances of each individual case. (4) BAC will seek to resolve the situation and protect the bullied child(ren) from further bullying. (5) Individuals involved will be reminded that the team does not permit bullying. (6) In accordance with the BAC Athlete Code of Conduct, BAC may take action against any athlete that bullies another team member as deemed appropriate by the particular circumstances.

 **False Reports.** BAC athletes and their parents should be aware that false reports of bullying are considered bullying. If upon investigation it is determined that an athlete or an athlete’s parents intentionally made a false report of bullying in order to harm another team member in any way, the false report will be treated as bullying and will be addressed accordingly.

Action Plan to Address Bullying December 2012