

Anti-bullying Policy of Edina Swim Club

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Edina Swim Club (“ESC”) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. ESC is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all of our members. If bullying does occur, all swimmers 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, swimmer/mentor, or other designated individual.

Objective of ESC’s Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that ESC will not tolerate bullying in any form, including, but not limited to direct or indirect bullying through social media or any form of electronic or telephonic communication.
2. To define bullying and give all coaches, parents and swimmers a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents, swimmers and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To spread the word that ESC takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

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 method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other team member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

1. Causing physical or emotional harm to the other team member or damage to the other team member’s property;
 2. Placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
 3. Creating a hostile environment for the other team member at any ESC or USA Swimming activity;
 4. Infringing on the rights of the other member at any ESC or USA Swimming activity;
- or

5. Materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any ESC swimming activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include without limitation, practice, meets, and other related ESC events).

REPORTING PROCEDURE

A swimmer who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following: (1) Talk to your parents; (2) Talk to an ESC Coach; (3) Write a letter or email to your coach or any ESC Board Member; (4) Make a report to the ESC Board of Directors or USA Swimming Safe Support 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 ESC 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. Please also refer to the Grievance Procedure set forth on the ESC website.

HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during or arising out of team-related activities, we take action to stop bullying on the spot using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is ok to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the swimmers involved if determined appropriate under the circumstances.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the swimmers involved, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior when you intervene. If bullying is occurring at ESC or is reported to be occurring at ESC, we address the bullying by finding out what happened and support the swimmers involved using the following approach:

If bullying is occurring at ESC or it is reported to be occurring at ESC, we address the bullying by FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED and SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. First, we get the facts.

- a. Keep the involved swimmers separate if determined appropriate under the specific circumstances.
- b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and swimmers.

- c. Listen without blaming.
- d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
- e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple swimmers are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying.

Collect all available information, including, but not limited to, any electronic or written communications that may exist.

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.

- a. Review the USA Swimming definition of bullying;
- b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions: (i) What is the history between the kids involved? (ii) Have there been past conflicts? (iii) 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 swimmer feels like there is a power imbalance there probably is. (iv) Has this happened before? (v) Is the swimmer worried it will happen again?
- c. 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.
- d. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the swimmers involved.

3. Support the swimmers who are being bullied

- a. Listen and focus on the swimmers being bullied. Learn what's been going on and show you want to help. Assure the swimmer that bullying is not their fault.
- b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the bullied swimmer. The swimmer, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
 - i. Ask the swimmer being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary,

such as switching practice groups, the swimmer who is bullied should not be forced to change.

ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the ESC and the parents. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.

c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the bullied swimmer.

4. Address bullying behavior

a. Make sure the swimmer(s) knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.

b. Show the swimmers that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the swimmer(s) that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.

c. Work with the swimmer(s) to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:

i. Sometimes children bully to fit in or just to make fun of someone is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.

ii. Other times children act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These children may be in need of additional support.

d. Involve the swimmer(s) who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the swimmer(s) can:

i. Write a letter apologizing to the swimmer who was bullied. It may be appropriate that the apology be disseminated to the group of individuals that may have been witness to the bullying, whether it be by social media, text message or other form of written bullying. It is important that all witnesses of bullying also understand that bullying will be addressed by ESC.

ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for ESC, or for others in your community.

iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.

e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:

- i. Conflict resolution and peer mediation will not work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset kids who have been bullied.
- ii. Refer to the Grievance Procedure in the ESC Code of Conduct, which shall be incorporated herein, and implemented upon a report of bullying.

5. Follow-up.

After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the swimmer(s) who bullied to understand how what they do affects other people. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.

6. Support bystanders who witness bullying.

Every day, kids witness bullying. They want to help, but don't know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that swimmers can help stop bullying when they see it happening.

- a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
- b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or other designated individual;
- c. Help the swimmer being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. “Let’s go, practice is about to start.”
- d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
- e. Don't give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

I hereby agree to abide by the ANTI-BULLYING POLICIES. Should I violate any provision of these Policies, I will be subject to disciplinary action, as set forth in the Code of Conduct.

Dated: _____

Swimmer: _____

Dated: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian: _____