



## ANTI-BULLYING AND MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION (MAAPP) POLICIES OF THE ELK GROVE SWIM TEAM

### APPLICABILITY:

This policy applies to:

1. All recreational and USA Swimming non-athlete members and adult athlete members;
2. Participating non-members (e.g., meet marshals, meet computer operators, timers, etc.);
3. LSC and club adult staff and board members; and
4. Any other adult authorized to have regular contact with or authority over minor athletes. Collectively "Applicable Adult(s)"

### PURPOSE

Bullying and abuse of any kind is unacceptable at Elk Grove Swim Team (Team) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. The Team is committed to providing a safe, caring, and friendly environment for our members.

If bullying or abuse does occur, incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying/abuse is happening is expected to tell a coach or board member, or athlete/mentor who can help communicate issue to a coach or board member.

### OBJECTIVES OF THE TEAM'S ANTI-BULLYING POLICY:

1. To make it clear that the Team will not tolerate bullying/abuse in any form.
2. To define bullying/abuse and educate all coaches, swimmers, parents and board members of the types of behavior that constitute bullying.
3. To inform all coaches, swimmers and parents that there is a policy and protocol, should any bullying/abuse issues arise.
4. To make clear the responsibility of all Team members to report bullying/abuse.
5. To spread the word that the Team takes bullying/abuse seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying/abuse is reported.

### WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among children/people (Members) that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. It can take the form 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 Members that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

1. Causing physical or emotional harm to the other Member or damage to the other Member's property placing the other Member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to their property
2. Creating a hostile environment for the other Member at any Team activity;
3. Infringing on the rights of the other Member at any Team activity; or
4. Materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any Team activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts and other events of a Team).

### REPORTING PROCEDURE

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

1. Talk to his or her parents;
2. Talk to a Team coach, Board member or other designated individual;



3. Write a letter or email to a Team coach. Board member or other designated individual;
4. Make a report to the league 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 Team leadership as soon as possible to stop the bullying behavior as soon as possible and to make sure that memories are fresh and behavior can be accurately recalled.

#### **HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING**

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

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.

If bullying is occurring at our Team or it is reported to be occurring at our Team, 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 all the involved children separate.
  - b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids, and gather all available information regarding the circumstances under which the incident occurred.
  - c. Listen without blaming.
  - d. Don't call the act "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
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 Team policy definition of bullying;
  - b. 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 and can include things like the "popularity" of the kids involved.
    - Has this happened before? Is the child 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 kids involved.

#### **SUPPORTING THE KIDS INVOLVED**



1. Support the kids who are being bullied
  - a. 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.
  - b. 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. It may help to:
    - Ask the child 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 child who is bullied should not be forced to change.
    - Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Team and 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 child.
2. Address bullying behavior
  - a. Make sure the child who engaged in the bullying behavior understands why his or her behavior is unacceptable. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
  - b. Show kids that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the child that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
  - c. Work with the child to understand some of the reasons he or she bullied. For example:
    - Sometimes children bully to fit in or to make fun of someone who is different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
    - Other times kids act out because something else—issues at home, abuse, stress—is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These kids may be in need of additional support.
  - d. Involve the kid who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the child can:
    - Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
    - Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Team, or for others in your community.
    - Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
  - e. Avoid strategies that don't work or have negative consequences:
    - Zero tolerance or "three strikes, you're out" are generally unsuccessful strategies. Swimmers may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
    - Similarly, conflict resolution and peer mediation often don't 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.
  - f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the child 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.
3. 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 athletes 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 Team board member.



- c. Help the kid 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.

#### **OBJECTIVE OF THE TEAM'S MINOR ATHLETE ABUSE PREVENTION POLICY**

USA Swimming member clubs and LSCs are required to implement this Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy in full. The Minor Athlete Abuse Prevention Policy must be reviewed and agreed to in writing by all athletes, parents, coaches and other non-athlete members of member clubs on an annual basis with such written agreement to be retained by the club. The purpose of this policy is to outline appropriate guidelines for interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian).

#### **ONE-ON-ONE INTERACTIONS**

- a. Observable and Interruptible
  - i. One-on-one interactions between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult (who is not the minor's legal guardian) must occur at an observable and interruptible distance from another adult unless meeting with a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider (see below) or under emergency circumstances.
- b. Meetings
  - i. Meetings between a minor athlete and an Applicable Adult may only occur if another adult is present and where interactions can be easily observed and at an interruptible distance from another adult, except under emergency circumstances.
  - ii. If a one-on-one meeting takes place, the door to the room must remain unlocked and open. If available, it must occur in a room that has windows, with the windows, blinds, and/or curtains remaining open during the meeting.
  - iii. Meetings must not be conducted in an Applicable Adult or athlete's hotel room or other overnight lodging location during team travel.
- c. Meetings with Mental Health Care Professionals and/or Health Care Providers
  - i. If a Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider meets with a minor athlete in conjunction with participation, including at practice or competition sites, a closed-door meeting may be permitted to protect patient privacy provided that:
    - 1. door remains unlocked;
    - 2. Another adult is present at the facility;
    - 3. The other adult is advised that a closed-door meeting is occurring; and
    - 4. Written legal guardian consent is obtained in advance by the Mental Health Care Professional and/or Health Care Provider, with a copy provided to the club.
- d. Individual Training Sessions [Recommended]
  - i. Individual training sessions outside of the regular course of training and practice between Applicable Adults and minor athletes are permitted if the training session is observable and interruptible by another adult. Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the training session.

#### **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS**

- a. Content
  - i. All electronic communication from Applicable Adults to minor athletes must be professional in nature.



b. Open and Transparent

- i. Absent emergency circumstances, if an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes needs to communicate directly with a minor athlete via electronic communications (including social media), the **minor athlete's legal guardian must be copied**. If a minor athlete communicates to the Applicable Adult (with authority over the minor athlete) privately first, **said Applicable Adult must copy the minor athlete's legal guardian on any electronic communication response to the minor athlete**.
- ii. When an Applicable Adult with authority over minor athletes communicates electronically to the entire team, said Applicable Adult must copy another adult.

c. Requests to Discontinue

- i. Legal guardians may request in writing that their minor athlete not be contacted through any form of electronic communication by the club, LSC or by an Applicable Adult subject to this Policy. The organization must abide by any such request that the minor athlete not be contacted via electronic communication, or included in any social media post, absent emergency circumstances.



- d. Hours
  - i. Electronic communications must only be sent between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., unless emergency circumstances exist, or during competition travel.
- e. Prohibited Electronic Communication
  - i. Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes are not permitted to maintain private social media connections with unrelated minor athletes and such Applicable Adults are not permitted to accept new personal page requests on social media platforms from minor athletes, unless the Applicable Adult has a fan page, or the contact is deemed as celebrity contact as opposed to regular contact. Existing social media connections with minor athletes must be discontinued. Minor athletes may "friend" the club and/or LSC's official page.
  - ii. Applicable Adults with authority over minor athletes must not send private, instant or direct messages to a minor athlete through social media platforms.

## TRAVEL

- a. Local Travel
  - i. Local travel consists of travel to training, practice and competition that occurs locally and does not include coordinated overnight stay(s).
  - ii. Applicable Adults must not ride in a vehicle alone with an unrelated minor athlete, absent emergency circumstances, and must always have at least two minor athletes or another adult in the vehicle, unless otherwise agreed to in writing by the minor athlete's legal guardian.
  - iii. Legal guardians must pick up their minor athlete first and drop off their minor athlete last in any shared or carpool travel arrangement.
- b. Team Travel
  - i. Team travel is travel to a competition or other team activity that the organization plans and supervises.
  - ii. During team travel, when doing room checks two-deep leadership (two Applicable Adults should be present) and observable and interruptible environments must be maintained.
  - iii. When only one Applicable Adult and one minor athlete travel to a competition, the minor athlete's legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each competition for the minor athlete to travel alone with said Applicable Adult.
  - iv. Team Managers and Chaperones who travel with the club or LSC must be USA Swimming members in good standing.
  - v. Unrelated non-athlete Applicable Adults must not share a hotel room, other sleeping arrangement or overnight lodging location with an athlete.
  - vi. Minor athletes should be paired to share hotel rooms or other sleeping arrangements with other minor athletes of the same gender and of similar age. When a minor athlete and an adult athlete share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement, the minor athlete's legal guardian must provide written permission in advance and for each instance for the minor to share a hotel room or other sleeping arrangement with said adult athlete.
  - vii. Meetings during team travel must be conducted consistent with the One-on-One Interactions section of this Policy (i.e., any such meeting must be observable and interruptible). Meetings must not be conducted in an individual's hotel room or other overnight sleeping location.

## LOCKER ROOMS AND CHANGING AREAS

- a. Requirement to Use Locker Room or Changing Area
  - i. The designated locker room or changing area must be used when an athlete or Applicable Adult changes, in whole or in part, into or out of a swimsuit when wearing just one suit (e.g., deck changing is prohibited).



- b. Use of Recording Devices
  - i. Use of any device's (including a cell phone's) recording capabilities, including voice recording, still cameras and video cameras in locker rooms, changing areas, or similar spaces by a minor athlete or an Applicable Adult is prohibited.
- c. Undress
  - i. An unrelated Applicable Adult must not expose his or her breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to a minor athlete under any circumstance. An unrelated Applicable Adult must not request an unrelated minor athlete to expose the minor athlete's breasts, buttocks, groin or genitals to the unrelated Applicable Adult under any circumstance.
- d. One-on-One Interactions
  - i. Except for athletes on the same team or athletes attending the same competition, at no time are unrelated Applicable Adults permitted to be alone with a minor athlete in a locker room or changing area, except under emergency circumstances. If the organization is using a facility that only has a single locker room or changing area, separate times for use by Applicable Adults must be designated.
- e. Monitoring
  - i. The club must regularly and randomly monitor the use of locker rooms and changing areas to ensure compliance with this Policy. Locker rooms and changing areas may be monitored by use of the following methods:
    - i. Conducting a sweep of the locker room or changing area before athletes arrive;
    - ii. Posting staff directly outside the locker room or changing area during periods of use;
    - iii. Leaving the doors open when adequate privacy is still possible; and/or
    - iv. Making occasional sweeps of the locker rooms or changing areas with women checking on female locker rooms and men checking on male locker rooms.
    - v. Every effort must be made to recognize when a minor athlete goes to the locker room or changing area during practice and competition, and, if the minor athlete does not return in a timely fashion, to check on the minor athlete's whereabouts.
- f. Legal Guardians in Locker Rooms or Changing Areas
  - i. Legal guardians are discouraged from entering locker rooms and changing areas. If a legal guardian does enter a locker room or changing area, it must only be a same-sex legal guardian and the legal guardian should notify a coach or administrator in advance.

## MASSAGES AND RUBDOWNS/ATHLETE TRAINING MODALITIES

- a. Definition
  - a. In this section, the term "Massage" refers to any massage, rubdown, athletic training modality including physical modalities (e.g., stretching, physical manipulation, injury rehabilitation, etc.) and electronic or instrument assisted modalities (e.g., stim treatment, dry needling, cupping, etc.).
- b. General Requirement
  - a. Any Massage performed on an athlete must be conducted in an open and interruptible location and must be performed by a licensed massage therapist or other certified professional. However, even if a coach is a licensed massage therapist, the coach must not perform a rubdown or massage of an athlete under any circumstance.
- c. Additional Minor Athlete Requirements
  - a. Written consent by a legal guardian must be obtained in advance by the licensed massage therapist or other certified professional, with a copy provided to the club.
  - b. Legal guardians must be allowed to observe the Massage.



- c. Any Massage of a minor athlete must be done with at least one other adult present and must never be done with only the minor athlete and the person performing the Massage in the room.
- d. Any Massage of a minor athlete must only occur after a proper diagnosis from a treating physician and be done in the course of care according to the physician's treatment plan.