

OCEANSIDE SWIM CLUB'S ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Oceanside Swim Club ("OSC") and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. OSC 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 with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell a coach, board member or parent.

Objectives of OSC's Anti-Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that OSC will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents and swimmers a thorough understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make the policy and protocol known to all parents, swimmers, and coaching staff should any bullying issues arise.
4. To clarify how to report bullying.
5. To communicate that Oceanside Swim Club takes bullying seriously and that all swimmers and parents can be assured that they will be supported if and when bullying is reported.

DEFINITION

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

Bullying may be characterized by resulting in one or more of the following:

- 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 his/her property;
- creating a hostile environment for the other member at any OSC activity;
- infringing on the rights of the other member at any OSC activity; or
- materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any OSC activity.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

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

- Talk to your parents
- Talk to a Coach or a Board Member
- Write a letter or email to the Coach or Board Member
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff.

There is no expressed 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.

ACTION STEPS

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 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. We first listen to all accounts of the incident(s) without blaming. We then determine whether the situation is bullying or something else. Children who are bullied will be supported to resolve the issue and ensure that the child feels safe.

OSC strictly enforces zero tolerance for bullying. Since all swimmers must agree to the OSC behavior agreement prior to joining the club, they understand that their actions have consequences. Children who bully are subject to ejection from practice, suspension or even termination.

In addition, OSC will make every effort to work with children in order to understand the reasons he or she bullied. Bullying is often a result of children trying to fit in, feeling insecure or other abuse or stress in their life. While OSC hopes to assist all children in feeling safe and secure, the team at large is the main priority. So, if one or more children appear to be a potential threat to safety at our club, they may face removal from the team.

BYSTANDER EXPECTATIONS

Athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening by:

- being a friend to the person being bullied;
- telling a trusted adult – your parent, coach, or club board member;
- helping 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.”
- setting a good example by not bullying others.
- not giving the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.