



Shorewood Swim Club

Anti-Bullying Policy (Rev. 10/2021)

I. Statement of Policy

A. The Shorewood Swim Club is committed to the physical and emotional safety and well-being of our members. Part of that commitment means developing behavior policies/codes-of-conduct for all members of the Club. This policy addresses bullying.

B. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at the Shorewood Swim Club and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. 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 athlete/mentor.

II. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is intentional, harmful, humiliating, and victimizing behavior that causes emotional, social, and/or physical pain for another person. Bullying can be physical, verbal, or social, and can involve directly observable behaviors such as teasing, hitting, threatening, and destruction of property or more insidious behaviors such as spreading rumors, social exclusion, intimidation, or manipulation.

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:

- A. Causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property.
- B. Placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property.
- C. Creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity.
- D. Infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity.
- E. 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).

Bullying behavior is distinguished from normal conflict by the following criteria:

- A. Repetitive (not an isolated event).
- B. Real or perceived imbalance of power between the individual(s) engaging in the bullying behavior and their target(s). The power imbalance can come from a number of sources—popularity, physical size or strength, cognitive ability, etc.
- C. Intent to harm. The individual(s) engaging in the bullying behavior derives power or pleasure from seeing the target(s) afraid, upset, or in physical pain as a direct or indirect result of their actions.

III. Anti-Bullying Procedure

A. Reporting: Athletes who experience bullying behavior themselves or witness the bullying of athletes are encouraged to report the conduct to a parent, a coach, or a Board Member so that the matter can be investigated and appropriate action taken. In addition, reports may be made directly to USA Swimming Safe Sport Staff (719-866-3589).

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.

B. Intervention: 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 intervening.

C. Investigation: Following a report or observation of potentially bullying behavior, the Head Coach or his designee shall investigate the behavior. If at any point in the investigation it is determined that the bullying might rise to a Level II infraction pursuant to the 13&O Code-of-Conduct Policy, the investigation will be referred to the Board and a subcommittee thereof as described in that Policy. Whether conducted by the Head Coach, his designee, or the Board, the following best practices should be observed:

1. Separate all involved individuals until investigation is complete

2. Collect information from a variety of sources, both adults and kids if possible
3. Listen and document information without blaming or labeling the behavior as “bullying.”
4. Recognize that it may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the behavior in question includes the use of technology or social media. Every reasonable effort will be made to collect the available information.
5. Determination made regarding whether the behavior constitutes 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
6. Review the USA Swimming and Club criteria for bullying behavior. Consider:
 - a) What is the history between the individuals involved?
 - b) Have there been past conflicts?
 - c) Is there a (real or perceived) power imbalance? A power imbalance is not limited to physical strength, and is often not easily recognized. If the targeted individual feels there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - d) Has this happened before? Is the child worried it will happen again?

D. Support: Support for identified target(s) of bullying behavior may include, but are not limited to:

1. Assurance provided that the club is supportive of them and that the behavior directed at them was not their fault.
2. Club and family collaboration commit to provide protection from further bullying, as well as discussion of how subsequent incidents will be addressed, should they arise.
3. Asking targeted individual(s) what can be done to make them feel safe.
4. Changes to routine shall be minimized for the targeted individual(s).
5. Rearranging lane assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as changing practice groups, the targeted individual shall not be forced to change.

6. Reaffirm commitment to the individual(s) safety and the safety of all members

E. Consequences: Bullying behavior can be more or less severe and more or less damaging. If bullying behavior is particularly severe or damaging it may rise to a Level II infraction under the 13&O Code-of-Conduct Policy and be disciplined accordingly. The Club believes, however, that the majority of bullying incidents, especially among the younger swimmers, are better handled without formal Club discipline. Among the ways bullying will be addressed are:

1. A discussion with the child to be sure they understand the behavior that was unacceptable, and the reasons it was unacceptable.
2. Notification of the child's family.
3. Support and encouragement for restitution: (writing a letter apologizing to the individual(s) affected, cleaning, repairing, or paying for any property they damaged, etc).
4. 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.