

DOWLING CATHOLIC RIPTIDE SWIM CLUB ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Dowling Catholic Riptide Swim Club (“Riptide”) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. Riptide 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 or has occurred is expected to tell a coach, board member or parent, with the expectation that the board and/or head coach will investigate and handle the matter.

Objectives of Riptide’s Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that Riptide will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all board members, 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 Riptide 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.

The USA Swimming Code of Conduct defines bullying as 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:

- i. causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
- ii. placing the other member in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;

- iii. creating a hostile environment for the other member at any USA Swimming activity;
- iv. infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA Swimming activity; or
- v. 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).

EXAMPLES OF PROHIBITED BULLYING:

Physical:

- Hitting/kicking/pinching/tripping/pushing
- Spitting
- Making mean or rude hand gestures
- Taking or breaking someone's personal belongings

Verbal:

- Teasing
- Name calling
- Taunting
- Threatening to cause harm

Social:

- Repeatedly ostracizing or leaving someone out on purpose
- Telling other children not to be friends with someone
- Spreading rumors about someone
- Embarrassing someone in public

Cyber:

- The constant and unrelenting transmission of offensive, insulting, rude or harassing messages over the internet or cell phone
- Transmission of messages to intimidate or threaten someone
- Impersonating someone to cause harm or damage their reputation

Parents:

- Bullying at Riptide is prohibited activity not only by and among swimmers, but also by parents. Parents are encouraged to discuss, by appointment at an appropriate time and place, any issues or concerns about the program or any aspect of it, with the head coach. Parents

should not attempt to bully, threaten or berate any member of the coaching staff either in person or by electronic means.

ANTI-BULLYING COMPLAINT RESOLUTION PROCEDURES

REPORTING PROCEDURE:

An athlete who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do the following:

- Talk to your parents, and with your parents talk to a Club Coach or Board Member about the problem, or
- Write a letter or email to the Head Coach or any Board Member.

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, that behavior can be accurately recalled, and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.

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 Riptide or it is reported to be occurring at our club, we address the bullying by:

1. First, we get the facts.
 - a. Keep all the involved children separate.
 - b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and kids.
 - c. Listen without blaming.

- d. Don't label or call the conduct "bullying" while you are trying to understand what happened.
 - e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or the bullying involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.
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; review the Dowling Catholic High School student handbook
 - 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. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted child feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - 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. Once you have determined if the situation is bullying, support all of the kids involved.
3. Following a valid report, the head coach will visit with all parties involved, separately
- a. The coach will visit with the parents of the child who bullied and share the information uncovered. The coach will also visit with the child who bullied and the victim of the bullying separately and discuss the situation and reach an understanding of the consequences if the behavior continues, or if immediate consequences are warranted.
 - b. If the bullying actions continue or if immediate consequences are warranted based on the severity and/or repeated nature of the bullying conduct, the child who bullied may be recommended to the board for suspension or expulsion.