

SPY Swim Team Anti-Bullying Policy

Purpose

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at SPY and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. SPY is committed to providing a safe, caring, and friendly environment for all 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 or board member.

Objectives of SPY's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

- To disclose to all parents, swimmers, and coaching staff that a bullying policy and protocol exists
- To make it clear that SPY will not tolerate bullying in any form
- To provide board members, coaches, parents, and swimmers with a good understanding of the definition of bullying
- To have a clear and simple reporting process should bullying occur
- To make it known that SPY 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 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:

- 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 USA swimming activity
- Infringing on the rights of the other member at any USA swimming activity; or
- 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).

Reporting Procedure

A swimmer who feels that he or she has been bullied is asked to do one or more of the following things:

- Talk to your parents
- Talk to a club coach or board member
- Complete and submit a report to the club coach: [SPY Bullying Report Form](#)
- Email the club coach or board member(s)
- Make a report to the USA Swimming Safe Sport staff

There is no time limit for initiating a complaint under this procedure. However, every effort should be made to bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate club leadership as soon as possible. This allows for early intervention to ensure that the behavior can be stopped as soon as possible, and interactions do not escalate.

How Bullying is Handled

If bullying occurs during team-related activities, the bullying will be stopped at the time of the incident by using the following steps:

- Separate the swimmers involved
- Make sure everyone is safe
- Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs
- Remain calm and reassure the swimmers involved, including those who are bystanders
- Model respectful behavior during any interventions

If bullying continues, the swimmer may be suspended from practices and meets while the coaches investigate further. Coaches may also involve the Board of Directors to support any further investigation into bullying. Together, the coaches and Board of Directors will determine the outcome up to and including the removal of a swimmer from SPY.

If physical bullying is involved and has been verified by coaches or other witnesses, the swimmer will be immediately suspended from all SPY activities and an investigation to determine the next steps will be launched. This does not include incidental or accidental contact but conscious efforts by the swimmer to intimidate and get a reaction.