

Dedham Health Hydras Anti-Bullying policy

The Dedham Health Hydras recognizes that a club team is physically and emotionally safe and secure for all athletes, promotes good citizenship, increases athlete attendance and engagement, and supports academic achievement. To protect the rights of all athletes for a safe and secure learning environment, the Dedham Health Hydras prohibits acts of bullying, harassment, and other forms of aggression and violence. Bullying or harassment, like other forms of aggressive and violent behaviors, interferes with both a club's ability to educate its Athletes and an athlete's ability to learn. All administrators, faculty, staff, parents, volunteers, and athletes are expected to refuse to tolerate bullying and harassment and to demonstrate behavior that is respectful and civil. It is especially important for adults to model these behaviors (even when disciplining) in order to provide positive examples for athlete behavior.

"Bullying" or "harassment" is any gesture or written, verbal, graphic, or physical act (including electronically transmitted acts – i.e., cyberbullying, through the use of internet, cell phone, personal digital assistant (pda), computer, or wireless handheld device, currently in use or later developed and used by athletes) that is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress and may be motivated either by bias or prejudice based upon any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression; or a mental, physical, or sensory disability or impairment; or by any other distinguishing characteristic, or is based upon association with another person who has or is perceived to have any distinguishing characteristic. Bullying and harassment also include forms of retaliation against individuals who report or cooperate in an investigation under this policy. Such behaviors are considered to be bullying or harassment whether they take place on or off club property, at any club-sponsored function, or in a club vehicle or at any time or place where a child's imminent safety or over-all well-being may be at issue.

"Bullying" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

- is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress;
- is directed at one or more pupils;
- is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological or emotional means;
- substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more athletes;
- adversely affects the ability of a athlete to participate in or benefit from the swim programs or activities by placing the athlete in reasonable fear of physical harm or by causing emotional distress; and,

- is based on an athlete's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above), or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

"Harassment" is conduct that meets all of the following criteria:

- is reasonably perceived as being dehumanizing, intimidating, hostile, humiliating, threatening, or otherwise likely to evoke fear of physical harm or emotional distress;
- is directed at one or more athletes;
- is conveyed through physical, verbal, technological or emotional means;
- substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits, or programs of one or more athletes;
- adversely affects the ability of a athlete to participate in or benefit from the programs or activities because the conduct, as reasonably perceived by the athlete, is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive as to have this effect; and,
- is based on an athlete's actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic (see above), or is based on an association with another person who has or is perceived to have any of these characteristics.

The scope of this policy includes the prohibition of every form of bullying, harassment, and cyberbullying/harassment, whether on club premises, or at a club-sponsored event, whether or not held on club premises. Bullying or harassment, including cyberbullying/ harassment, that is not initiated at a location defined above is covered by this policy if the incident results in a potentially material or substantial disruption of the learning environment for one or more athletes and/or the orderly day-to-day operations of any club program.

The Dedham Health Hydras expects athletes to conduct themselves in a manner in keeping with their levels of development, maturity, and demonstrated capabilities with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other athletes, staff, volunteers, and contractors.

The Dedham Health Hydras believes that standards for athlete's behavior must be set through interaction among the athletes, parents and guardians, staff, and community member, producing an atmosphere that encourages athletes to grow in self-discipline and their ability to respect the rights of others. The development of this atmosphere requires respect for self and others, as well as for club and community property on the part of athletes, staff, parents, and community members.

The Dedham Health Hydras believes that the best discipline for aggressive behavior is designed to (1) support athletes in taking responsibility for their actions, (2) develop empathy, and (3) teach alternative ways to achieve the goals and solve problems that motivated the aggressive behavior. Staff members who interact with athletes shall apply best practices

designed to *prevent* discipline problems and encourage athletes' abilities to develop self-discipline and make better choices in the future.

Since bystander support of bullying and harassment can encourage these behaviors, the club prohibits both active and passive support for acts of harassment or bullying. The staff should encourage athletes *not* to be part of the problem; *not* to pass on the rumor or derogatory message; to walk away from these acts when they see them; to constructively attempt to stop them; to report them to the designated authority; and to reach out in friendship to the target. When bystanders do report or cooperate in an investigation, they must be protected from retaliation with the same type of procedures used to respond to bullying and harassment.

Consequences and appropriate remedial actions for a athlete or staff member who engages in one or more acts of bullying or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion, in the case of an athlete, or suspension or termination in the case of an employee, as set forth in the employee handbook. Employees will also be held accountable for bullying or harassing behavior directed toward club employees, volunteers, parents, or athletes.

Consequences for a athlete who commits an act of bullying and harassment shall vary in method and severity according to the nature of the behavior, the developmental age of the athlete, and the athlete's history of problem behaviors and performance, and must be consistent with the club's code of conduct. Remedial measures shall be designed to: *correct the problem behavior*; *prevent another occurrence* of the behavior; and *protect the victim* of the act. Effective discipline should employ a club-wide approach to adopt a rubric of bullying offenses and the associated consequences.

All employees are required to report alleged violations of this policy to the general manager or the general manager's designee. All other members of the community, including athletes, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy.

Reports may be made anonymously, but formal disciplinary action *may not* be based solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

The Dedham Health Hydras prohibits reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying or harassment or cooperates in an investigation. The consequences and appropriate remedial action for a person who engages in reprisal or retaliation shall be determined by the administrator after consideration of the nature, severity, and circumstances of the act.