

**NWPSA**

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Anti-Bullying Policy

The Northwest Peace Soccer Association District (NWPSA) is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can participate in soccer in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our district. If bullying does occur, all children and parents should be able to openly communicate the situation and know that all incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Bullying will not be tolerated.

- All players, coaches and managers and parents of the club should understand what bullying is.
- All managers and coaching staff should know what the club policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All players should know what the club policy is on bullying and what they should do if bullying occurs or is suspected.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Players and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying consists of three basic types of abuse — emotional, verbal, and physical.

Bullying can be and does include:

- Verbal bullying including derogatory comments, lies, false rumors, teasing, ridicule and bad names.
- Emotional bullying includes being unfriendly, sending hurtful or tormenting messages via social media.
- Bullying through social exclusion or isolation, being ignored and or left out.
- Physical bullying includes pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any other use of violence.
- Being attacked because of their religion, race or color, gender or sexuality including but not limited to taunts, graffiti, gestures etc.
- Sexually unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Misuse of associated technology such as unwanted camera and video usage and social networking exposure

Signs and Indicators:

A player may indicate he or she is being bullied by signs or behavior, adults should be aware of these possible signs and should investigate if a player:

- Says he or she is being bullied
- Is afraid or unwilling to go to training, practice or games
- Becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Feels ill before training sessions
- Is nervous and /or jumpy when a message is received (ie. Text, IM, phone, social network)

- Comes home with clothes torn or training equipment damaged
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay the bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is frightened to say what's wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

In some more severe situations, other indicators can include:

- Cry them-selves to sleep at night or have nightmares
- Become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Start bullying other children or siblings
- Stops eating
- Perform self harm in some way

These signs and behaviors may indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Why do players sometimes bully other players?

Players might bully because:

- They may not have been taught that any form of bullying is unacceptable behavior and will not be condoned by the NWPSA District.
- They think it is fun or funny
- They are lacking in their own self confidence
- They are copying older siblings, friends, parents or even club staff
- They are encouraged to bully by friends
- They themselves have been a victim of bullying

As a parent, guardian, coach, or manager what can you do if you think your player is being bullied? (On the bench, on the field, or anywhere bullying may take place)

- Ask the player directly
- Take any incidents of bullying that they tell you about seriously
- Talk calmly with the player about their experiences
- Make note of what the player says
 - Never approach another parent directly
- Do not encourage your player to retaliate

As a youth soccer member what can you do if you think you are being bullied? (On the bench, on the field, or anywhere bullying may take place)

- Refrain from retaliating
- Talk to your coach, assistant coach, manager, or parent about it as soon as possible
- Provide as much detail as possible about the incident
- Know that you will be supported in the process

What to do if you are witnessing bullying

- Calmly tell the bullying player something like:
 - We don't act like that in this club
 - We don't speak like that in this club

- What you are doing is not acceptable

Procedures once bullying has been recognized

- Reassure the player that they have done the right thing by telling you

- Understand that the bullying player may need to change aspects of their behavior and they will be mentored on how to do that

- Complete an **Incident report** and contact the NWPSA district immediately to report the bullying incidents/behavior. *The district will take every concern seriously, and investigate the issue in a timely manner.

If necessary and appropriate, the disciplinary committee may recommend the police be consulted based on the severity of the situation.