

# Northern Districts Gymnastic Club Inc

1 / 5 Whipple St, Balcatta, WA  
PO Box 797 Balcatta 6914  
Ph: 08 9240 6861, Fx: 08 92406863  
Email: [info@ndgc.org.au](mailto:info@ndgc.org.au)  
Web Site: [www.ndgc.org.au](http://www.ndgc.org.au)

Policy Title:	ANTI- BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT POLICY
Policy Number:	POLHR 10
Date of issue:	24 <sup>th</sup> March 2014
Controlling Body	NDGC Board of Management

Northern Districts Gymnastics Club views all forms of bullying as unacceptable gymnast behaviour

## Purpose

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Northern Districts Gymnastics Club (NDGC) and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to a team spirit and is potentially damaging to a victim. The club 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 happening is expected to tell a coach, Board Member, or fellow athlete / mentor.

## Definitions

**Bullying** is seen as a repeated and deliberate intent to hurt, embarrass, or cause discomfort. Bullying is an inappropriate use of power (physical, social and emotional) and can occur over a period of time. This behavior can affect individuals as well as groups.

**Conflict** (including short term or once off teasing and fighting amongst gymnasts/ teams/ squads) may not be deemed bullying. These behaviours may represent the normal dynamics of a particular friendship and gymnasts need to develop the skills to deal with these situations.

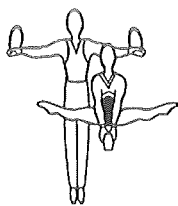
## **Forms of bullying**

Bullying takes many forms, but can be best catagorised under the following headings:

- Emotional bullying
- Physical bullying
- Verbal bullying
- Property abuse
- Sexuality or gender based bullying
- Cyber bullying

## Policy Statement

Northern Districts Gymnastics Club will not tolerate harassment or bullying behaviours of any form. Every gymnast has the right to feel safe at all times. The gym should be a safe environment in which to develop physically, socially and emotionally.



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## Objective of the Clubs Anti- Bullying Policy and Action Plan

1. To make it clear that bullying will not be tolerated in any form
2. To define bullying, and give all board members, coaches, parents and athletes an understanding of what bullying is
3. To make it known to parents, athletes and coaching staff that there is a policy and protocol should bullying issues arise
4. To ensure all parents, coaches and athletes are encouraged to report bullying behaviours
5. To clearly define how to report bullying, and ensure the process is clear, transparent and understandable
6. To ensure there is a general understanding that NDGC takes bullying seriously and that all athletes and parents can be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported

## Policies and Procedures

### Management of Observed Bullying (coach initiated)

If bullying is observed by coaching staff during training sessions, the coach should intervene at the time, and the behaviour must be stopped immediately. The following steps should be used

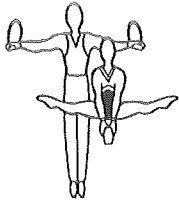
- 1 Intervene immediately. If the coach involved is junior or unsure of how to best handle the situation, seek assistance from a senior coach, program coordinator or Director of Coaching
- 2 Separate the children involved
- 3 Ensure all children, including bystanders, are safe – meeting any immediate medical or emotional needs
- 4 Stay calm and model respectful behaviour
- 5 Follow the 'incident investigation' procedure documented below

### Reporting Procedure for athletes or parents

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

- 1 Talk to their parents
- 2 Talk to either their coach, Director of Coaching, Board Member or any other member of the club that the 'victim' feels comfortable talking to
- 3 Write a letter or email to the club, coach or Board if direct communication is difficult

There is no 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. This ensures that memories are fresh and behaviours can be accurately recalled, and facilitates an end to the bullying behaviour as quickly as possible.



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## Incident Investigation

Reporting of an incident or perceived bullying behaviour allows investigations to be undertaken. Initial investigations needs to be undertaken by the Director of Coaching (or their delegate) the program coordinator, or a senior squad coach, and needs to determine whether bullying has occurred (see conflict definition). The following steps will assist in determining whether a bullying behaviour is identified and allow factual information to be obtained

- a. Keep all the children involved separated
- b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and children if possible
- c. Listen without blaming
- d. Don't call the act 'bullying' when trying to ascertain what happened
- e. If may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved, or the bullying involves social or cyber bullying. Collect all available information

## Action to respond to bullying behaviour

If bullying is identified, it is important to support all involved, both the victim and the person inflicting the bullying behaviours. Bullying behaviour is to be addressed in the following way

- 1 The Director of Coaching (or delegate) arranges a meeting with the athlete exhibiting bullying behaviours within 24 hours of the incident being formally reported.
- 2 Bullying harassment behaviours are identified and alternative conflict resolution or problem solving strategies are suggested in discussion with coach and athlete. These strategies are documented, and a copy of this is given to the athlete and parents.
- 3 The athlete writes a statement to identify how behaviour was bullying or harassment behaviour, and outlines how things will be different. A copy is given to the parents/guardians of the athlete.
- 4 If another incident (with either the same, or any other athlete) is reported, the athlete and athlete's parents meet with the Director of Coaching and are informed as to the next part of the process - suspension from training for one week.
- 5 Further counseling may be offered to the athlete involved from outside professional sources in the form of mediation. Parents are encouraged to attend all session with their child
- 6 If bullying or harassment continues and are formally investigated and deemed bullying behaviours, the athlete's membership at NDGC will potentially be terminated.



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## ADOPTION, REVIEW and CONTINUING EDUCATION

A copy of this policy is made available to all parents, coaches and athletes, including but not limited to

- Displayed on the club website
- In the policy manual
- Gymnasts packs – acknowledged when signing the 'contract to train'
- Coaches conditions of employment

This policy is communicated to all coaches, and education and support is provided to facilitate its adoption by all coaches within the club. Coaches, gymnasts, board members and parents have the opportunity to be provided with training in line with the protective behaviours WA Curriculum, and GWA Code of Conduct as necessary. Delivery of information and anti bullying strategies that promote positive peer relationships are encouraged (at an age appropriate level) to athletes. Examples of such programs include, Early Warning Signs; Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships, The bystander approach to Anti bullying; and Steps to becoming a 'Telling' Club. This policy and its accompanying procedures are evaluated and reviewed every two years by the board and Director of Coaching

### References

[www.usaswimming.org](http://www.usaswimming.org)

[www.stopbullying.gov](http://www.stopbullying.gov)

[www.gymnasticsaustralia.com.au](http://www.gymnasticsaustralia.com.au)

Cornwell Sports Partnership; Anti-Bullying Policy for Sports Clubs

[www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

The Hills Sports High School, May 2011, Anti-Bullying Policy

### Associated documents:

Squad behaviour adherence contract

Discipline Statement

Behaviour Management Policy