



TROIJAN GYMNASTIC CLUB

Trojan Gymnastic Club Anti-Bullying Policy

What is Bullying? Bullying can be defined as repeated aggression be it verbal, psychological or physical conducted by an individual or group against others. It is behaviour that is intentionally aggravating and intimidating. Bullying includes such behaviours as teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, extortion and exclusion behaviour by one or more persons against a victim. The newest method of bullying to emerge is 'E-Bullying' through the use of emails, text messaging etc.

All involved within Trojan Gymnastic Club have a role to play in countering bullying.

Bullying can happen from: Young person to young person

Young person to adult

Adult to young person

The following strategies will support the club's attempt to prevent bullying:

- Encourage an ethos of mutual respect throughout the Club.
- Give positive encouragement and promote the value of self and others.
- Raise awareness of all to the possible cause and effect of bullying.
- Make it clear that bullying will not be tolerated and is unacceptable, but that both the target and perpetrator of the bullying will be given the necessary support.
- Enable gymnasts, Coaches and Administrators to understand that the Club will tolerate no form of bullying be it physical, psychological or verbal.
- Enable members to feel confident that their concerns will be listened to and taken seriously.
- Display anti bullying posters slogans around the gym

Indicators of Bullying

All bullies operate using furtiveness, threats and fear. Bullying can therefore only survive in an environment where the victim does not feel empowered to tell someone who can help or in which it is not safe to do so. The following indicators are warning signs that a young person might be getting bullied:

- Reluctance to come to a venue or take part in activities
- Physical signs (unexplained bruises, scratches, or damage to belongings)
- Stress-caused illness – headaches, and stomach aches which seem unexplained
- Fearful behaviour (fear of walking to a meeting, going different routes, asking to be driven)
- Frequent loss of, or shortage of money with vague explanations
- Having few friends
- Changes in behaviour (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, upset, distressed, crying)
- Not eating
- Attempting suicide or hinting at suicide
- Anxiety (shown by nail-biting, fearfulness, tics)

There are other possible reasons for many of the above.



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Dealing with bullying behaviour is the responsibility of all coaches officials/ parents/ Guardians within the club.

Extreme forms of bullying are reported to the HSE/HSCT or An Garda Síochána,

Preventing Bullying

- Ensure all members follow the code of conduct, which promotes the rights and dignity of each member
- Deal with any incidents as they arise
- Use a whole group policy or 'no-blame approach', i.e., not 'bullying the bully' but working with bullies and the group of young people, helping them to understand the hurt they are causing and so make the problem a 'shared concern' of the group (see below)
- Reinforce that there is 'a permission to tell' culture rather than a 'might is right'
- Encourage young people to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different children
- Offer the victim immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can't ignore it, it hurts too much
- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands or beat the bully at their own game
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

The 'No Blame Approach'

1. If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling.

Was verbal or physical intimidation

How hurt is the victim

Was it within their own peer group

Assure the victim that their name will not come out in the investigation

Actively listen

2. Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include any witnesses/bystanders, those who joined in and those who initiated the bullying: Have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable Make a point of calling a 'special' meeting Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all Speak only of the hurt caused and distressed suffered in general terms with no reference to the victim Play on the conscience of all – ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you? Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?' Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone

3. Share the responsibility Explain what steps/controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will lose out as a result.



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4. Ask the group for their ideas At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases 'if it were you' to encourage a response. listen to all suggestions and note them.
5. Leave it to them Now the problem has been identified and solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to resolve. Arrange to meet again in a week's time. Pass responsibility over to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done
6. Meet again with everyone involved to discuss how things are going, who is doing what, what resolutions have been put in place and if there have been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

Further resources can be accessed through The Child Protection in Sport Unit (NI)they have developed a resource for Sports Leaders to help them address bullying through using a variety of different short exercises with young people. This is available under the resources section of their web site www.thecpsu.org.uk

Reporting recording and informing

When an incidence of bullying has been observed in the club, reported by the victim, another club member or the by parents/guardians, It must be reported to the club children's officer as soon as possible. The CPO will in turn engage with the Club DLP and Club CDO. They will take charge of the situation raising awareness of all other staff members and keeping everyone informed of the plan of action, The Co will record the incident, the DLP will liaise with the parents of both the victim and the perpetrator. The CPO will monitor the situation until it is resolved and the CDO will become involved if required.