UK Coaching
Dealing with bullying

Bullying is considered to be peer–on–peer behaviour that seeks to harm, intimidate or coerce. All incidents or suspicions of bullying must be taken very seriously. Many organisations now have guidelines in place with clear expectations and procedures around dealing with bullying, so it is worth checking with your organisation for the appropriate process. The guidelines below will also help your organisation deal with the issue appropriately:

- Develop guidelines on dealing with bullying and ensure these are part of an active policy.
- Involve the young people in the development and review of these guidelines and procedures.
- Consider the impact of social networking within guidelines as this is a frequently neglected area where bullying can take place.
- Promote the guidelines in your club's code of practice.
- Ensure that the concepts of equity, value and inclusion are covered in staff training.
- Take all signs of bullying seriously.
- Involve parents.
- Do not ignore the victim or bully – encourage them to discuss their thoughts both with you and, if appropriate, others within the group.
- Encourage the young people involved to change their behaviour in order to improve the situation.
- If a disclosure is made to you, remember to listen to and reassure the victim, record your conversation and report to the appropriate person.
- Invite professional organisations to explain specific issues to young people and offer further help – this could be a session for both coaches and young people.
- Report concerns – the victim may not be safe.
- Follow up what you do – remember that sport should be safe and fun for both the victim and bully.
- If the bullying incident was severe in nature, eg a serious assault, or bullying behaviour persists despite attempts to deal with it, this should be reported and dealt with in line with the club's child protection policy and procedures, including consideration of the need to refer the matter to statutory services.

Child Protection in Sport Unit

NSPCC

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Sample anti–bullying policy

The club or organisation will:

- recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all participants from harm
- promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures
- seek to ensure that bullying behaviour is not accepted or condoned
- require all members of the club/organisation to be given information about, and sign up to, this policy
- take action to investigate and respond to any alleged incidents of bullying
- encourage and facilitate children and young people to play an active part in developing and adopting a code of conduct to address bullying
- ensure that coaches are given access to information, guidance and/or training on bullying.

Each participant, coach, volunteer or official will:

- respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available
- respect the feelings and views of others
- recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special and should be valued
- show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress
- be committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt and collective action to deal with it
- ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see
- report incidents of bullying they see – by doing nothing you are condoning bullying.

Bullying

- All forms of bullying will be addressed.
- Everybody in the club/organisation has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.
- Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour.
- Bullying can include:
  - physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc
  - name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals
  - posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites
  - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism
  - sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour
  - unwanted physical contact.
- Children with a disability, from ethnic minorities, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and are more likely to be targeted.

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Support to the child

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them.
- Potential barriers to talking (including those associated with a child's disability or impairment) need to be identified and addressed at the outset to enable children to approach adults for help.
- Children should have access to helpline numbers.
- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.
- Sanctions for those bullying others that involve long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, will be avoided.

Support to the parents/guardians

- Parents/guardians should be advised on the club/organisation's bullying policy and practice.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/guardians.
- Parents will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available.
- Support should be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

Useful contacts

NSPCC Helpline 0808 800 5000

ChildLine 0800 500/www.childline.org.uk

Kidscape www.kidscape.org.uk

Anti-Bullying Alliance
www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk

Child Protection in Sport Unit

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www.anti–bullyingalliance.org.uk

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