



Anti-Bullying Policy

This policy applies to all members, committee, coaches, players, umpires, visitors and volunteers of the Central Conference.

Statement of Intent

The Central Conference is committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our members so they can train and play in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable in our Conference. If bullying does occur, it will be dealt with directly by the club promptly and effectively.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg hiding kit, threatening gestures)
- Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist: racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments.
- Homophobic: because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal: name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Social/Cyber: All areas of internet, such as e-mail, Twitter & Facebook. Mobile threats by text messaging and calls.

Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Members who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving. AllFootball Clubs have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Policy Objectives

- All club and association administrators, coaching staff, children and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All members should know what the club policy is on bullying, what they should do if bullying arises and follow the policy when bullying is reported.
- As a club we take bullying seriously. Members should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs & Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- Says they are being bullied
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to the club
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- Comes home with clothes torn or belongings damaged
- Has possessions which are damaged
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above.

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

Procedures

1. Report bullying incidents to the coach, team manager and president.
2. In cases of serious bullying, the incidents will be reported to the Central Conference Executive for advice.
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
4. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
5. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly.
6. An attempt will be made to help the bully (or bullies) change their behaviour.

Prevention

The following non-compliance strategy will be followed if anyone breaches Central Conference Anti-bullying Policy.

1. Assume the person is unaware of the policy.
2. The coach, team manager or president will approach the person breaching the policy and ask them to refrain from the behaviour and remind them about the policy and why it matters.
3. If an offence continues, the president will verbally warn them again and hand over a formally written letter or behaviour contract to sign and return. The letter will outline the Anti-bullying Policy and state that if the person continues the behaviour they will be asked to leave.
4. If the bullying does continue then the patron will be reported directly to the Central Conference Competitions Director and asked to leave the club.