

North Whidbey SC Anti-Bullying Policy

North Whidbey Soccer Club (NWSC) is committed to providing players a fun, positive, and secure environment to learn and enjoy the sport. We do not tolerate bullying at any practice, game, or other club-sanctioned event, including recreational games, futsal practices or games, Deception FC programming and games, North Whidbey Soccer Academy classes and camps, or any other activity.

NWSC promotes a telling atmosphere. Anyone who knows that bullying takes place is expected to report the incident. Players and parents should be assured they will be supported when making such a report.

Definition of Bullying Behavior

Bullying is defined as conduct, gestures or comments that are insulting, intimidating, humiliating, hurtful, malicious, degrading or otherwise offensive to a player, group of players and/or teammates, and which create a hostile or intimidating environment, or which negatively affects a player's physical and/or emotional well-being. Bullying is any written, verbal or physical act, or any electronic communication, whether a single incident or a series of incidents that results in intentional pain and distress to the victim.

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate they are being bullied through various signs and symptoms. While some children are prone to report bullying to their parents, coaches, or adults, others will not due to fear, intimidation, or other factors. Coaches and parents should be aware of possible signs indicating that bullying may be taking place. These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered likely and investigated.

Procedures for Parents, Coaches, Volunteers, and Board Members

- Parents should report bullying incidents to the team coach or manager. If the problem persists, contact the appropriate board member overseeing programming in that area or the NWSC Vice President. If necessary and appropriate, police may be consulted.
- If the issue involves an adult displaying bullying behavior toward minors, a complaint should be filed within 24 hours of the incident. If necessary and appropriate, SafeSport can be notified without contacting NWSC personnel within the 24-hour requirement. The Vice President is charged with investigating complaints and hearing grievances. If this individual is part of the complaint, then the Registrar will investigate the matter per NWSC bylaws.
- In all cases of reported bullying, parents of the player who was bullied shall be informed immediately and may be asked to meet with the respective team coach and/or director to discuss the incident. In all cases, strict confidentiality shall be maintained. It is not our goal to make a public example of reported incidents.
- The negative behavior must be investigated, and the bullying must be stopped immediately. The parents of any player reported to be bullying will be contacted directly

by the respective team coach, programming director, or board member and asked to discuss the incident to help the bully or bullies change their behavior.

Consequences of Bullying Behavior

In a first-offense situation involving peer-to-peer bullying, an attempt will be made to encourage the individual(s) to modify their behavior for their benefit, the benefit of the person bullied, and for the team, camp, class, or activity. An attempt will be made by the coach, manager, and/or parent(s) to reconcile the situation, with the age and maturity level of the players and the severity of the offense considered.

If bullying behavior persists, disciplinary action against a player may be taken by the team coach, their programming director, or an assigned NWSC board member or committee overseeing the incident. It may include, but is not limited to, immediate suspension from participation in practices or games for a period of time.

Repeated incidents of bullying behavior may result in, but is not limited to, complete suspension of playing privileges or membership revocation. Refunds are not provided for lost playing time.

Appeals of decisions made regarding bullying behavior are permitted. These will be heard by the Vice President and/or an assigned disciplinary committee overseeing the incident. (See Section 15 in NWSC bylaws.)

After the incident(s) have been investigated and addressed, the situation will continue to be monitored by the team coach, background-checked team managers, and the parents of the players to ensure the issue is resolved.

NWSC coaches and volunteers, including board members and minors in the role of a coach, may receive consequences that may result in, but are not limited to, losing their position(s), having their contract(s) canceled with cause, and individual club membership permanently revoked. The incident may be referred to the police for further investigation.