



Lee Sportsmen's Association Youth Programs

Action Plan of Lee Sportsmen's Association Youth Programs to Address Bullying

PURPOSE

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Lee Sportsmen's Association Youth Programs and will not be tolerated. Bullying is counterproductive to team spirit and can be devastating to the victim. The Club is committed to providing a safe, caring, and friendly environment for all our members. If bullying does occur, all athletes and parents/guardians 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 of Directors member, or an athlete/mentor.

Objectives of the Club's Bullying Policy and Action Plan:

1. To make it clear that LSA and LSA Youth Programs will not tolerate bullying in any form.
2. To define bullying and give all Board members, coaches, parents/guardians, and youth athletes a good understanding of what bullying is.
3. To make it known to all parents/guardians, youth athletes, and coaches that there is a policy and protocol should any bullying issues arise.
4. To make how to report bullying clear and understandable.
5. To inform that LSA and LSA Youth Programs takes bullying seriously and assure all youth athletes and parents/guardians that they will be supported when bullying is reported.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The USA Shooting (USAS), Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation (SSSF, Scholastic Action Shooting Program - SASP & Scholastic Clay Target Program - SCTP), and LSA Youth Programs Codes of Conduct prohibit bullying. Generally, bullying is the use of aggression, whether intentional or not, which hurts another person. Bullying results in pain and distress. Bullying is the severe or repeated use by one or more members of oral, written, electronic, or other technological expression, image, sound, date, or intelligence of any nature (regardless of the method of transmission), or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at any other member that to a reasonably objective person has the effect of:

- i. Causing physical or emotional harm to the other member or damage to the other member's property;
- ii. Placing the other member in reasonable fear or harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- iii. Creating a hostile environment for the other member at any activity;



- iv. Infringing on the rights of the other member at any activity; or
- v. Materially and substantially disrupting the training process or the orderly operation of any activity (which for the purposes of this section shall include, without limitation, practices, workouts, and other events of a member club).

The USAS Safe Sport Policy defines bullying as:

- (1) An intentional, persistent and repeated pattern of committing or willfully tolerating physical and non-physical behaviors that are intended, or have the reasonable potential, to cause fear, humiliation or physical harm in an attempt to socially exclude, diminish or isolate the targeted athlete(s).
- (2) Any act or conduct described as bullying under federal or state law.

Exceptions: Bullying does not include group or team behaviors that (a) are meant to establish normative team behaviors, or (b) promote team cohesion. For example, bullying does not include verbal admonitions to encourage team members to train harder and to push through a difficult training regimen.

Examples of bullying prohibited by USAS Policy include, without limitation:

- (1) Physical behaviors. Behaviors that include (a) hitting, pushing, punching, beating, biting, striking, kicking, choking, or slapping an athlete; (b) throwing at or hitting an athlete with, objects such as sporting equipment.
- (2) Verbal and emotional behaviors. Behaviors that include (a) teasing, ridiculing, intimidating; (b) spreading rumors or making false statements; or (c) using electronic communications, social media, or other technology to harass, frighten, intimidate or humiliate ("cyber bullying").

REPORTING PROCEDURE

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

- Talk to your parents/guardians;
- Talk to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Write a letter or email to a Club Coach, Board Member, or other designated individual;
- Make a report to the USAS or SSSF (SASP & SCTP) Safe Sport staff.

There is no express 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 to ensure memories are fresh, behavior can be accurately recalled, and the bullying behavior can be stopped as soon as possible.



HOW WE HANDLE BULLYING

If bullying is occurring during team-related activities, we **STOP BULLYING ON THE SPOT** using the following steps:

1. Intervene immediately. It is OK to get another adult to help.
2. Separate the youths involved.
3. Make sure everyone is safe.
4. Meet any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm. Reassure the youths involved, including bystanders.
6. Those who intervene will model respectful behavior.

If bullying is occurring at our Club or it is reported to be occurring at our Club, we address the bullying by **FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED** and **SUPPORTING THE YOUTHS INVOLVED** using the following approach:

FINDING OUT WHAT HAPPENED

1. **First, we get the facts.**
 - a. Keep all the involved youths separate.
 - b. Get the story from several sources, both adults and youths.
 - c. Listen without blaming.
 - d. Do not call the act “bullying” while trying to understand what happened.
 - e. It may be difficult to get the whole story, especially if multiple athletes are involved or if the issue involves social bullying or cyber bullying. Collect all available information.
2. **Then, we determine if it is bullying.** There are many behaviors that look like bullying but require different approaches. It is important to determine whether the situation is bullying or something else.
 - a. Review the USAS and SSSF (SASP & SCTP) definitions of bullying;
 - b. To determine if the behavior is bullying or something else, consider the following questions:
 - What is the history between the youths involved?
 - Have there been past conflicts?
 - Is there a power imbalance? Remember that a power imbalance is not limited to physical strength. It is sometimes not easily recognized. If the targeted youth feels like there is a power imbalance, there probably is.
 - Has this happened before? Is the youth worried it will happen again?



- c. Remember that it may not matter “who started it.” Some kids who are bullied may be viewed as annoying or provoking, but this does not excuse the bullying behavior.
- d. Once it has been determined if the situation is bullying, support all those involved.

SUPPORTING THE YOUTHS INVOLVED

3. Support the youths who are being bullied.

- a. Listen and focus on the youth. Learn what has been going on and show you want to help. Assure the youth that bullying is not their fault.
- b. Work together to resolve the situation and protect the victim. The youth, parents, and fellow team members and coaches may all have valuable input. It may help to:
 - i. Ask the youth being bullied what can be done to make him or her feel safe. Remember that changes to routine should be minimized. He or she is not at fault and should not be singled out. For example, consider rearranging port or squad assignments for everyone. If bigger moves are necessary, such as switching practice groups, the youth who is bullied should not be forced to change.
 - ii. Develop a game plan. Maintain open communication between the Club and parents/guardians. Discuss the steps that will be taken and how bullying will be addressed going forward.
- c. Be persistent. Bullying may not end overnight. Commit to making it stop and consistently support the victim.

4. Address the bullying behavior.

- a. Make sure the youth knows what the problem behavior is. Young people who bully must learn their behavior is wrong and harms others.
- b. Show youth that bullying is taken seriously. Calmly tell the youth that bullying will not be tolerated. Model respectful behavior when addressing the problem.
- c. Work with the youth to understand some of the reasons her or she bullied. For example:
 - i. Sometimes youth bully to fit in or just make fun of someone who is a little different from them. In other words, there may be some insecurity involved.
 - ii. Other times youth act out because something else – issues at home, abuse, stress – is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. These youth may need additional support.



- d. Involve the youth who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the youth can:
 - i. Write a letter apologizing to the athlete who was bullied.
 - ii. Do a good deed for the person who was bullied, for the Club, or for others in your community.
 - iii. Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.
 - e. Avoid strategies that do not work or have negative consequences:
 - i. Zero tolerance or “three strikes, you’re out” strategies do not work. Suspending or removing from the team those who bully does not reduce bullying behavior. Athletes may be less likely to report and address bullying if suspension or getting kicked off the team is the consequence.
 - ii. Conflict resolution and peer mediation do not always work for bullying. Bullying is not a conflict between people of equal power who share equal blame. Facing those who have bullied may further upset youth who have been bullied.
 - f. Follow-up. After the bullying issue is resolved, continue finding ways to help the youth who bullied to understand how what they do and say affects others. For example, praise acts of kindness or talk about what it means to be a good teammate.
5. **Support bystanders who witness bullying.** Every day, youths witness bullying. They want to help, but do not know how. Fortunately, there are a few simple, safe ways that athletes can help stop bullying when they see it happening.
- a. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
 - b. Tell a trusted adult – your parent/guardian, coach, or Club Board member;
 - c. Help the youth being bullied get away from the situation. Create a distraction, focus the attention on something else, or offer a way for the target to get out of the situation. “Let’s go, practice is about to start.”
 - d. Set a good example by not bullying others.
 - e. Do not give the bully an audience. Bullies are encouraged by the attention they get from bystanders. If you do nothing else, just walk away.

RESOURCES

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/>

<http://www.usashooting.org/11-resources/policiesandprocedures>

http://www.usashooting.org/library/Policies_and_Procedures/USA_Shooting_Safe_Sport_Policy_vMar2018.pdf



https://sssfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/2018-SCTP_HAND.pdf

<https://sssfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/SASP-2018-2019-Final.pdf>

<https://safesport.org/>

https://coach.nra.org/media/4247/coaching_ethics.pdf