



Toronto Azzurri Soccer Club

Anti-Bullying Policy

In Canada, at least 1 in 3 adolescent students have reported being bullied. Almost half of Canada parents have reported having a child that is the victim of bullying. Studies have found bullying occurs once every seven minutes on the playground and once every 25 minutes in the classroom. In the majority of cases, bullying stops within 10 seconds when peers intervene, or do not support the bullying behaviour.

Bullying has become a major issue in today's society. Whether it is at school or on the soccer pitch, bullying is an issue that needs to be addressed. TASC recognizes the negative impact of bullying and is focused on eradicating this practice by implementing a stringent policy. As a not for profit community club within the City of Toronto, TASC is intent on implementing a progressive policy that will aim to prevent bullying and create a positive / inclusive environment on and off the soccer pitch for all participants.

What is Bullying

Bullying is defined as unwanted, aggressive behavior among children and youth that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Individuals who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting issues.

Examples of bullying include:

- Punching, shoving and other acts that hurt people physically
- Spreading false and negative rumours about people
- Keeping certain people out of a group
- Teasing / taunting people in a mean way
- Getting certain people to "gang up" on others

A safe and inclusive learning environment in our club is critical for our players to achieve success. Parents and players must be confident in knowing that our club environment is free from harassment, violence, intolerance and intimidation, all of which are forms of bullying. TASC Anti-Bullying policy's purpose is to properly educate coaches about bullying so that they are more informed and can educate all participants and parents.

Did you know?

Canada has the 9th highest rate of bullying in the 13-years-olds category on a scale of 35 countries. [1]

- At least 1 in 3 adolescent students in Canada have reported being bullied recently. [2]
- Among adult Canadians, 38% of males and 30% of females reported having experienced occasional or frequent bullying during their school years. [3]
- 47% of Canadian parents report having a child victim of bullying. [4]
- Any participation in bullying increases risk of suicidal ideas in youth. [5]
- The rate of discrimination experienced among students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans-identified, Two-Spirited, Queer or Questioning (LGBTQ) is three times higher than heterosexual youth. [4]
- Girls are more likely to be bullied on the internet than boys. [6]
- 7% of adult internet users in Canada, age 18 years and older, self-reported having been a victim of cyber-bullying at some point in their life. [7]
- The most common form of cyber-bullying involved receiving threatening or aggressive e-mails or instant messages, reported by 73% of victims. [6]

* Source: <https://www.bullyingcanada.ca/get-help/>

Types of Bullying Behaviours:

- **Verbal bullying** – name-calling, sarcasm, teasing, spreading rumours, threatening, making negative references to one’s culture, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, or sexual orientation, unwanted sexual comments
- **Social bullying** – mobbing, scapegoating, excluding others from a group, humiliating others with public gestures or graffiti intended to put others down
- **Physical bullying** – hitting, poking, pinching, chasing, shoving, coercing, destroying or stealing belongs, unwanted sexual touching
- **Cyber Bullying** – using the internet or text messaging to intimidate, put-down, spread rumours or make fun of someone

TASC Code of Conduct

Toronto Azzurri Soccer Club’s codes of conduct describe the positive behaviours expected of all participants, coaches, staff, match officials, parents and spectators. These codes of conduct sets the standard for ethical behaviour, as well details expectations for positive interactions.

Coach Education

Toronto Azzurri Soccer Club’s coaches must abide by the Anti-Bullying policy, and will receive training on identifying bullying, created awareness and processes to bring diffuse / report incidents.

Conflict Resolution Protocol

Conflict Procedure

1. Report bullying incidents to the Coach, Administrator and / or Club Head Coach
2. Coach, Administrator / Club Head need to contact the General Manager immediately
3. All parties must maintain confidentiality during the complaint, investigation and resolution processes
4. A meeting with affected party will be scheduled to investigate this complaint
5. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
6. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying shall be investigated with the offender

7. Assistance will be provided to the offender(s) in an effort to change their behaviour
8. If mediation fails and the bullying continues the club will initiate disciplinary action which may include removal or participant from team and club

Recommended Actions for Resolution

Once the Conflict Resolution Procedure has been implemented, the following actions will be undertaken:

1. General Manager, Coach, Club Head Coach will attempt to bring all parties together; only if agreeable by complaint. A genuine apology may be sufficient to resolve the issue
2. If this fails / not appropriate the General Manager, Coach, Club Head Coach should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes must be recorded.
3. The General Manager, Coach, Club Head Coach should meet with the alleged offender with their parents to investigate allegations. Minutes to be recorded.
4. The General Manager, Coach, Club Head Coach will meet with witnesses / bystanders and any one else involved to document observations.
5. Should evidence of bullying be deemed, the offender(s) shall be given a warning and put on notice of further disciplinary action.

Addressing Bullying Behaviour:

- Ensure the offender understands / knows what the problem behaviour is.
 - Young people who bully must learn their behaviour is wrong and harms others.
- Show the offender that bullying is taken seriously.
 - Calmly tell the offender that bullying will not be tolerated.
 - Model respectful behaviour when addressing the problem.
- Work with the offender to understand some of the reasons they bullied. For example:
 - At times, offenders bully to fit in. They can benefit from participating in positive activities. Involvement in sports and clubs can enable them to take leadership roles and make friends without feeling the need to bully.
 - Other times offenders act out because something else – issues at home, abuse, stress – is going on in their lives. They also may have been bullied. They may be in need of additional support, such as mental health services.
- Use consequences to teach. Consequences that involve learning or building empathy can help prevent future bullying. TASC's Staff must follow the TASC Codes of Conduct, and Anti-Bully Policy in developing consequences and assigning discipline. For example, the child who bullied can:
 - Lead a team discussion about how to be a good teammate.
 - Write a story about the effects of bullying or benefits of teamwork.
 - Read a book about bullying.
- Involve the offender who bullied in making amends or repairing the situation. The goal is to help them see how their actions affect others. For example, the offender can:
 - Write a letter apologizing to the affected party / complainant who was bullied.
 - Do a good deed for the person who was bullied or for others in the TASC community.
 - Clean up, repair, or pay for any property they damaged.