



Action Plan to Address Bullying

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at Paseo Aquatics and will not be tolerated. It undermines team spirit and can be devastating to a victim. Paseo is committed to providing a safe, caring, and supportive environment for all members.

If bullying occurs, athletes and parents should know that incidents will be addressed promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows of bullying is expected to tell a coach, board member, or athlete/mentor.

Objectives of this Policy and Action Plan:

1. Make it clear that bullying in any form will not be tolerated.
2. Define bullying and give all board members, coaches, parents, and swimmers a shared understanding of what it is.
3. Provide a clear policy and protocol if bullying issues arise.
4. Ensure reporting procedures are simple and accessible.
5. Spread the word that Paseo Aquatics takes bullying seriously, and all swimmers and parents will be supported when reporting it.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression—intentional or not—that causes pain, distress, or harm.

Specifically, bullying is the **severe or repeated use** of oral, written, electronic, or physical acts by one or more USA Swimming members against another member or participating non-member that has the effect of:

- Causing physical or emotional harm or damage to property.
- Creating reasonable fear of harm.
- Creating a hostile environment during a USA Swimming activity.
- Infringing on the rights of another member.
- Disrupting training or team operations, including practices, workouts, or events.



Reporting Procedure

An athlete who feels they have been bullied is encouraged to:

- **Talk to your parents.**
- **Talk to your Paseo Coach or Safe Sport Coordinator** – Kelly Zancanaro by calling 661-645-4268.
- **Write a letter** or email to a coach, board member, owner or or Safe Sport Coordinator – Kelly Zancanaro at safesport@paseoaquatics.org.
- **Report directly** to the [USA Swimming Safe Sport](#) staff.

There is **no time limit** for initiating a complaint, but reporting as soon as possible ensures accurate recall and a quicker resolution.

How We Handle Bullying

On the Spot

If bullying is observed during team-related activities, we STOP IT immediately:

1. Intervene at once (get another adult if needed).
2. Separate the kids involved.
3. Ensure safety.
4. Address any immediate medical or mental health needs.
5. Stay calm and reassure all kids, including bystanders.
6. Model respectful behavior while intervening.

Finding Out What Happened

If bullying is reported or suspected:

1. **Gather facts**



- Keep kids separate.
- Collect stories from multiple sources.
- Listen without blaming.
- Avoid labeling it “bullying” until facts are clear.
- Be thorough, especially with social or cyber bullying.

2. Determine if it’s bullying

- Use the USA Swimming definition in the “What is Bullying?” section above.
- Ask: What’s the history between kids? Past conflicts? Power imbalance? Has this happened before? Is the child worried it’ll happen again?
- Remember: it may not matter “who started it.”

Supporting the Kids Involved

For the child being bullied:

- Listen and reassure them it’s not their fault.
- Work together with the child, parents, and coaches to protect them.
- Ask what makes them feel safe; minimize disruptions to their routine.
- Keep open communication with parents and create a game plan.
- Commit to persistence—bullying may not end overnight.

For the child who bullied:

- Make sure they understand the behavior is wrong and harmful.
- Calmly reinforce that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Explore root causes (fitting in, insecurity, stress at home, etc.).



- Encourage amends: apologize, do a good deed, repair damage.
- Avoid “zero tolerance” or peer mediation—these do not reduce bullying.
- Follow up with ongoing support, reinforcing positive behavior.

For bystanders:

- Be a friend to the person being bullied.
- Tell a trusted adult (parent, coach, or board member).
- Help remove the bullied child from the situation.
- Set an example by not bullying.
- Don’t give the bully an audience—walk away if nothing else.

Our Commitment

Paseo Aquatics is dedicated to building a safe, respectful, and united community where every swimmer can thrive. We expect all members to uphold these standards at every practice, meet, and event.

Safe Sport Resources: www.usaswimming.org/protect

Acknowledgment

I have read and understand the policies stated above. I agree to comply with the policy outlined. If one parent/guardian signs, these expectations apply to both parents/guardians in the household.

Printed Name _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____