

## **Bullying What is Bullying?**

Bullying is defined as unwanted negative behaviour, verbal, psychological or physical, conducted by an individual or group against another person (or persons) and which is repeated over time.

## **Bullying**

- All forms of bullying will be addressed.
- Everybody in Irish Surfing has a responsibility to work together to stop bullying.
- Bullying can include online as well as offline behaviour.

## **Bullying can occur:**

- Child to child - includes physical aggression, verbal bullying, intimidation, damage to property and isolation
- Adult to child - includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature, or any comment intended to degrade the child
- Child to adult – includes the use of repeated gestures or expressions of a threatening or intimidatory nature by an individual child or a group of children

## **Bullying can include:**

- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching etc...
- Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing and emotional torment through ridicule, humiliation or the continual ignoring of individuals.
- Posting of derogatory or abusive comments, videos or images on social network sites.
- Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, sectarianism, sexual comments, suggestions or behaviour.
- Unwanted physical contact.

Children with a disability, from ethnic minorities, young people who are gay or lesbian, or those with learning difficulties are more vulnerable to this form of abuse and are more likely to be targeted.

## **Irish Surfing will:**

- Recognise its duty of care and responsibility to safeguard all participants from harm.
- Promote and implement this anti-bullying policy in addition to our safeguarding policy and procedures.
- Seek to ensure that bullying behaviour is not accepted or condoned.
- Require all members of the club/organisation to be given information about, and sign up to, this policy.
- Take action to investigate and respond to any alleged incidents of bullying.
- Encourage and facilitate children and young people to play an active part in developing and adopting a code of conduct to address bullying.
- Ensure that coaches are given access to information, guidance and/or training on bullying.

#### **Each participant, coach, volunteer or official will:**

- Respect every child's need for, and rights to, a play environment where safety, security, praise, recognition and opportunity for taking responsibility are available.
- Respect the feelings and views of others.
- Recognise that everyone is important and that our differences make each of us special and should be valued.
- Show appreciation of others by acknowledging individual qualities, contributions and progress.
- Be committed to the early identification of bullying, and prompt and collective action to deal with it.
- Ensure safety by having rules and practices carefully explained and displayed for all to see.
- Report incidents of bullying they see to the club children's officer – by doing nothing you are condoning bullying.

#### **Support to the child:**

- Children should know who will listen to and support them.
- Systems should be established to open the door to children wishing to talk about bullying or any other issue that affects them.
- Potential barriers to talking (including those associated with a child's disability or impairment) need to be identified and addressed at the outset to enable children to approach adults for help.
- Children should have access to Helpline numbers.

- Anyone who reports an incident of bullying will be listened to carefully and be supported.
- Any reported incident of bullying will be investigated objectively and will involve listening carefully to all those involved.
- Children being bullied will be supported and assistance given to uphold their right to play and live in a safe environment which allows their healthy development.
- Those who bully will be supported and encouraged to stop bullying.
- Sanctions for those bullying others that involve long periods of isolation, or which diminish and make individuals look or feel foolish in front of others, will be avoided.

#### Support to the parents/guardians:

- Parents/guardians will be advised of Irish Surfing's bullying policy and practice.
- Any incident of bullying will be discussed with the child's parent(s)/carers.
- Parents will be consulted on action to be taken (for both victim and bully) and agreements made as to what action should be taken.
- Information and advice on coping with bullying will be made available.
- Support will be offered to the parent(s) including information on other agencies or support lines.

#### Are there any practical steps that can be used to counter bullying?

- Use young people as a positive resource in countering bullying and to change the culture of the group to a permission to tell culture rather than a 'might is right' one.
- Teach young people to negotiate, co-operate and help others, particularly new or different children
- It's a good idea to run poster campaigns and have stories and role-plays on how to deal with a bully included in ordinary group activities
- Offer the victim immediate support and put the 'no blame approach' into operation
- Never tell a young person to ignore bullying, they can't ignore it, it hurts too much

- Never encourage a young person to take the law into their own hands and beat the bully at their own game.
- Tell the victim there is nothing wrong with them and it is not their fault

### Addressing Bullying the 'No Blame' Approach?

#### Step 1 – Speak with the victim

If you find that there has been an incident of bullying, first talk to the victim. At this stage find out who was involved and what the victim is now feeling. Try asking the following questions:

- Was it verbal or physical intimidation?
- How hurt is the victim
- Was it within his/her own peer group?
- Ensure the victim that his/her name will not come out in the investigation
- Actively listen

#### Step 2 – Meet with all involved

Arrange to meet with all those involved; this should include some bystanders, those who may have colluded, those joined in and those who initiated the bullying.

- Just have a maximum of six to eight in the group – keep the number controllable
- Make a point of calling a 'special' meeting
- Ensure the severity of the topic is understood by all
- Speak only of the hurt caused in general terms with no reference to the victim
- Play on the conscience of all – ask questions like: How would you feel? Would you like it done to you?

#### Step 3 – Explain the problem

The distress being suffered as a result of the bullying incident is explained. At this stage the details of the incident or the allocation of the blame is not discussed. Explain the feelings of loneliness, feeling left out, rejected, laughed at. Try asking questions:

- Would they like it if it happened to them
- "Someone here in this group was bullied by someone within the group, what could we do to see it does not happen again?"
- Listen, watch out for reactions, and pick up on any without isolating anyone

#### Step 4 – Share the responsibility

Explain what steps / controls may have to be introduced to prevent further incidents and how everyone will lose out as a result.

#### Step 5 – Ask the group for their ideas

At this stage the group is encouraged to suggest ways that would make the victim feel happier. All positive responses are noted. Use phrases "if it were you" to encourage a response. Listen to all suggestions and note them.

#### Step 6 – Leave it to them

Now the problem has been identified, solutions suggested, the problem is now handed over to the group to solve. Arrange to meet again in a week's time. Pass responsibility over to the group and give a time frame within which something must be done.

#### Step 7 – Meet them again

Each member of the group, including the bully, discuss how things are going, who is doing what and have there been other incidents. This allows for continual monitoring and also keeps all involved in the process.

Again enforce the idea of the 'team' looking after each other at regular intervals to ensure it is known that bullying or intimidating behaviour will not be tolerated.

#### Useful Contacts:

Irish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (ISPCC): [www.ispcc.ie/shield](http://www.ispcc.ie/shield)

Anti-Bullying Centre DCU: [www4.dcu.ie/abc/index.shtml](http://www4.dcu.ie/abc/index.shtml)

NSPCC Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Sticks and Stones: 087 9015199 or [www.sticksandstones.ie](http://www.sticksandstones.ie)

ChildLine UK: 0800 11 11 / [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)

ChildLine Republic of Ireland: 1800 66 66 66 or Text Talk to 50101, [www.childline.ie](http://www.childline.ie)

Northern Ireland Anti-Bullying Forum: [www.niabf.org.uk](http://www.niabf.org.uk)

Kidscape: [www.kidscape.org.uk](http://www.kidscape.org.uk)

Anti-Bullying Alliance: [www.antibullyingalliance.org](http://www.antibullyingalliance.org)