

KARATE NOVA SCOTIA

Bully Prevention Policy

Version 1.0 - March 1, 2021

Bully Prevention Code Of Conduct For Athletes, Parents, Coaches And Officials

Policies and Procedures

Everyone has a right to feel safe, welcome and included in their sporting organization.

Bullying is a societal problem which impacts individual's wellbeing in all areas of school, work, sport, and home life. In the sporting world, bullying sometimes hides behind the disguise of teamwork and the push for excellence, so it's often difficult to pinpoint. Whether it is exhibited by athletes, parents, volunteers, coaches or staff members, uncivil or disrespectful behaviour has become a growing concern in our gyms, swimming pools, rinks and on our playing fields.

Bullying is a form of mistreatment that affects physical and psychological health and safety.

Karate Nova Scotia will not tolerate disrespectful or bullying behavior of any kind. All athletes, parents, coaches, volunteers, and associated members are expected to display a positive attitude, respectful behavior and support to all members of this organization whether at practice or at an external sporting venue. To ensure that a culture of bullying does not exist at Karate Nova Scotia it is expected that all members of Karate Nova Scotia have read, understand and abide by the following Bully Prevention Code of Conduct.

Bully Prevention Code Of Conduct

Due to the pervasiveness of bullying in sports, Karate Nova Scotia takes a no-nonsense approach to all bullying behavior and ALL members will be held accountable for their behavior.

The Definition of Bullying is:

- Targeting an individual or group with repetitive intentional, or unintentional, negative actions.
- When one person has more power, whether perceived or actual, over others and those being targeted feel they are unable to defend themselves or speak up against the bully.
- When the person being targeted feels alone, afraid, or unwelcome in the organization.
- Impacts others and bystanders.

Bullying is a pattern of repeated and persistent behaviour that tends to progress and become worse over time. The behaviour offends, humiliates or intimidates. It is behaviour that the person would reasonably know to be unwelcome, however, it does not rely on proving whether someone intended to cause harm, but on the outcome of the behaviour.

The impact on the individual or group being targeted is more important than the intent of the aggressor. What one person finds funny or acceptable can be seen as insulting, demeaning, degrading or offensive by the person being targeted, or even by bystanders. Bullying is about the impact it has on the person being targeted, not about the intent of the person precipitating the behaviour. These behaviours can negatively impact not only the direct victims, but also those who witness the behaviour.

Bullying can be passive, passive aggressive, or aggressive in nature and undermines the credibility and personal well-being of the target. Due to the imbalance of power, it is best not to use mediation as a remedy for the situation.

Bystanders

The world will not be destroyed by those who do evil, but by those who watch them without doing anything. ~ Albert Einstein

There are no innocent bystanders. Bystanders have a choice to be a part of the problem or part of the solution. A passive bystander provides an audience and gives the silent “okay” and support for the behaviour to continue.

A bystander can play a key role to step up and step in to help stop the behaviour. The alternative is to do nothing and by doing so are passive contributors to the inappropriate behaviour.

Bystanders may not intervene when they witness bullying because:

- They fear the bully might turn on them next.
- They don't wish to draw attention to themselves.
- Feel that they won't make a difference if they report the bully or speak up.
- Believe the target deserves what's happening.
- Think the situation is none of their business or not their concern. “Not my problem”.
- They don't know what to do.

Bystanders - Don't

- Don't stand by and watch.
- Don't encourage the bully by laughing, cheering or making comments that support or encourage the bully.
- Don't encourage the behaviour by spreading gossip about others,
- Don't acknowledge, or pass on bullying content such as emails, photos that could have a hurtful or negative impact on the target.
- Don't join in on the bullying.

Bystanders - Do

- Discourage the bullying and show disapproval of the behaviour.
- Redirect the situation away from the bullying.
- Stand with the target to imbalance the power of the bully.
- Step in if you feel it is safe to do so, and directly intervene by telling the aggressor that their behaviour is unacceptable.
- Defend the target of the bullying.
- Encourage the victim to get help or report the bullying.

- Document the incident. Time, place, people and what was said.
- Report the incident to the appropriate people.

Bullying is about power and control.

Types of Bullying

- **Physical Aggression:** pushing, grabbing, hitting, pinching, spitting, tripping, etc. Also includes destroying property and threatening.
- **Social Alienation:** gossiping, spreading rumors, intentionally excluding from a group.
- **Verbal Aggression:** name calling privately or in front of others, ridiculing, put downs, swearing, screaming or yelling at a person, spreading gossip, public criticism.
- **Intimidation:** threatening others to do something, threatening with a weapon.
- **Sexual Harassment:** any comments or actions of a sexual nature that are unwelcome and make the recipient uncomfortable. Any words written or spoken, or action taken, that ridicules a person's gender, sexual orientation, or gender identification.
- **Racial/Ethnic/Religious Harassment** - offensive comments, jokes or behaviours that disparage or ridicule a person's race, ethnic, or religious background.
- **Cyber Bullying:** using technology to frighten, embarrass, exclude or damage another person's reputation. Can include emails, chat rooms, photographs, social media, text messages, etc.
- **Destabilization:** Failure to give credit, or remove responsibilities. Minimize feelings, deny, and blame: "He/she started it", "It's not that bad", "They had it coming", etc.
- **Isolation:** Making someone feel invisible. Refusing to socialize with them, giving the silent treatment, condemning others who socialize with the target. Withholding information, preventing access to opportunities.

Policies and Procedures

Bullying will not be tolerated at Karate Nova Scotia: the above definition and types of bullying fall under this portion of the Code of Conduct. If it is determined that repeated disrespectful and negative behavior is occurring, the following steps will be taken:

Please note, depending on the severity of the incident, a formal investigation involving the Harassment Officer/Committee may commence immediately and steps may be skipped possibly resulting in immediate suspension or expulsion from the sport organization.

Steps In Dealing With Athletes Who Display Bullying Behavior:

Step 1: The athlete(s) primary coach will meet separately with the athlete(s) named as displaying the bullying behavior. The coach will review the code of conduct with the athlete(s) and the parent(s) will be notified. If it is determined the athlete is in violation of the code, the athlete will be instructed to stop the behaviors and the coach will determine an appropriate consequence. Primary coach will **document**

the incident and forward the report to the head coach and the Board of Directors (BOD). If the initial Board complaint brought forward is serious or complex in nature, Step 1 may be omitted, at the discretion of the coach, and proceedings will start at Step 2 below.

Step 2: If step one is not successful in resolving the issue or mitigating the problem, the BOD will start investigation procedures. The Primary Coach, Head Coach, parent(s), and the athlete(s) will meet in person and each participant will sign a formal Confidentiality Agreement. (optional) The Code of Conduct will be reviewed and an appropriate consequence will be determined. The athlete and parents will be notified that a subsequent incident will result in a formal meeting with the BOD and Head Coach. The incident will be formally **documented** and filed with the BOD.

Step 3: If the bullying issue is not resolved the Head Coach, Primary Coach, BOD, parent(s) and athlete(s) will have a formal meeting initiated by the Head Coach. Consequences are given and FINAL WARNING is issued. The next step is a meeting with the BOD to determine suspension or removal from the organization. The meeting is **documented** and filed with the BOD.

Step 4: Athlete is suspended or removed from the organization and the suspension or removal process is **documented and filed with the BOD and the main office filing system.**

At any point, the police may become involved due to the severity of the incident and a temporary suspension is put in place until the matter is concluded and final steps are decided.

Steps In Dealing With Parents Displaying Bullying Behavior

Step 1: If a parent is repeatedly displaying bullying behavior, any individual can report the incident to the Primary coach. Primary Coach is obligated to then report the incident to the Head Coach and the BOD. Head Coach, Primary Coach and parent will meet and each participant will sign a formal Confidentiality Agreement (optional). A review of the Code of Conduct will be done and if it is determined that the parent is in breach of the Code, a request is made to the parent to stop the behaviors. The Incident is **documented** and filed with the BOD.

Step 2: If the bullying behavior continues, the Head Coach and Primary Coach will meet with the Parent and a consequence will be determined. The parent will be given notice that if behavior continues, they will not be allowed on site of the sporting venue during practice and /or competitions for a period of time or indefinitely. The incident is **documented** and filed with the Harassment Officer.

Step 3: Head Coach and BOD will meet with the parent and a time frame is determined in which the parent is not allowed on site of the sporting venue during practice and/or competition. This is the FINAL WARNING before the parent is completely barred from the organization. Incident is **documented** and filed with the Harassment Officer.

Step 4: The parent is barred from the sporting organization. The BOD can call a meeting with parent(s) and/or provided with a letter of dismissal. BOD can, on a case-by-case basis, determine whether or not the family is also barred from the organization. Incident is documented and forwarded to the BOD and the organization's main office filing system.

At any point, the police may become involved due to the severity of the incident and a temporary suspension is put in place until the matter is concluded and final steps are decided.

Steps In Dealing With A Coach Who Is Displaying Bullying Behavior

Step 1: Parent and/or athlete will talk directly to the coach who is displaying the bullying behavior and inform them of the incident(s). Sometimes the coach does not realize how their behavior is coming across to others and a simple reminder of the Code of Conduct is all that is needed. The parent will **document** the meeting and all incidents of negative behavior and a copy is forwarded to the BOD. While KNS encourages direct approach with the coach, it does acknowledge this can be uncomfortable for some parents and/or athletes. In cases that the parent and/or athlete does not feel comfortable with approaching the coach directly, then a 3rd party can be used to approach the coach. This coach should be a member of KNS and could include, but not be limited to other provincial team coaches, dojo coaches, team managers, officials or senior karate athletes.

Step 2: If the parent and/or athlete feel that the issue has not been resolved, the parent and/or athlete will meet with the Head Coach, BOD, and the coach displaying the bullying behavior. Each participant will sign a formal Confidentiality Agreement (optional). The Code of Conduct will be reviewed and the BOD begins investigation procedures. The meeting is **documented** and filed with the BOD. If it is determined that the coach is in breach of the code of conduct, the coach will be required to stop or change behaviors, and will be notified that further incidents will result in a formal meeting with the BOD and disciplinary action may occur.

Step 3: The Head Coach and BOD and the coach/perpetrator will meet. The Code of Conduct is reviewed and all incidents of bullying discussed and documented. Based on the investigation, the BOD will determine what disciplinary action is needed. A FINAL WARNING is given to the coach and meeting is **documented and filed with the BOD**.

Step 4: Coach is terminated from position. Meeting is **documented and forwarded to the BOD as well as the main office filing system**.

At any point, the police may become involved due to the severity of the incident and a temporary suspension is put in place until the matter is concluded and final steps are decided.

IMPORTANT: In the event that a bullying complaint is made and/or an investigation is required, whether it be for an athlete, parent, coach, volunteer, or other member of the sporting organization, only those involved in the investigation will be advised of the complaint outcome. Parties to the incident will be interviewed individually by the investigator, along with anyone else who may be able to provide relevant information. Confidentiality Agreements may be issued to minimize gossip, hearsay or the spread of misinformation within the sporting community.

- Retaliation against any individual for reporting an incident under this Code is a violation of this policy and will not be tolerated. Any retaliatory action should be reported immediately to the BOD
- Similarly, a false accusation is a serious matter. A person making a false statement may face serious consequences.

- If an incident of high severity occurs, it is up to the BOD whether steps can be skipped and/or an individual is removed immediately from the organization. Incidents of high severity would include: breaking the law, inflicting physical injury, sharing of sexual images on-line, exploitation of a minor, and others.
- At any point in the process of a complaint, the police may become involved depending on the severity and/or nature of the complaint.

Guidelines on How To Document A Situation or Event

Record:

- Date, time and location of event.
- Who was involved including witnesses.
- What was the situation or event? State words used as well as the tone and describe behaviours, gestures including non-verbal.
- Describe the impact on:
 - Your ability to do your job/activity
 - Personal impact (consider suppression techniques, shame and blame, made to feel invisible, withholding information, double blind situations (no right answer).
- Describe the desired outcome. What remedy do you feel would be appropriate to restore your dignity and respectful environment.

WE AGREE TO ABIDE BY THIS CODE OF CONDUCT, DATED THIS _____ DAY OF _____, 20____.

ATHLETE NAME

ATHLETE SIGNATURE

PARENT OR GUARDIAN NAME

PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

PARENT OR GUARDIAN NAME

PARENT OR GUARDIAN SIGNATURE

*This form must be signed and submitted by _____(date)