



Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy

Tumblers Gymnastics Centre (hereafter referred to as “Tumblers” or “the Club”) does not tolerate bullying or harassment. All members are prohibited from bullying or harassing anyone. Tumblers believes that its environment should at all times be supportive of the dignity and self-esteem of individuals based on mutual respect, honesty and trust, and that all individuals are to be treated with respect and fairness at all times. In this Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy (hereafter referred to as the “Policy”), we use the word “bullying” to encompass both bullying and harassing behaviour.

Bullying is conduct that is unwelcome by others, including other athletes, coaches, faculty and staff members. This includes conduct which a person knows, or ought reasonably to know, is unwelcome to the recipient. Unwanted physical contact, verbal abuse and threats, neglect, and unwelcome remarks including jokes, innuendo, or taunting (in verbal, written or digital form) about a person’s body, race, gender identity, attire, sexual orientation, or religion are all forms of bullying.

Other examples of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Picking on a person in front of others, or in private.
- Non-constructive criticism addressed in such a way as to belittle another person’s abilities and achievements, intimidate, undermine confidence, or imply incompetence.
- Physical violence, such as hitting, pushing, spitting or cruel practical jokes towards another.
- Interfering with another person’s property, such as by stealing, hiding or damaging it.
- Using abusive or foul language and/or intimidating behaviour, including gestures and comments or use of offensive names when addressing another person.
- Making rude, derogatory or offensive remarks, teasing or spreading rumours about another person or his/her family.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about another person.
- Unreasonably excluding another person from a group activity.
- Ridiculing another person’s appearance, way of speaking, or mannerisms.
- Cyber Bullying: misusing technology to hurt, intimidate, embarrass, and/or humiliate another person.
- Sexting: the sending of messages that include unwanted sexual remarks and/or photos/videos of a sexual nature.
- Hazing: any initiation practice that may humiliate, degrade, demean, and/or disgrace a person, regardless of location or consent of participants.
- Repeated behaviour which a person has previously objected to.
- Any unwanted sexual remark or physical contact.

Bullying can occur either through a single incident, or through a series of incidents. Bullying may occur even if the individual involved does not intend his/her conduct to be bullying.

Bullying does not include the exercise of authority related to safety, the provision of advice, assignment of work or coaching, discipline or other similar supervisory functions undertaken for legitimate coaching purposes.

Minor verbal disagreements, personality differences and consensual banter among equals do not normally constitute bullying.

Tumblers recognizes that not all incidents of bullying are equally serious in their consequences. Bullying covers a wide spectrum of behaviours, and the response must be equally broad in range, and appropriate to the behaviour in question.

Responsibilities within the Tumblers Community

General Responsibilities

All individuals have a responsibility to maintain and enhance the dignity and self-esteem of the Club's members and other individuals by:

- Treating each other with the highest standards of respect and integrity.
- Focusing comments or criticism appropriately and avoiding public criticism of persons, coaches, officials, organizers, volunteers, employees, or members.
- Consistently demonstrating the spirit of sportsmanship, sport leadership, and ethical conduct.
- Never engaging in bullying or encouraging others to do so.
- Acting, when appropriate, to correct or prevent practices that are unjustly discriminatory.
- Consistently treating individuals fairly and reasonably.
- Ensuring adherence to the rules of the Club, the sport, and the spirit of those rules.

In addition to the General Responsibilities, the following will have additional responsibilities:

Coaching Staff and Administration

The coach-athlete relationship is a privileged one and plays a critical role in the personal and athletic development of the athlete. Coaches must understand and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in this relationship and must be extremely careful not to abuse it, consciously or unconsciously.

Coaching and administrative staff are required to:

- Ensure a safe environment by selecting activities and establishing controls that are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the involved athletes.

- Consider and foster an athlete's empathy, self-esteem, self-respect and respect for others.
- Demonstrate, by leading by example, the high standards of personal and social behaviour the Club expects of its athletes and members.
- Keep informed about the club's activities, the sport community, and general trends in the sectors in which it operates.
- Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all the sport and club's governing documents as it relates to bullying.
- Discuss bullying with all athletes so that every athlete learns about the damage it causes and the importance of reporting bullying to a coach, parent or staff member when it occurs.
- Be alert to signs of distress and other possible indications of bullying.
- Listen to athletes who claim to have been bullied, take what they say seriously and act to support and protect them.
- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly, effectively, and in accordance with the club's bylaws, policies and procedures.
- Be independent, impartial, and not be influenced by self-interest, outside pressure, expectation of reward, or fear of criticism.
- Report suspected cases of bullying to the Executive Director, Technical Director or the Operations Director in a timely manner.
- Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature.

Executive Director, Technical Director and Operations Director

The Executive Director, Technical Director and Operations Director are required to:

- Deal with observed instances of bullying promptly, effectively, and in accordance with the club's policies and procedures.
- Recognize the serious negative impact of all types of bullying on personal dignity, individual, and group development and performance, enjoyment of the sport and personal safety.
- Contact the parents of the individuals involved to inform them of the incident and schedule a meeting for discussion.
- Begin the process of investigation and resolution of any complaint of alleged bullying. The process must be fair to all parties.
- Recognize that not all incidents of bullying are equally serious in their consequences; response to bullying must be equally broad in range, appropriate to the behaviour in question and capable of providing a constructive remedy.

Athletes

Athletes are required to:

- Refrain from engaging in any kind of bullying.
- Conduct themselves within the parameters of the Policy, and contribute towards the maintenance of a respectful environment free of bullying.
- Intervene to help support any athlete who is being bullied, unless it is unsafe to do so.

- Report to their coach, the Executive Director, Technical Director or the Operations Director, any witnessed or suspected instances of bullying in a timely manner.

Parents and Guardians

Parents and Guardians are expected to:

- Provide positive comments that motivate and encourage participants' continued effort.
- Never ridicule an athlete for making a mistake during a performance or practice.
- Encourage athletes to compete within the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to bullying, hostility or violence.
- Respect the decisions and judgments of coaches and officials and encourage athletes to do the same.
- Support all efforts to remove verbal and physical abuse, coercion, intimidation and sarcasm.
- Watch for signs of distress or unusual behaviour in their children, which might be evidence of bullying.
- Watch for signs that their children may be engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Speak to their children about not engaging in bullying and proactively address any potential bullying behaviour that their children may be engaging in.
- Advise their children to report any bullying to the coach, Executive Director, Technical Director or Operations Director and explain the implications of not addressing the bullying on themselves or other athletes in the club's community.
- Advise their children not to retaliate violently to any forms of bullying.
- Be sympathetic and supportive towards their children, and reassure them that appropriate action will be taken to address bullying.
- Cooperate fully and encourage their child to cooperate fully in any bullying investigation.
- Keep a written record of any reported instances of bullying.

The Target of Bullying

The target of bullying, or his/her parents, are expected to report the bullying in a timely manner and not to suffer in silence. Speaking out and reporting bullying ensures that Tumblers can appropriately address the bullying and may help prevent other athletes from future bullying.

Retaliatory Conduct

Retaliatory conduct is any conduct directed towards a Tumblers athlete (or his/her parents) because that athlete:

- Has invoked the Policy in good faith, whether on his/her own behalf or on another athlete's behalf.
- Has participated in, or cooperated with, any process or procedure set out in this Policy.
- Has associated with another athlete/member/guest who has invoked this Policy or has participated in any of its processes or procedures.

Retaliatory conduct against any athlete that has accessed this Policy in good faith will be dealt with seriously as a separate actionable matter under this Policy.

Retaliatory conduct by the target of the bullying (or his/her parents) against the alleged bully will be dealt with as a separate actionable matter under this Policy.

Unfounded false, malicious, or frivolous claims made by the alleged target of the bullying (or his/her parents), or the alleged perpetrator (or his/her parents) will be dealt with as a separate actionable matter under this Policy.

Tumblers Response to Bullying

Where Tumblers becomes aware of bullying, it will take all reasonable steps to bring the bullying to an immediate end.

Recommended Action

If Tumblers decides it is appropriate to deal with the situation, the following procedure should be followed as outlined below:

Upon receipt of a complaint, a Discipline Chair will be appointed and has the discretion to choose which process should be followed, as per the Terms of Reference of the Disciplinary Committee:

Process #1: The Discipline Chair will review the submissions related to the complaint or incident and determine a sanction.

Process #2: Following the determination that the complaint or incident should be handled by a Disciplinary Committee, the Discipline Chair will oversee the management and administration of the complaint or incident.

Process 2 will invoke the following steps:

1. A specially appointed Disciplinary Committee will schedule a meeting with the parent and child alleging bullying to obtain details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity and the key allegations should be confirmed in writing to ensure accuracy.
2. The committee will schedule a meeting with the alleged bully and parents and provide the details of the allegation to them and obtain their response to the allegation. Minutes will again be taken and again, the response to the key allegations should be confirmed in writing to ensure accuracy.
3. The committee will review any relevant documents (including texts and any social media) and interview any witnesses to gather additional information; again, minutes will be taken.

4. If the committee concludes that bullying has taken place, the committee should determine the appropriate disciplinary outcome in accordance with the guidelines set out below. The committee may also consider whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at any time.
5. All coaches involved with both athletes will be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process.

Consequences/Sanctions for Those Who Bully

Tumblers will generally apply the approach set out below, subject to the severity of the bullying, which may result in the Club elevating the response immediately.

1st Offense: Warning / Probation

- Short-term removal of certain privileges
- Parent/guardian notified by phone or in writing by the Club, possible in-person conference
- Verbal or written reprimand
- Verbal or written apology required
- Anti-bullying assignment given with a reflective activity
- Team or program probation
- Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage

2nd Offense: Suspension

- Short term or long term suspension from training, events, and/or club activities
- Parent/guardian conference
- Verbal or written reprimand
- Verbal or written apology required
- Referral to outside counseling
- Removal of certain privileges
- Possible suspension from all club activities for a designated period
- Payment of the cost of repairs for property damage
- Any other sanction considered appropriate for the offence

3rd Offense:

Membership review / Expulsion

- Records of all decisions will be maintained by the Club.
- Tumblers may suspend a membership in the event of a single or repeated bullying incident that is determined to be serious and extreme in nature, both during and after the investigation period.
- Tumblers may terminate a membership in the event of a single or repeated bullying incident that is determined to be serious and extreme in nature, after the investigation has been completed.
- Tumblers may refer a bullying incident to law enforcement and/or the governing sport authority as necessary and as required by law.

- Tumblers may suspend or terminate membership in the event of non-compliance with the committee/executive's determined consequences for a bullying event.

Confidentiality

Tumblers will endeavour to keep complaints filed under this Policy as confidential as is reasonably possible. However, disclosure of certain information or evidence may be required to investigate and/or process a complaint. In some instances, disclosure to other persons or agencies of the existence of a complaint or of information or evidence pertaining to that complaint, may be permitted or even required by law.

After the Incident

After the incident(s) have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

Conclusion

Tumblers has developed this Policy in order to ensure that all of its athletes and members can participate in a safe and healthy environment free from harassment and bullying, and to ensure that all people are treated with respect without being exposed to harassment or bullying.

Please complete this section to attest that you have read and understood this Policy and have discussed it, as appropriate, with your child.

I have reviewed this Anti-Bullying/Harassment Policy. _____ (Please initial)

I have discussed it with my child. _____ (Please initial)

I agree to adhere to this Policy. _____ (Please initial)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date