# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

November 2024

North Delta FC has adhered to this Anti-Bullying Policy to help guide and protect the children that participate in our activities as players, referees, coaches or in any other capacity. Bullying can be defined as intentional hurtful and aggressive behaviour that makes others feel uncomfortable, scared or upset, and it is the responsibility of the club, our staff and volunteers to create a safe, free of bullying soccer environment.

**Resources below were provided by the Government of British Columbia*

## IMPORTANCE OF AN ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

According to the data provided by the Provincial Government, 1 in 3 Canadian teens say they've been bullied recently and almost half of Canadian parents say their kid has been bullied at some point.

A person who shows bullying behaviour usually picks on another person's culture, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, looks, religion, or sexual orientation - children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified, two-spirited, queer or questioning (LGBTQ) are discriminated against three times more than heterosexual students.

The effects of bullying can be traumatic and long-lasting, affecting even adulthood by causing extended psychological harm.

## DEFINING BULLYING

It's important to know the difference between bullying and single acts of aggression or conflict. Not all mean or rude behaviour or conflict is bullying. Understanding the difference helps when it comes to knowing how to intervene.

Bullying is a persistent pattern of unwelcome or aggressive behaviour that hurts others physically and/or emotionally. For a situation to be considered bullying, three indicators are usually present:

- Power – children who bully acquire their power through physical size and strength, by status within the peer group, and by recruiting support of the group.
- Frequency – bullying is not a random act. It is this factor that brings about the anticipatory terror in the mind of the child being bullied that can be so detrimental and have the most debilitating long-term effects.
- Intent to harm – children who bully generally do so with the intent to either physically or emotionally harm the other child.

A person who shows bullying behaviour says or does something intentionally hurtful to others and they keep doing it, with no sense of regret or remorse – even when it's obvious that they've hurt a person or when they're asked to stop.

**TYPES OF BULLYING**

- Physical – hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing, damaging property.
- Verbal – name-calling, insulting others, teasing, intimidating others, making homophobic or racist comments, verbal abuse.
- Social and emotional (or relational) – Doing things to harm someone else's reputation or make them feel embarrassed or humiliated by lying, spreading rumours, making mean gestures or jokes, excluding someone.
- Cyber – teasing or humiliating a person online using social media, cruel websites (e.g. posting photos of others on rating websites), video games, instant message or texting. Cyberbullying is constantly evolving and changing with new technology and it can reach a child even in the privacy of their own home.

**SIGNS THAT A CHILD IS BEING BULLIED**

Kids who are being bullied by others will often display a change in behaviour or emotions, like:

- Not wanting to go to school or participate in extra-curricular activities.
- Anxious, fearful or over-reactive.
- Having low self-esteem and making negative comments about themselves or a former friend
- Regular complaints of stomachaches, headaches, and other physical symptoms without any particular cause.
- Less interest in school or soccer.
- Injuries, bruising, damaged clothing, or broken items.
- Unhappy and irritable.
- Trouble sleeping, nightmares, bedwetting.
- Frequently crying.

- Threatens to hurt themself or others.
- Significant changes in social life (i.e. no one is calling or inviting them out).

**SIGNS THAT A CHILD IS ENGAGING IN BULLYING BEHAVIOUR**

Kids who exhibit bullying behaviour may show signs that they are using power aggressively, such as:

- Little concern for the feelings of others.
- Aggressive with siblings, parents, teachers, friends and animals.
- Bossy and manipulative to get their own way.
- Coming home with unexplained objects or extra money.
- Secretive about possessions, activities or where they've been.
- Easily frustrated and quickly angered.
- Believe aggression is an acceptable way to resolve conflicts.
- Abuse others physically or verbally.
- Get into fights and blame others for starting them.
- Have a need to dominate others.
- Have two or three friends who are also aggressive.
- Hang out with increasingly younger children.
- Quick to interpret accidents or neutral events as deliberate hostile acts.

**NORTH DELTA FC ANTI-BULLYING REPORTING PROCEDURE**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. NDFC is committed to providing a safe, caring and friendly environment for all participants.

All NDFC members have the right to a fair and timely resolution of complaints. To ensure a positive environment, please report incidents or complaints as soon as possible for prompt action.

1. Members are encouraged to first discuss the concerns with their Coaches or Team Manager. Often, these situations can be resolved by having a discussion, as team officials are most knowledgeable about the individual(s) and the situation. In most cases, the issue can be resolved at this stage after a discussion.
2. If the concern involves the Coach/Manager, or if the member feels that their response was unsatisfactory, or if the member does not feel comfortable bringing the issue to the Coach/Team Manager, the member can reach out to the President at president@northdeltafc.com.
3. If the concern involves the President, then the concern can be addressed with the Vice President at vicepresident@northdeltafc.com.

Members can report incidents via email to president@northdeltafc.com. Please try to include as much detail as possible, such as names of those involved, any witnesses, location, date and time and a description of what occurred.

If the incident is deemed severe, the club will consult with the police.

All reports will be documented and filed confidentially. This ensures a formal record of the complaint, which outlines the details, involved parties and actions taken.

From Canada Soccer's Guide to Safety: "*There is no express time limit for initiating a complaint, but every effort should be made to quickly bring the complaint to the attention of the appropriate organizational leadership to stop the bullying behaviour as soon as possible and to make sure that memories are fresh, and behaviour can be accurately recalled*".

**NORTH DELTA FC ANTI-BULLYING CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Once a report has been reviewed, the following steps will be taken to address and resolve the situation:

1. The parents or guardians of the children involved in the incident will be notified by the President or a Board Member. This ensures transparency for each family to understand the situation and next steps.
2. The President or Board Member will be the designated point of contact for communication with all parties involved.
3. The President or Board Member will arrange and facilitate a mediated meeting with the parents/guardians. The intent of the meeting is to allow both parties to understand the impact of the incident and to encourage positive conflict resolution.
4. If deemed necessary, North Delta FC may consider disciplinary actions, such as a temporary suspension, to prevent future incidents. All disciplinary actions will be decided on a case by case basis with the best interest in mind for all parties.

**BC SOCCER ALIGNMENT**

All North Delta FC policies must align with BC Soccer's Bylaws, Rules & Regulations, and applicable Policies and procedures.