



ASTRA Soccer Academy

Bullying Policy and Procedure

Vision

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at ASTRA Soccer Academy. Our mandate has and always will be to create the best soccer experience possible for every child in our programs. This includes providing a caring, friendly, safe and harassment free sport environment.

It is the responsibility of all staff, board members, coaches, referees, parents and volunteers to take all reasonable steps to safeguard the welfare of ASTRA players and to protect them from any form of maltreatment.

Bullying Policy

ASTRA Soccer Academy is committed to investigating reported incidents of bullying or harassment in a prompt, objective, and sensitive manner taking necessary corrective action and providing appropriate support for victims. No individual shall be penalized in any way for making a complaint or giving evidence in a bullying or harassment investigation.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. It is done to intimidate, coerce, fear, control, embarrass or exclude.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding (emotionally and physically), sending hurtful text messages, tormenting, (e.g. hiding cleats/clothing, threatening gestures);
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures;
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments;
- Homophobic - because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality; or
- Verbal name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing.

Bullying may be:

- Planned or unintentional;
- Individual or group action(s);

- Of an isolated or continual nature

Procedure When Bullying Occurs

1. Any incident of bullying or harassment should be reported to either the team coach or manager as soon as possible.
2. The team coach and manager will discuss the situation and will investigate the incident speaking to both parties individually.
3. The team manager will inform parents of the players involved and may call a meeting to discuss the incident and make a plan to prevent future incidents from occurring.
4. The team manager will file a Bullying Incident Report form with the ASTRA Academy Program Manager within 30 days of receiving the information that an incident has occurred.
5. The ASTRA Academy Program Manager will keep a record of all bullying incident forms submitted.
6. If the measures taken to end the bullying are not effective and the bullying is seen to continue, a second report will be filed with the ASTRA Academy Program Manager and will be forwarded by the Academy Director.
7. Upon receipt of a second incident referral from the Academy Program Manager, the Director will make a ruling on intervention and/or possible disciplinary action.
8. If mediation and disciplinary action do not bring the bullying or harassing behavior to an end, the Director may consider further disciplinary action or player expulsion from the club.
9. In any situation where it is deemed necessary and appropriate by Program Manager or the Director, the police may be consulted regarding matters of bullying or harassment.

Recommended Actions

If the Academy decides it is appropriate to intervene after receipt of a referral from the Academy Director, the following are some suggested measures that may be taken:

1. Reconciliation by getting the parties together. It may be that a genuine apology solves the problem.
2. If this fails or is deemed as not appropriate a small panel (including executive board members and the director of soccer operations) should meet with the parent and child alleging bullying to get details of the allegation. Minutes should be taken for clarity.
3. The same panel should meet with the alleged bully and parent/s and put the incident raised to them to answer and give their view of the allegation. Minutes should again be taken.
4. The same panel should also interview any witnesses to gather additional information; again, minutes should be taken.
5. If bullying has in their view taken place the athletes should be warned and put on notice of further action. Consideration should be given as to whether a reconciliation meeting between parties is appropriate at this time.
6. Coaches and managers involved with both athletes should be made aware of the concerns and outcome of the process i.e. the warning.

Consequences for Those Who Bully

Athletes found to be bullying teammates or members of other teams/clubs may face consequences including:

- Formal apology;
- Restitution for any damage to property or personal possessions;
- Benching;
- Barring from travel to tournaments or training trips;
- Suspension;
- Expulsion from ASTRA Soccer Academy

Any retaliation by athletes, or their parents, against someone who reports bullying will be dealt with very seriously

