

Southeastern Gymnastics and the Piedmont Gymnastics Organization's Anti-Bullying Policy

Principles and Values.

Southeastern Gymnastics & the PGO takes bullying seriously. Gymnasts and parents should be assured bullying will not be tolerated and that known incidents of bullying will be responded to immediately and pro-actively.

Objectives of this Policy.

All coaches, administrative staff, gymnasts and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is. All gymnasts and parents should know the policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises. All coaches should know how to respond to allegations of bullying and steps to take when it is reported to them.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Bullying has the potential to damage the mental health of a victim. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is unacceptable behavior used by an individual or group, usually repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally. Bullying can be short term or continuous over long periods of time.

Bullying can be on the basis of race, gender, religion, culture, disability, appearance or health condition, home circumstances, money, and/ or sexual orientation.

Bullying can take place in the gym, waiting areas, changing areas, at Meets, and in cyberspace. It can take place in group activities or one-on-one.

Unacceptable behaviors that are identified as bullying:

- Emotional: being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding equipment, threatening gestures);
- Physical: pushing, kicking, biting, hitting, punching or any use of violence;
- Racial: 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 rumors, teasing.

Perpetrators and Victims.

Bullying takes place where there is an imbalance of power of one person or persons over another.

This can be achieved by:

- The size of the individual,
- The strength of the individual

- The numbers or group size involved
- Anonymity – through the use of cyber bullying or using email, social networking sites, texts

All Staff and Coaches must remain vigilant about bullying behaviors and approach it directly and compassionately. Children may not be aware that they are being bullied; because they may be too young or have a level of Special Educational Needs which means that they may be unable to realize what others may be doing to them.

Prevention.

The ethos and working philosophy of Southeastern Gymnastics & the PGO Gymnastics means that all staff actively encourage children to have respect for each other and for other people's property. Kind and polite behavior is expected, acknowledged and rewarded. If your child feels that they are being bullied, we are requesting they talk with you and/or inform a coach or staff member so it can be addressed immediately.

Consequences of Bullying.

All known/reported incidences of bullying will be investigated by Southeastern and where appropriate, the PGO.

First Offense:

- Warning and behavior re-direction by staff, Southeastern, and/ or PGO;
- Notification of behavior to parents of any gymnasts involved by telephone call, email, or in person;
- meeting with coach and gymnast; and
- Apology to victim.

Second Offense:

- Warning and behavior re-direction by staff, Southeastern, and/ or PGO;
- Meeting with gymnast and Southeastern to discuss behavior and required changes to behavior;
- Written apology to victim; and
- Notice future offenses may result in suspension from practice and meet(s).

Third Offense:

- Mandatory meeting with gymnast and Southeastern to discuss behavior and required changes to behavior;
- Written apology to victim; and
- Suspension for a period determined appropriate by Southeastern in consultation with head coach and PGO