



Anti-bullying Policy

This is one of a series of documents intended to set the standard for behaviour within Rowing. It applies to all people involved in our sport.

Rationale

Rowing Ireland believes that a primary role of the sport is to provide individuals with the ability to develop to their full rowing potential. Essential to this is provision of a safe learning environment, without fear of being bullied. Bullying denies individuals access to high quality rowing experience and can result in psychological damage to those involved. It is an anti-social behaviour, which is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in Irish Rowing. If bullying does occur this policy should outline the procedures for dealing with the situation. This policy has been drawn up recognising Article 19 of the UN convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that 'children have the right to be protected from all forms of physical and mental violence.'

Aims of this policy are:

- to create an ethos in which attending a rowing session is a positive experience for all members of the rowing community
- to make clear that all forms of bullying are unacceptable in sport
- to enable everyone to feel safe while at rowing and encourage reporting of any bullying
- to support and protect anyone who has been bullied and ensure they are listened to
- to help those who have displayed bullying behaviour to change their ways and to understand why change is needed
- to inform coaches, parents, and others relevant to the rowing community
- to ensure all members of the rowing community feel responsible for combating bullying

Definition of Bullying

'The repeated use of power by one or more persons intentionally to harm, hurt or adversely affect the rights or needs of another or others'.

The term bullying refers to a range of harmful behaviour, whether physical or psychological, and usually has the following four features:

- It is repetitive and persistent- though sometimes a single incident can have the same impact over time, as part of a continuous pattern. E.g. Racist bullying.
- It is intentionally harmful- though occasionally not consciously intended by the bully or bystanders.
- It involves an imbalance of power, leaving someone feeling helpless to prevent or stop it
- It causes distress, fear, loneliness and lack of confidence

Common characteristics include

- Motivation to demonstrate power by creating fear and to gain 'respect' by peers.
- Often people who bully have themselves been bullied in the past. They may feel powerless and compensate by trying to intimidate others
- Bullying can be obvious, subtle, hidden, and difficult to prove.
- Males often use physical bullying and threats, but exclusion from groups is more common amongst females.
- Bullying can be by one person, one-on-one, by group against one or group on group.
- Bystanders often show acceptance or approval, and those on the receiving end can see them as part of the problem.
- Bullying in sport can be related to tensions in schools, groups, families and local communities.

Bullying can be:

Emotional	Unfriendly, exclusion, torment (e.g. hiding belongings, threats, rumours)
Physical	Pushing, kicking, hitting, or any violence
Racist	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Sexual	Unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
Homophobic	Because of, or focussing on, sexuality
Verbal	Calling names, sarcasm, rumours
Cyberbullying	All types of internet and email misuse, threats by text, calls by mobile phone and other devices, misuse of technology e.g. camera and video.

We need to learn that one person's teasing may, to another, be unkind and even cruel.

The way behaviour is received is important rather than what was intended.

A person can be bullying and subject to bullying, at the same time. Although some are vulnerable due to physical or social character, anyone can be bullied for any reason or for no reason. Individuals may resort to bullying for a range of reasons, and Rowing Ireland will support the bully as well as those who are bullied.

The rowing workforce must be aware of how their actions are perceived and take care not to be accused of bullying. Bullying by the workforce could include:

- Teasing about characteristics one has little of no control of.
- Inappropriate bad temper
- Ridiculing the actions of one in front of others
- Inconsistency in application of punishment or reward
- Physical intimidation
- Insults or swearing
- Belittling others on the workforce
- Non-constructive or unnecessarily personal criticism

The workforce must remember the importance of leadership by example. Bullying by the workforce will be treated as disciplinary business. Any worker feeling bullied should initially consult their line manager.

Signs & Symptoms

Initial impacts of bullying often go un-noticed, but may be apparent in mood changes and attitudes. Those bullied often develop insecurity and anxiety. This can cause vulnerability, low self-confidence and self-esteem. Reluctance to discuss problems through fear of consequences, is common, and the workforce should be alert to this.

These may indicate that a person is being bullied:

- Anxiety about travel to and from sessions, or changes to arrangements.
- Unwillingness or refusal to attend or participate, unexplained absence
- Deteriorating performance, poor concentration or enthusiasm
- Patterns of illness
- Unexplained mood or behavioural change, especially after absences
- Visible anxiety or stress: stammers, withdrawing from activities, etc.
- Spontaneous out of character comments about others
- Stealing or increased requests for money
- Unexplained bruising, cuts, or clothing damage
- Reluctance to discuss distress

These signs do not necessarily indicate bullying. If recurring or in combination they warrant investigation.

Cyberbullying is defined as:

Use of technology, e.g. mobile phones/internet, to deliberately upset someone.

This type of bullying can be used for all other types of bullying but use technology as a tool. It can include a range of unacceptable behaviour, including harassment, threats and insults.

Cyberbullying can be an extension of face to face bullying, as another route for harassment. It does differ in several ways to other methods, e.g. remote

invasion, messages difficult to control, different profiles for bully and target. While bullying may not be criminal, there are laws that can apply to harassment and threats.

Forms of Cyberbullying

Threats of intimidation: Serious threats can be sent by mobile phone, email and via comments on websites, social networking sites or message boards.

Harassment or stalking: Repeated, prolonged unwanted texting, whether explicitly offensive or not, is harassment. Online stalking (cyberstalking) where a person's online activities are repeatedly monitored, can cause psychological harm and fear. Previously safe enjoyable environments can become threatening, and online activity may lead to anxiety.

Online harassment and stalking can take many or multiple forms, and may be a continuation of offline bullying or lead to offline bullying. Forms of harassment include:

- Repeated unwanted messages, or calls, including silent calls.
- Repeated harassment on public forums, or derogatory or defamatory statements to provoke a response ('flaming').
- Tracking targets by using spyware
- Sending viruses

Vilification / defamation: Cyberbullying can include posting upsetting or defamatory remarks about a person online, or name-calling using technology. Insults could be general, or prejudice-based. Sexist, homophobic and racist messages or attacks on other types of difference are common- a disability, background, appearance or socio-economic position.

Ostracising / peer rejection / exclusion: Online exclusion can be harder to detect than offline when others are present. Social network sites provide a platform to establish online presence and talk to others. They can extend one's social space and activity. Most social networks function as gated communities, limited to members, so only a few sites may be popular to a group of rowers. It is possible for them to set up a closed group, which can protect them from unwanted intrusion. It also means that excluding someone- by refusing to respond to messages, or deleting them from lists- can be hurtful.

Identity theft / unauthorised access / impersonation: Hacking generally means gaining access to an account by finding out or guessing their username and password. Hacking into systems, accounts or files is not always cyberbullying, but is always serious. Hacking is illegal, and examples of how it can become cyberbullying include:

- Accessing and copying personal information, e.g. emails or pictures, to harass or humiliate,

posting private information on public sites, forwarding data, or printing and circulating.

- Deleting personal information – e.g. electronic training programmes, or important emails.
- Impersonating someone – e.g. pretending to be a person whose account has been hacked, in order to post abuse. This may include sending instant messages, or using someone's phone to send abusive calls, texts or images.

Publicly transmitting personal or private data:

Once electronic data is made public, it is hard to contain. It can be passed between devices wirelessly, sent by text or email, uploaded to websites or video hosting sites. 'Happy slapping' refers to physical assaults recorded and circulated by phone. Those who record an attack can be involved in cyberbullying. Circulating images of attacks can be harassment, and will often compound the original harm. Creating, possessing copying or distributing indecent images of those under 18 is illegal, even if done for fun or with consent. This also applied to indecent 'pseudo-photos'- images created or adapted using software.

Manipulation: This is an under considered form of bullying, e.g. applied pressure to reveal personal information or to arrange a physical meeting. Online friendship status may be used. Manipulation is difficult to detect, as the victim often feels implicated and responsible, and maybe guilty or ashamed. Manipulation may involve getting someone to act or talk provocatively. Rude images or messages can be embarrassing, and fear of exposing these can make one vulnerable to further manipulation. Technology is also used to control, track and manipulate within teen relationships.

Cyberbullying– the legal context

Although bullying is not a criminal offence, there are laws that may apply to harassment or threatening behaviour, e.g. threatening and menacing communications. Some Cyberbullying could be criminal activity under a range of laws:

Protection from Harassment: This is relevant to repeated incidents. A person may be restrained from conduct amounting to harassment, and the victim may be protected.

Public Communications: Sending 'grossly offensive...obscene, indecent or menacing' communications, sending a message one knows to be false (or causing to be sent) or persistent use of a public communications system.

Malicious Communications: Sending indecent, grossly offensive or threatening communications or articles to another person with the intent to cause them distress or anxiety.

Public Order: Use of threatening, abusive, or insulting words, writing, signs etc., within the sight or hearing of a person likely to be caused; and with intent to cause; harassment, alarm or distress. This may apply where a phone is used as a camera or video.

Obscene publications: Obscene articles, published by circulating, showing, playing or projecting, or transmitting that data e.g. on a club website or intranet. Obscene articles are those whose effect could deprave or corrupt those likely to read, see or hear the matter contained or embodied.

Computer misuse: Includes hacking into a person's account, and other laws on confidentiality and privacy may apply.

Defamation: Applies to published material which damages the reputation of an individual or an organisation, and includes material published in the internet. Where material of this sort is published on a website, the person affected may inform the host and ask for removal. Once the host knows the material may be defamatory, it cannot rely on a defence of innocent dissemination.

Avoiding cyberbullying- rowers

Text/video messaging

- Do not reply to abusive or obscene messages. Your service provider should have a number for reporting abusive messages. Try their website for details.
- Do not delete the message. If abuse continues you can show messages to someone who can help.
- Be careful who you give phone numbers to and don't leave your phone lying around.

Chatrooms / instant messaging

- Protect your personal details.
- Give yourself an alias that does not display your age, gender or location.
- Do not respond to abusive posting- ignore or log-off. If you rush to reply you may write something which may make things worse.
- Think about what you send and consider how it might be interpreted.

Email

- If you receive an abusive email do not reply. If from someone familiar, they may expect a reaction as they would if facing you directly. Do not satisfy them with a reply, and they might stop.
- If they don't stop you should trace the source of the email. Using Outlook or Outlook Express, right click over the email to reveal details of the source. You can then contact the service provider for help.
- Email may come from strangers, ('spamming'). Addresses are easy for companies to obtain and for programmes to predict. You should not reply to these, even if they have a [click to stop] link, which will confirm your address is real, and make things worse.
- You can delete these emails, but if it becomes serious you can save or print these so you have some evidence.
- Learn more about your email program from the Help menu, to find details on creating folders,

filters, and routing, to help to shield you from abuse.

Internet

If cyberbullying is on a club or community website, act as if the bully was face to face. Tell someone who can help. If it is on a site which is strange to you, you have to do some research to find the host of the site.

Minimising cyberbullying; how to respond and report - Workforce.

Protecting personal information: The workforce may use the web and social networking like Facebook etc for rowing or personal use. As an individual, you also have a reputation in rowing. You are required to protect the health and safety of colleagues and others. You are advised, in your own interest, to ensure that personal data is not accessible to anyone without permission to handle it. Some agencies now carry out web and social network searches to find online information about the workforce. All workers, especially those new to the position, should ensure information available is accurate and appropriate. Internet privacy seldom means complete privacy. Information sent using official accounts or equipment will usually be accessible for monitoring and may be requested under Data Protection legislation.

Advice for workforce:

- When publishing or messaging online, consider how you present yourself, who can see it, and how you can manage this. Ask yourself if you are comfortable with a current or possible employer, colleague, rower or parent, viewing your content.
- Be aware of who is allowed to view your content, and how to restrict this where necessary. If you are not clear on restriction, regard all your content as on public view. You can check that others are not misrepresenting you or treating you unfairly online. If you find something unacceptable, you can ask the source to remove it. More serious incidents, including cyberbullying, will require a formal response from your person in charge, and will be a disciplinary or maybe a legal matter.

You can check if others are creating or posting objectionable data about you online:

- Use search engines to see what data is associated with your name, or your organisation.
- Use searches within social networking sites – you may need to be a member.
- You may become aware of objectionable material, about you, from others. Encourage others to report incidents, and not be a bystander.
- ‘Friending’ is giving contacts permission to view or contact you. Friends may be known as contacts or connections. Social sites may allow levels of access and privacy. These options

vary. ‘Friends’ may not mean real life friends, although you may restrict access to that. They could also be colleagues, family, or people you met online. If you are social networking, do not friend young people or add them to your contacts. They may be giving you access to their personal information. If you want to use a social networking site for rowing, use a service that won't give contacts access to personal data, or allow collaboration without permissions. You can allow young rowers to create new rowing accounts for themselves, and run them as they would an online portfolio or CV.

Responding to cyberbullying incidents and reporting:

- Workforce members should never personally engage with cyberbullying incidents. They should report incidents appropriately and seek support.
- Keep any records of the abuse – texts, emails, etc., and not delete. Take screen prints of web pages, and carefully record date time, and website address. You should inform your person in charge, or their assistant, at the earliest opportunity.
- Where the perpetrator is known to be a current rower or co-worker, most cases will be handled best by rowing mediation and disciplinary procedures.
- Although technology seemingly allows anonymity, there are ways of tracing sources. It is important however to be aware that this may not lead to the right identifiable person.
- If a potential offence has occurred, and your organisation cannot identify the perpetrator, the police may request a service provider to disclose data about a message or its source.
- Any confiscation must be appropriate and proportional, e.g. the circumstances when confiscation might result.
- The person in charge or their assistant, should contact the police where it appears the law has been broken, e.g. where death threats, assault, or racially motivated offences are involved. The organisation should ensure that any internal investigation does not interfere with police enquiries. Workforce members can of course go direct to the police
- There have been incidents where young people have made unfounded malicious claims against workforce members. Every claim should still be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. In cases where an allegation is made of abuse in a way that indicates a person is unsuitable to work with children, that allegation should be reported to the person in charge or their assistant, immediately. The person in charge or assistant should inform the Rowing Ireland Designated Officer who is responsible for providing advice and monitoring cases. The RI Designated Officer will then decide on further action. Guidance on dealing with allegations of

abuse is contained in the Rowing Ireland Safeguarding Policy, available to download from www.rowingireland.ie

Roles & Responsibilities:

The workforce will:

- Foster in rowers self-esteem, self-respect, and respect for others
- Show by example the high standards of personal and social behaviour we expect from all our participants
- Discuss bullying with our rowers, so that each one learns about the damage to the bullied and the bully, and discuss the importance to report any bullying when it happens
- Be alert to signs of distress and other indications of bullying
- Listen to those who have been bullied, take them seriously and act to support & protect.
- Report suspected bullying to the appropriate person on the organisation.
- Follow up any complaint from an individual or friend about bullying, and report back promptly on any actions taken
- Deal with observed bullying promptly and effectively, in accordance with agreed procedures

We expect participants in rowing to:

- Avoid getting involved in any kind of bullying, even if it makes you unpopular
- Step in to protect anyone from being bullied, unless it is unsafe for you.
- Report to the person in charge or their assistant, any bullying seen or suspected, to avoid secrecy and to help stop further instances

Anyone who is a target of bullies should:

- Not suffer in silence, but try to speak out, to end suffering by themselves and maybe others.

Parents/Carers, Coaches and Assistants are asked to give support by:

- Watching for distress or unusual behaviour, which might indicate bullying
- Advising their rowers to report any bullying to the person in charge, and explain the dangers of the spread of bullying to themselves and others
- Advising their rowers not to react violently to any form of bullying
- Being supportive to their rowers, reassuring them that suitable action will be taken
- Keeping a written note of any reported bullying
- Informing the organisation of any suspected bullying, even if it is other rowers who are involved.
- Co-operating with the rowing community. If your rowers are accused of bullying, try to get the

truth, explain the implications of bullying, both for the bullied and the bullies.

Everyone involved in rowing should:

- Work together to combat and, hopefully to reduce and put an end to bullying.

Prevention of bullying

The following are suggested to prevent bullying from taking place:

1. Rowing Ireland

- Through preparation, and publication of this document, the increased awareness of the issues within rowing, and the implementation of the procedures to deal with any incidents and reports.

2. Local club/organisation

- Through participation in any Anti-Bullying events available. Through meetings of the whole club/organisation with announcement of a zero tolerance policy towards bullying, and to dispel the idea that bystanders are innocent when bullying occurs.
- Through the organisation's policy for use of mobile phones, to include the reporting of inappropriate use to the police.
- Through anti-bullying information displayed in clubs.
- By role modelling of appropriate behaviour towards others by complete workforce.
- By discussion of procedures with beginners as part of their induction process.
- Through use of senior rowers as mentors with all beginners.
- By having the person in charge of rowing available to all rowers as a first point of contact.

3. Rowing crew/squad

- Through learning social skills of negotiation, arbitration and intervention, and learning to consider issues of difference and diversity.
- Through learning what Cyberbullying is and how to prevent yourself becoming a victim- not making personal information public, not giving out passwords, and not responding to threatening or rude messages. Learn also what to do if cyberbullied- including keeping messages for proof, using online protection services, telling parents or friends.

Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour

Our aim in the process below is to support the person suffering the bullying behaviour, and to focus on changing the behaviour of those displaying bullying behaviour.

- The workforce take their duty of care seriously and will be vigilant and take immediate action. If staff observe or become aware of, an alleged bullying incident they should record details, and pass these to the person in charge.

- The person in charge or their assistant, will investigate carefully and considerately by interviewing all those concerned. The information provided will be recorded.
- Following investigation the person in charge and their assistant will decide on an appropriate means to best support the person suffering, including altering their behaviour.
- The action taken will be recorded.
- All bullying records will be attached to records for the rower, and the workforce will be kept informed as appropriate and necessary.
- A date for review of the situation will be set with all those involved.

How an alleged bullying incident should be handled.

Three steps to deal with incidents of bullying are:

1. To interview the person who has been bullied and the person who has displayed bullying behaviour – separately.
2. To provide support for those individuals
3. To monitor and review the situation.

When a bullying incident is reported remember:

- Each case will be different and the solution must be tailored to suit the problem;
- To remain impartial – do not seek to attribute blame;
- To help all individuals involved to gain insight into their behaviour;
- That both behaviours have been 'learned' from life experience, so with support they can be challenged and changed to acceptable behaviours

Step 1 – Interviewing the individuals involved

The person alleged to have been bullied:

- a. Listen to the victim's story in a calm non-judgemental way
- b. Indicate from the start that the incident is being taken seriously
- c. Inform Designated Safeguarding/Childrens Officer
- d. Allow the victim to explore their feelings about the incident
- e. Do not attempt to find out all facts as this may increase stress
- f. Discuss and agree how they might be supported. Involve them in achieving a constructive solution
- g. Agree acceptable targets for reaching the solution
- h. Agree a review date
- i. Monitor the situation with workforce members in an unobtrusive way.

The person who allegedly displayed the bullying behaviour

- j. Interview the person along with any bystanders
- k. Do not disclose information sources – respect confidentiality
- l. State that all incidents of inappropriate behaviour are taken seriously
- m. Clarify that the group has a problem and they need a constructive solution
- n. Facilitate them working to set agreed targets for the group
- o. Make the group aware that progress will be monitored and appropriate action taken

Step 2. Provide support for the individuals involved

For the person who has been bullied

- a. Identify a workforce member who will act a point of contact for the person
- b. Find a reliable friend or group of friends who will accompany the person and report any incidents
- c. Identify times and places of bullying and minimise opportunities by supervision
- d. Provide advice to the workforce on preventing bullying e.g. seating arrangements
- e. Work with the person to develop self-esteem and social skills

For the person who displayed the bullying behaviour

- f. Communicate clear expectations of behaviour
- g. Communicate and act on any breach of disciplinary policies.
- h. Work with the person to improve their social skills

For the workforce member

- i. Contact the person involved and if appropriate, a parent. (they may request that parents are not contacted, and interviewer should then use discretion, and note on interview form.)
- j. Enlist support to ensure awareness and agreement of targets set.
- k. Include supporters in monitoring and review process.

Step 3 – Conducting a review meeting. (After suitable period e.g. 3-6 weeks.)

- a. Interview all those involved to ascertain level of progress.
- b. If targets are not achieved, set new targets
- c. Monitor and review until targets achieved.

For further information or advice see:

www.rowingireland.ie

Or contact: Chief Executive Officer, c/o Rowing Ireland, National Rowing Centre, Farran Wood, Ovens, Co. Cork

Email: info@rowingireland.ie