

## Harrassment/Bullying/Abuse

### Definitions of Abuse

**Abuse of Authority:** occurs when a person uses authority unreasonably to interfere with an employee or the employee's job. It includes humiliation, intimidation, threats, and coercion. It does not include normal managerial activities, such as counseling, performance appraisals, and discipline, as long as these are not done in a discriminatory manner.

**Abuse of a Minor:** is a misuse of power by anyone who is in a position of authority over a minor. Complaints related to the abuse of a minor will be taken seriously and reported to the appropriate authority. A minor is considered to be any person under the age of 18 years.

**Bullying:** repeated acts that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power with the more powerful individual or group abusing those who are less powerful.

**Emotional/Psychological Abuse:** usually expresses itself in verbal attacks involving rejection, belittlement, threats of acts, or coercive tactics. Psychological/emotional abuse can include, but is not limited to, humiliating, controlling, withholding information, deliberately doing something to make the victim feel diminished or embarrassed, isolating the victim from friends and family, and denying the victim access to money or other basic resources.

**Personal Harassment:** is any behavior that demeans, humiliates or embarrasses a person, and that a reasonable person should have known would be unwelcome. It includes actions (e.g. touching, pushing), comments (e.g. jokes, name-calling), or displays (e.g. posters, cartoons) that are related to race, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, family status, disability, or sexual orientation.

**Physical Abuse:** occurs when anyone inflicts physical harm on another person or uses force that is unwarranted by the situation.

**Physical Neglect:** failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, or medical care or failing to intervene to eliminate a risk when able to do so.

**Sexual Assault:** is a criminal act involving unwanted or forced sexual contact or activity.

**Sexual Harassment:** is behavior of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and offensive to the person it is targeted toward. Examples of harassing behavior may include unwanted physical contact, offensive sexual language, sexual propositions, jokes, remarks, obscene gestures, and displays of sexually explicit pictures or drawings. Use of the UGA's communication systems (including computers, phone or data networks) for the purpose of viewing, displaying, or disseminating material that is sexual in nature may also constitute harassing behavior and will result in the termination of employment.

## **ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY**

All people at camp, regardless of who they are (Participants, athletes, staff, volunteers, observing coaches, parents), have a right to experience a safe place. We are committed to providing an environment that is free from harassment, bullying, or abuse. Harassment, bullying, or abuse based upon an individual's sex, race, ethnicity, age, religion or other affiliation will not be tolerated. All employees, including management, summer staff, athletes, coaches, and volunteers are expected and required to abide by this policy. Any employee engaging in improper behavior toward another employee, Participant, or other person, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including including termination of employment.

## **RESPONSE TO SUSPECTED HARASSMENT/ABUSE**

- If you suspect that someone has been abused, or if you have been abused yourself, the proper course of action is to tell the Director immediately. If the Director is not available or if you do not feel comfortable speaking with him then speak with another senior camp staff member.
- It is important that your report is dealt with confidentially, for the sake of both parties, the victim and the alleged abuser(s) involved. All complaints of harassment or abuse will be handled in as discreet and confidential a manner as possible.
- Once the matter has been reported it will be promptly investigated, a formal report will be made, and any necessary corrective action will be taken where appropriate.
- The procedure for reporting incidents of abuse is not intended to impair or limit the right to seek a remedy under available state, provincial or federal law.

## **SUPPORTING AN PARTICIPANT AFTER A DISCLOSURE OF HARASSMENT OR ABUSE**

- Give priority to the Participants concerns. Assure the Participant that you believe what is being shared is very important and represents a legitimate problem.
- Listen openly and calmly: It is important to put your own feelings aside while you are with the Participant. Condemning the abuser is not acceptable because most abused Participants are the victims of a relative or close family friend, and therefore, despite the abuse, care deeply for their abuser. Also, if the Participant knows you are angry, he/she may not want to continue to open up to you. Be attentive to the Participant and actively listen to what is shared. Try not to ask any questions beyond "Is there anything more you would like to tell me?" The Participant will tell you what he/she wants to disclose. Any questions or suggestions on your part could end up hindering an official investigation.
- Reassure the Participant: Tell the Participant that he/she did the right thing in telling you. Also, let the Participant know that you can't keep the disclosure a secret, but that you need to tell someone who is trained to help with this type of situation. The three most important messages for the Participant are:
  - i. It's not your fault.
  - ii. You are not alone.
  - iii. There are people who can help you.
- Write down the facts: After the Participant speaks with you, immediately record what was shared. Record the facts and not your interpretations or speculations. Also, record the date and place of the Participant's disclosure to you and provide it to the Director.

## **GUIDELINES FOR RELATING TO PARTICIPANTS**

### **Staff Awareness and Responsibilities**

- In every instance, the Participants are our number one priority and are to be treated with respect. Insults, name-calling, and belittling Participants will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.
- Staff must be careful not to put themselves in situations where others can misinterpret their actions. Staff should NEVER be alone with a Participant and should follow the two-person rule. If this is not possible, let a fellow staff member know where you will be, why, and for how long. When circumstances do not permit two staff (e.g. a hospital trip at an inconvenient time), the staff member should then have at least two Participants with them. Private conversations between an Participant and staff member should always be done in the view of others.
- Conversations of a sexual nature with Participants are not acceptable. Though Participant may discuss topics of a sexual nature, a staff member should not contribute or engage in these conversations. If such conversations occur, a staff member should remind the Participants of the inappropriateness of their behavior.
- Staff members are not to request the personal information (email, phone number) of any participating Participant.

### **Discipline**

- Discipline may not include any form of physical or emotional punishment, denial of needs (sleep, food, shelter, clothing), or verbal abuse. If you need to reprimand an athlete or impose consequences for misbehavior, it must be reported to the Director.
- Whenever possible, Staff should respect the Participant's desire for privacy and the Participant's personal boundaries.

### **Showing Affection**

- Avoid physical touch with Participants outside of athletic setting.
- Within gym sessions, typical physical touch is permitted (i.e. high fives, pat on the back).
- Whether on-site or off-site, athletes and staff are to stay in rooms with the same gender. There shall be no female athletes with male athletes, unless an exception is made with family members due to health concerns.

## **GUIDELINES FOR STAFF RELATING TO OTHER STAFF**

It is expected that Staff will be role models of healthy friendships and positive relationships. Sexual activity between staff or a staff member and a Participant is completely unacceptable and will lead to the immediate dismissal of those involved.