



Complaints & Dispute Resolution

Safe Sport Session

Presented by
Amy Levac



Communicate your procedures

Post procedures on:

- 🍁 A bulletin board (coach room, lobby)
- 🍁 Web site

Review the complaints process at meetings

Complaint procedures should be provided/communicated to:

- 🍁 Skaters
- 🍁 Parents of skaters
- 🍁 Coaches
- 🍁 Volunteers
- 🍁 Board members and administrators



Communication - Best Practices

The following are best practices and tips

- 🍁 Plan (Who? What? Where? When? Why?)
- 🍁 How? (Email, letter, website / e-newsletter, social media)
- 🍁 Be clear and concise
- 🍁 Consider your response time
- 🍁 Value of verbal communication



Effectively communicating with others is the foundation for creating strong relationships, increasing productivity and supporting a strong and healthier skating community.



Harassment vs. Conflict Bullying Prevention



Harassment

What Is:

- Unwanted sexual advances
- Repeated or a single severe event
- Threats
- Discrimination *(as per the Canadian Human Rights Act and SC policy)*
- Isolating the person by:
 - No longer talking to them
 - Ignoring them

What Isn't:

- Conflict in itself
- A single or isolated incident *(inappropriate remark)*

Ask yourself:

- Was this the first incident?
- Did the incident occur within the scope of the policy?



Bullying vs. Conflict

Bullying

- Is always negative
- Is typically repeated
- Involves aggressive, harmful behaviour
- Always a power imbalance
- The person bullying intends to cause fear or harm

Conflict

- Can be positive or negative
- Can be a one-time event
- Doesn't have to involve aggression
- Can occur between two people of equal power
- There is no intent to hurt others



Types of Bullying

- Verbal:** The use of words and/or tone to hurt or humiliate another person
- Physical:** Engaging in behaviours such as hitting, hair pulling, kicking or damaging their property
- Relational or Social:** Harming someone through ignoring, isolating, excluding or spreading rumors
- Cyberbullying:** Using digital means such as emails, text messages and social media to deliberately harm another person





Bullying causes serious harm

Social, physical and mental health problems

- ❁ Children who are bullied suffer more headaches, stomach aches, depression and anxiety
- ❁ Children who bully, and those who are bullied, are at greater risk of suicide
- ❁ Children who bully are more likely to use drugs and alcohol and engage in criminal activity



“All the things we don't say about bullying and how it makes us feel... and what we all need to hear.”



What can clubs/schools do:

To Prevent Bullying?

Have a group discussion with the skaters about:

- **Anti-Bullying and Respect**
(e.g. respecting individual's physical space, encourage others as they try new things, listen to other when they are speaking)
- **Go over club rules**
- **How to repair a relationship after being disrespectful or hurt**
(both giving and receiving apologies)

When Bullying is Happening?

INTERVENE as quickly as possible:

- Speak with the child that is bullying
- Acknowledge the behaviour is unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- Explain that the behaviour must be adjusted moving forward
- Speak with the child who is being bullied
(find out how they are feeling and ensure they know that they deserve to be treated with respect)
- Continue to monitor the behaviour and the relationship between both skaters



Triaging Complaints

Understanding when complaints are handled at the club/skating school, by the Section or National



Handling Complaints:

Why should complaints be submitted in writing by the complainant?

- ❖ Gives the complainant the opportunity to focus on their situation
- ❖ Clearly state what the complaint is and what policy or procedure has been breached
- ❖ Provide the facts of the situation that occurred
- ❖ Confirm how they'd like the situation to be resolved
- ❖ Helps avoid misinterpretation, misunderstandings, gaps



The Importance of Documentation

by the Board of Directors'

Documentation and proper recording of important communications, including those related to formal complaints is vital

- ✿ Dates – from the date of formal complaint submission to resolution
- ✿ Meetings - Record of attendees, actions and/or decisions

In doing so:

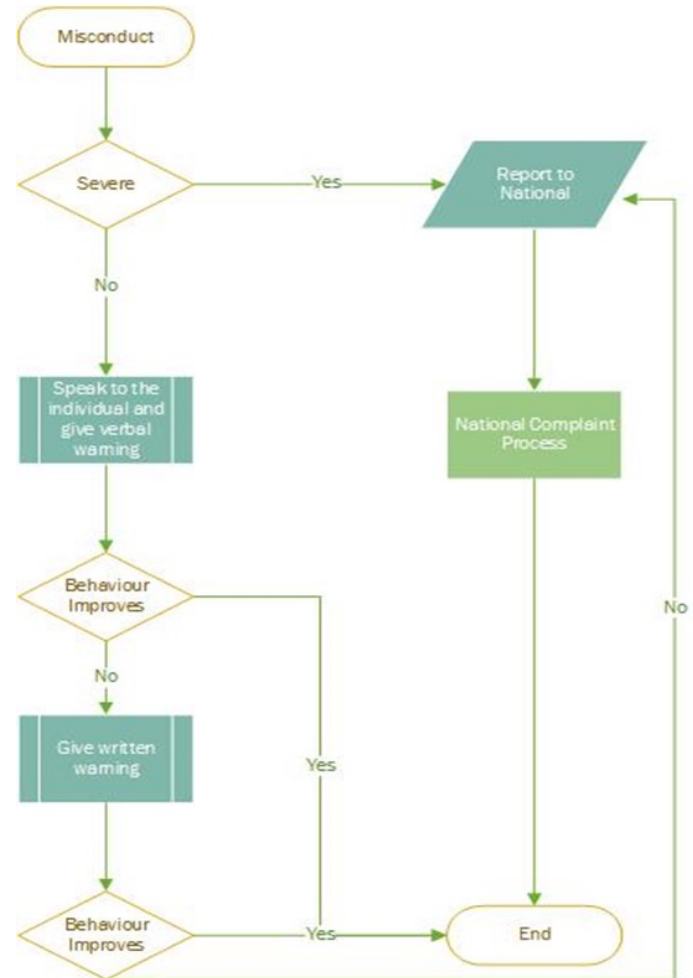
- ✿ Provides a record of the Board's due diligence
- ✿ Enables timely follow-up
- ✿ Supports progressive actions when necessary
- ✿ Supports Safe Sport mandate, Code of Ethics, Privacy, Policies



The Board must always

- ✦ Follow the policies and procedures that are in place
- ✦ Ensure there is no conflict of interest
- ✦ Ensure the entire board works together
- ✦ Ensure the process is fair and impartial
- ✦ Maintain confidentiality
- ✦ Use due diligence

Progressive Discipline Approach





Effective Conflict Resolution

- ❖ Maintain professional boundaries
- ❖ Ensure that the club's constitution is updated regularly and followed
- ❖ Reach out for help whenever needed
- ❖ Always remember, it's about the skaters!



Effective Conflict Resolution

Agreement:

The first step in resolving conflict is getting agreement that a problem needs to be solved.

Information:

Positive conflict resolution involves gathering information about interests, needs, viewpoints and concerns.

Solution:

Following a positive conflict resolution process requires participants to be open to all ideas. Don't dwell on complaints and accusations.

Resolution:

Focus on positive outcomes and you'll get better results.



Complaints Overview

Over 90% of complaints received at Safe Sport involve 2 people who aren't effectively relating to each other and don't know how to resolve it

- 🍁 Parent alleges coach isn't treating their child skater fairly
- 🍁 Coach alleges parent is harassing them
- 🍁 Coach alleges head-coach isn't treating them fairly / bullying
- 🍁 2 Coaches not getting along
- 🍁 2 Skaters not getting along

For all the above:

Safe Sport will encourage the complainant to submit their complaint in writing to their skating club Board of Directors or skating school administration



Complaint Escalation

If, after the skating club BOD or Skating School Administration has worked with the parties to help them resolve the complaint,

- ❁ the Complainant isn't satisfied with the outcome they can escalate their complaint in writing to the Section.
- ❁ The Section may review the complaint and determine best next steps which could include: (Interviews, investigation, mediation, etc.)
- ❁ For complaints that fall within the National Complaints Policy Skate Canada will review the complaint.



National Process (Internal)

RECEIVE

complaint by email, national complaint form or forwarded by a section office

REVIEW

within 10 – 14 days

COMPARE

the allegations listed against our policies

DETERMINE

outcome or course of action to be taken



Handling of Complaints

**Club Dispute
Resolution**

**Section Dispute
Resolution**

**Telephone
conversations with
the complainant**

**3rd Party Preliminary
Investigation**

to determine if the
complaint will be
taken into the NCP

If both parties agree
we can offer them
**professional
mediation** in hopes
to settle the conflict

Activate complaint
to be handled by
National Office



Handling of Serious Allegations

- 🍁 Activate immediately
- 🍁 Connect with the complainant
- 🍁 Connect with law enforcement – (if applicable)
- 🍁 Immediately suspend the individual accused of the allegations
- 🍁 Inform all parties (club/school, complainant, section) that the individual has been suspended until further notice
- 🍁 Update the list of suspended individuals on the membership site
- 🍁 Once the police investigation is complete, we begin our National Complaints Process



Reporting

Contact your local **Child Protection Agency**

If the child is in immediate danger, **dial 911**

*Urgent Safe Sport Reporting **1-833-723-3758** or nationalsafesportskating@bell.net

**The third party service provides a safe place for Skate Canada registrants and members of incidents of harassment, abuse and discrimination to report their concerns*

Safe Sport **1-888-747-2372**, ext. **703** or safesport@skatecanada.ca





Available Tools & Resources

Skate Canada's Safe Sport Department

- 🍁 1-888-747-2372 ext: 703
- 🍁 safesport@skatecanada.ca

Respect in Sport – Activity Leader Training

- 🍁 Available to all club board members and administrators
- 🍁 <https://skatecanada.respectgroupinc.com>

Respect Resource Line - **CONFIDENTIAL ANONYMOUS** (Available 365 days)

TOLL FREE: 1-888-329-4009

TEXT: 1-306-717-9636

RESOURCELINE@RESPECTGROUPINC.COM



Safe Sport Videos

Available on Skate Canada's very own YouTube Channel:
[Skating Development Video Library](#)



safesport@skatecanada.ca



PLAN TO EXECUTE FOR SUCCESS