



# HELP SHEET

## A CYBER SAFE ENVIRONMENT



### RATIONALE

Cyberbullying" or "electronic aggression" means deliberately using technology such as smartphones, the Internet or social media environments to harass, humiliate, badmouth, or threaten someone.

Acts of cyberbullying and other electronic aggression have caused a great deal of suffering that can and must be prevented. Our roles as Leagues and club administrators, parents, community members, and caring adults are to teach our young people, as well as our colleagues, how to be good digital citizens, to model being positive digital citizens ourselves, and to insist that everyone demonstrate an ongoing commitment to using technology wisely and safely.

Smartphones and social media apps have moved a huge number of our social interactions online. Unfortunately, they've moved bullying and aggression online, too. It's estimated that between 10 and 40% of adolescents are victims of cyberbullying, or repeated and intentional acts of online aggression. Even more social media users have witnessed these acts of aggression and done nothing to intervene.

### PROCEDURES

#### Set a Good Example

Your club is a powerful social influence and your example will be followed by those young people in your club. Cyber bullying is not just a young person's behaviour; adults can be just as hurtful.

The Leagues and our clubs have a responsibility to establish expectations, implement processes to minimise any cyber bullying and to step in when it occurs.

- The Leagues has several policies; Member Protection Policy and Cybersafety Policy which should be published and circulated through your club. Spend time explaining to your members your club's and the Leagues expectations.
- Reach out to communicate in person directly and respectfully with someone with whom you have a problem rather than complaining behind this individual's back. Or, if this doesn't work, let the Leagues deal with the issue.

#### Call Out Bullying or Inappropriate Behaviour

Stepping in if you are a parent is harder than it seems. Fear of retaliation, indifference and the assumption others will do it are all of the excuses. As a club you have a responsibility to all of your members.

- All social media groups in your club should have at least one adult moderator/administrator (two or more is better). They should monitor posts and activity on a daily basis and remove posts which breach the Member Protection policy.
- Those that post offensive posts or like or share offence posts must be "called out!" Stay respectful and polite but explain that these comments breach our expectations.

#### Get a Buy-In From Your Members

When families join your club, they should clearly understand the Leagues' Cyber Safety Policy and the Member Protection Policy.

- Get a commitment from your members to act with respect, safety and kindness toward others.
- Bullying is unsafe, disrespectful behaviour, whether it happens in person, on paper, or with social media.

#### There Are Consequences!

- If a member does something hurtful to another member either online or in person, have them apologize or make amends.
- The Leagues has clearly published guidelines for incidents that escalate beyond the club.

#### Nothing is Private

Even though a communication seems very private and anonymous, and even if the developers claim their platform is private, whenever a person uses technology what they do leaves an electronic footprint that can become public, including to potential employers and even police.

- Ask the question when you post or make comment: **Do I want the entire population of the globe to see this?**
- Remember that anything shared electronically with anyone can be shared publicly by anyone you send it to.