

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The City of Tulsa's Park and Recreation Department is committed to a safe and fun-filled environment, free from harassment, intimidation or bullying for all of our participants and staff, regardless of actual or perceived differences of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, intersexuality, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital and family status, age, ability, ancestry, height, weight, domestic partner status, labor organization membership, family situation, or political affiliation.

We are working hard to make all parks and facilities we manage a "Bully Free Zone", and encourage all patrons or participants to report any type of bullying they may experience, hear or see occurring in our recreation facilities.

What is Bullying?

Bullying can be best defined as the intentional abuse, harassment and/or intimidation of others. Bullying can emotionally, socially, mentally or physically harm a child or adult. It is always an intentional act. The person who bullies intends to harm the victim; it is no accident. Bullying is characterized by repeat occurrences and is not generally considered a random act or single incident.

Types of Bullying:

- Verbal Bullying includes but is not limited to teasing, name calling, inappropriate comments, taunting and threatening to cause harm.
- Social Bullying includes but is not limited to words or actions that hurt someone's reputation or relationships, leaving someone out on purpose, telling other children not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone, and embarrassing someone in public.
- Physical Bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes but is not limited to hitting, kicking, pinching, spitting, tripping, pushing, hair pulling, mean or rude hand gestures, damage to someone's property, and/or theft.
- Cyber or Electronic Bullying involves using technology to threaten, hurt, single out, embarrass, spread rumors, and/or reveal secrets about others. Cyber bullying can be done through phone calls, text messages, pictures/video clips, email, instant messaging, chat rooms, websites, gaming, or any other online medium.

Why is Bullying Difficult to Stop?

Stopping the act of bullying is difficult for several reasons:

- Often children/adults do not complain about bullying because they are afraid of retribution and consequences.
- It is feared that the person notified of the bullying may not handle the situation properly, thereby losing the trust and respect of the victim.
- Bystanders and/or witnesses seldom intervene.
- Bullying usually occurs when there are not others present.