

## **Girl Scouts of Western Washington Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Introduction**

Girl Scouts of Western Washington (GSWW) strives to provide a safe, secure, and respectful environment for all Girl Scouts on GSWW property and at GSWW-sponsored activities. Bullying has a harmful social, physical, psychological, and academic impact on bullies, victims, and bystanders. Our council consistently and vigorously addresses bullying so that there is no disruption to the enriching experiences and opportunities that GSWW provides to our Girl Scout members.

### **Definition**

Bullying is deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions, intended to cause fear, intimidation, or harm. Bullying may be repeated behavior and involves an imbalance of power. The behavior may be motivated by an actual or perceived distinguishing characteristic, such as, but not limited to: age; national origin; race; ethnicity; religion; gender; gender identity; sexual orientation; physical attributes; physical or mental ability or disability; and social, economic, or family status.

Bullying behavior can be:

1. Physical (e.g. assault, hitting or punching, kicking, theft, threatening behavior)
2. Verbal (e.g. threatening or intimidating language, teasing or name-calling, racist remarks)
3. Indirect (e.g. spreading cruel rumors, intimidation through gestures, social exclusion, and sending insulting messages or pictures by mobile phone or using the internet—also known as cyber bullying)

### **Prohibition**

Bullying behavior is prohibited at our campsites, buildings, properties, and at GSWW events, including any property or vehicle owned, leased, or used by GSWW. This includes transportation regularly used by Girl Scouts to go to and from GSWW sponsored events/activities. Educational environments include, but are not limited to, every activity under GSWW supervision.

### **Consequences and Support**

An interview of the bully regarding the allegations will generally be conducted before GSWW takes any action but will not be required if there are sufficient witnesses and/or other evidence supporting the allegations of bullying under certain circumstances.

If it is determined that any Girl Scout member (youth or adult), volunteer, or

employee participated in bullying behavior or retaliated against anyone due to the reporting of bullying behavior, GSWW may take the necessary disciplinary action, up to and including: suspension, expulsion, termination of volunteer or employment relationship, and/or referral to law enforcement officials for possible legal action, where appropriate.