

	American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association Inc. <i>Safety and Excellence in the Surgical Care of Children</i>	
	POLICY AND PROCEDURE	
PAGE: 1 of 3		REPLACES POLICY DATED: N/A
EFFECTIVE DATE: August 2019		APPROVED BY: APSNA BOD 2025-2026
NEXT REVISION: September 2028		
POLICY DESCRIPTION: Bullying and Incivility Policy		
REVIEWED: 9/25		REVISION: 08/22

STATEMENT OF POLICY: The American Nurses Association’s Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements states that nurses are required to “create an ethical environment and culture of civility and kindness, treating colleagues, coworkers, employees, students, and others with dignity and respect” (ANA, 2015, p. 4). The American Pediatric Surgical Nurses Association, Inc. (APSNA) is committed to promoting and maintaining a healthy environment within APSNA as well as in working, learning, and social settings where every individual is treated with civility and respect.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to communicate that APSNA will not *in any instance* tolerate bullying behavior.

Conduct prohibited by this Policy is unacceptable in APSNA and in any organization-related setting outside APSNA, such as during APSNA-sponsored or -related trips, meetings and social events.

Related policies:

Non-Discrimination Harassment Policy

Statement of Values and Ethics Standards Policy

Diversity and Inclusion Policy

Information Technology (IT) Resources and Communication Systems Policy

Interactions with Industry Policy

Statement of Values and Ethical Standards Policy – Board of Directors and Volunteers

I. Definitions

- A. **Incivility** can take the form of rude and discourteous actions, of gossiping and spreading rumors, and of refusing to assist a colleague or fellow member when reasonably possible. All of those are an affront to the dignity of a colleague or fellow member and violate professional standards of respect. Oftentimes, incivility is not directed at any specific person or persons. However, it may perpetuate or become a precursor to bullying and workplace violence; therefore, it cannot be characterized as innocuous or inconsequential.
- B. **Bullying** is a pattern of persistent and repeated health-harming mistreatment of one or more people by one or more perpetrators that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, and unrelated to APSNA’s legitimate business interests. APSNA considers the following types of behaviors examples of bullying:

1. Verbal bullying. Slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or his or her family; persistent name-calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.
 2. Physical bullying. Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault, damage to a person's work area or property.
 3. Gesture bullying. Nonverbal gestures that can convey threatening messages.
 4. Exclusion. Socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work-related activities.
 5. Cyber bullying using emails, forum or social media posts to intimidate, threaten or humiliate others.
- C. In addition, the following examples may constitute or contribute to evidence of bullying:
1. Persistent singling out of one person.
 2. Shouting or raising one's voice at an individual in public or in private.
 3. Using obscene or intimidating gestures.
 4. Not allowing the person to speak or express himself or herself (i.e., ignoring or interrupting).
 5. Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames.
 6. Public humiliation in any form.
 7. Constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's job performance or description.
 8. Public reprimands.
 9. Repeatedly accusing someone of errors that cannot be documented.
 10. Deliberately interfering with mail and other communications.
 11. Spreading rumors and gossip regarding individuals.
 12. Encouraging others to disregard a leader's instructions.
 13. Manipulating the ability of someone to do his or her work (e.g., overloading, underloading, withholding information, setting deadlines that cannot be met, giving deliberately ambiguous instructions).
 14. Unwanted physical contact, physical abuse or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property (defacing or marking up property).
- D. Bullying behavior may take many forms including physical, verbal, or written, electronic (cyber) acts or behaviors. Bullying often involves an abuse or misuse of power. A single physical, verbal, or written act or behavior generally will not constitute bullying unless especially severe and egregious.
- E. Members engaged in the bullying of other members can contribute to an unhealthy, hostile and unprofessional organizational environment than is likely to adversely affect a member's experience and therefore satisfaction with APSNA.
- F. Such behavior violates APSNA's Statement of Values and Ethical Standards Policy.

II. **No Retaliation**

APSNA is committed to enforcing this Policy against all forms of bullying and incivility. However, the effectiveness of its efforts depends largely on members and employees reporting inappropriate conduct. If members and/or employees feel that they or someone else may have been subjected to conduct that violates this Policy, they should report it immediately (as described below). If members and/or employees do not report conduct prohibited by this policy, APSNA may not become aware of a possible violation of this Policy and may not be able to take appropriate corrective action.

APSNA prohibits retaliation against any individual who reports bullying or participates in an investigation of such reports. No one will be subject to any form of discipline, reprisal, intimidation, or retaliation for good faith reporting of incidents of bullying and incivility of any kind or cooperating in related investigations.

III. **Complaint Procedure**

Individuals who believe they have been the victims of conduct prohibited by this Policy or believe they have witnessed such conduct should discuss their concerns with the President Elect/Immediate Past President as soon as possible. Complaints should be as detailed as possible, including the names of all individuals involved and any witnesses. If you do not feel comfortable reporting the matter to the President Elect/Immediate Past President for any reason or if the President Elect/Immediate Past President is not available or you believe that the matter has not been appropriately addressed by him/her, you should report the matter to the President.

APSNA encourages the prompt reporting of complaints or concerns so that rapid and constructive action can be taken before relationships become irreparably strained. Therefore, while no fixed reporting period has been established, early reporting and intervention have proven to be the most effective method of resolving actual or perceived violations of this Policy.

Any such complaint will be heard in confidence, and the information will be disclosed only on a need-to-know basis to investigate and resolve the matter. APSNA will investigate the complaint promptly and thoroughly and will take any and all appropriate corrective action. Any individual found to have violated this Policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of membership / employment or removal.

False and malicious complaints of bullying, incivility or retaliation (as opposed to complaints that, even if erroneous, are made in good faith) may be the subject of appropriate disciplinary action.