



## Coach Note: Helping your team OWN the bullying issue

This week we will take a look at the R (Relationships) combined with the O (Ownership) in the GROW model as they both relate to bullying in sports.

We can listen to the tragic stories of young people being bullied and be overwhelmed at the magnitude and severity of the psychological and physical created by bullying. Statistics reveal that half of all high school athletes report having been hazed on a sport team. Coaches often bully their players. The complexity of the issue can be defeating, but something can and **MUST** be done about it. We, as coach ministers, must tackle bullying/hazing in sport head-on.

In the Play Like a Champion Today® philosophy, coaches are urged to give some ownership of their team to their players. This can be seen in entrusting young people to lead stretching exercises or group prayer, set team rules and have input into their positioning. The best way to address and prevent bullying on a team is to make sure all of the players take ownership of the problem. The problem is not the bully and/or the person being bullied. The problem is a **team problem**. Get your team together to talk about the issue. Even if you are not experiencing a direct problem with bullying/hazing, still get your team talking about the issue in a team meeting. Remember, as a coach minister you have a special opportunity to address moral issues in sport and help your athletes become value-oriented, virtuous people who stand up for what is right.

Perhaps the most overlooked people in bullying



### October is Bullying Prevention Month

There are numerous resources available on the web to empower adults and youth on how to address this social ill.

Make a commitment to do something about bullying on your team and in your community **TODAY!**

incidents are on-lookers. Get them to express how they feel about watching the trouble, and make them understand that, as "owners" of the team, it is their responsibility to speak up and be heard when they see wrong being done.

The point is not simply to preach against bullying, but get your team talking about it to OWN the solution. Lead discussions with your team, and don't be afraid to see where your team takes the discussion. You'll be surprised just how expert they really are! In next week's coach note, we will break down the "to-do's" in the team discussion process.

When you guide your athletes to recognize bullying has no place on a sport team that is a family, you are helping your athletes develop the cardinal virtue of justice - respect for all. When you empower your athletes to stand up against bullying on your team and in your community, you are helping them to practice the cardinal virtue of prudence - wise and just decision-making.