



2024 CHEERLEADING MANUAL



City of Tallahassee
Parks, Recreation & Neighborhood Affairs

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ATTENTION COACHES

Pictures are an inevitable component of youth sports. Parents love them. Several different photography companies will approach you at the beginning of the season. It is important that you NOT try to sort through their brochures yourself. You should select a parent representative to take care of this selection process.

Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department does not endorse any company. As a coach you are considered a city representative and should not promote or endorse any vendor. The selection and subsequent purchase of pictures is each individual team's decision and responsibility. The city is in no way involved in this process.

Vendors must provide proof of licensure to be eligible to act as a legitimate vendor at City sponsored events. In addition, any employee of said company must provide appropriate identification and credentials reflecting such.

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I. ROLE OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH

The Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department (PRNA) would like to thank you for accepting the responsibility of coaching one of our cheerleading squads. No program can be a success without good leadership.

The hours will be long, and you are serving without pay, but your job is most important. You will be building the moral fiber, mental health, and physical strength of young boys and girls who will be the citizens of tomorrow.

These athletes are at a most impressionable age and the training you give them, good or bad, will have a lasting effect on their young lives.

For some, cheering on your squad may be their only contact with organized sports. We know you will want them to remember it as a pleasurable and meaningful experience.

Without your help, this program would not be possible. For the players, parents, and the Tallahassee PRNA, THANKS!

II. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE VOLUNTEER COACH

Background Check

All head coaches and primary assistant coaches must complete a National Background Screening Consent/Release Form. Coaches must be cleared before coaching any Tallahassee Parks and Recreation program, this includes practices. Any team assistants or team parents are encouraged to complete a Tallahassee Parks and Recreation Volunteer Information Sheet.

Parents Meeting

All coaches must have a preseason meeting with squad parents to discuss the purpose and scope of the program, code of conduct, rules and regulations, and other necessary information.

Player Supervision

To ensure the safety of all cheerleaders, Tallahassee Parks and Recreation is asking each coach to stay with their cheerleaders after practices and games until all players have been picked up. If the same parent(s) are consistently late, please let your park supervisor know. The park supervisor will talk to the parent(s) regarding the issue. If the issue continues, a cheerleader may be dismissed from the league. Under no circumstance shall a coach leave a cheerleader unattended.

Parent/Spectator Control

A team is responsible for its parents and spectators. Officials may penalize a team for the behavior of its parents and spectators. Please read through the Code of Conduct and the definition and penalty for unsportsmanlike conduct.

Reporting Injuries

During games, park supervisors are responsible for filling out the Accident Report Form for any injury that requires medical attention, or for any injury that may potentially require medical attention. During warm-ups or practices, coaches are responsible for filling out the Accident Report Form. A copy of the report should be turned into Tallahassee Parks and Recreation within 24 hours.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT

THIS COPY IS FOR YOUR REFERENCE – SIGNED COPY SUBMITTED

Tallahassee Parks and Recreation directs many youths athletic recreational programs. We are committed to creating opportunities and experiences that will foster the development of positive moral and ethical values, and we strive to promote good sportsmanship among all participants. As a volunteer coach, I hereby pledge to live up to the following code of conduct:

1. I will abstain from using any tobacco or alcohol products in or around the playing field, or the sports complex in which the field is located. I will also refrain from participating in any practice or game activity when it is apparent that I have consumed alcohol prior to arriving. ____ Initials
2. I will refrain from using abusive or profane language in or around the playing field or the sports complex in which the field is located. ____ Initials
3. I will refrain from permitting a player to participate in a practice or game when in doubt as to the player's health or physical condition, and I will abide by a doctor's decision in all matters relating to a player's health or physical condition. ____ Initials
4. I will provide equal opportunities for all players regardless of race, color, ethnicity, religion, age, or otherwise qualified characteristic. ____ Initials
5. I will refrain from accepting any gift, gratuity, or favor that might influence my judgment. I will refrain from offering any gift, gratuity, or favor with the intent of obtaining special privileges, and will not exploit any relationship with a player for personal gain or other advantage. ____ Initials
6. I will strive to promote good mental and physical health in all aspects of participation and refrain from any type of verbal or physical abuse of any players. I will make any criticism "constructive" in nature and reserve it for private moments. ____ Initials
7. I will consistently display and demand good sportsmanship in practice and in games, including but not limited to accepting decisions of the officials in a professional manner; refraining from criticizing opposing coaches, players, and spectators; refraining from "running up the score" and congratulating opposing teams following a game. ____ Initials
8. I will conduct myself in accordance with all rules, regulations, and determinations of the particular league or program in which I am volunteering. ____ Initials
9. I will hold a pre-season parents' meeting and maintain open communication with parents relating to all aspects of participation, including conduct of both spectators and players. ____ Initials
10. I will consistently act in the best interest of all players and the particular program in which I am volunteering, so as to provide a positive experience for all players and to promote a positive image of the program. ____ Initials

Coach Signature

Date

Park

League (Age)

Team

IV. EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

We want to emphasize the importance of conducting yourselves properly in dealing with medical emergencies at your facilities. Realizing we are not empowered or trained to "treat" victims, we still have the responsibility to render front line aid and supervise the situation. This may involve discussing the situation with the victim, coach, or parent, or to call in the Ambulance Service. Listed below are some guidelines to follow, which should always be coupled with good common sense.

In the event of an accident or emergency:

1. Try to determine the extent of the injury. If in doubt as to the seriousness of the accident, do not move the patient. Keep her comfortable and reassured and call an ambulance. If the situation calls for it, apply ice or keep the patient warm and comfortable.
2. Front line care of an accident would include use of ice, stoppage of bleeding, restoring breathing, and treatment for shock, heat exhaustion or stroke.
3. Be sure victim is as comfortable as possible. If it's cold, cover them. If it's hot, loosen equipment, etc. **USE GOOD COMMON SENSE!**
4. Call for additional support. Use other adults to secure necessary materials and never leave the patient alone with other players.
5. If an ambulance is called, be sure you have someone to direct it to the site. Assist paramedics in any way you can.
6. Always prepare an accident report that will be turned in to the supervisor who will then get the information to the Parks and Recreation Department.
7. Be sure you have access to a phone within a short period of time.
8. Submit a follow up report of the injured person. Call to find out the extent of the injury and how she is doing.

Above all, supervisors and coaches are to take charge during these incidents and must coordinate aid rendered.

Please advise all your coaches of the importance of being sure all aspects of an accident are handled properly and expeditiously.

V. INCLEMENT WEATHER & LIGHTNING SAFETY

Tallahassee Parks and Recreation currently uses the AccuWeather Sky Guard System. This system provides staff with lightning advisories and warnings via text or email message based on a given park or facility location. Full-time athletic supervisors will receive an email and/or text with information regarding a potential storm. The athletic supervisors will alert park supervisors of one of two messages received: **Lightning Advisory** and **Lightning Warning**. During games onsite park supervisors will inform their coaches of any advisories or warnings. This system will be used to determine whether play should be suspended and able to resume activity.

Lightning Advisory = Lightning conditions exist within 15 miles of the park or facility location. Play may continue until a warning is received.

Lightning Warning = Lightning conditions exist within 8 miles of the park or facility location. All players, coaches and officials must clear the playing field. Anyone onsite at the park or facility location is encouraged to seek appropriate shelter. Play will resume when the warning expires.

During practices or when a park supervisor is not onsite, coaches will be responsible for determining whether play should be suspended. Please be aware of weather conditions. Use common sense and good judgment and make safety a priority! Lack of rainfall is not an adequate indicator for suspending play.

If you see it (lightning), flee it! If you hear it (thunder), clear it!

Ultimately, players, coaches and spectators are responsible for their safety. If participants feel they are in danger from inclement weather or impending lightning, they have the right to leave the park or facility location to seek shelter, without fear of repercussion or penalty.

VI. MEDICAL ISSUES/CARE

Heat Related Emergencies

Heat related emergencies usually result from loss of fluids and electrolytes (salts) from heavy sweating. As a person continues to lose fluids through sweat, the blood volume is decreased. Blood flow to the skin increases, reducing blood flow to the vital organs. The circulatory system is affected; therefore, the person goes into mild shock. If treated immediately, heat cramps and heat exhaustion can usually be reversed with prompt care.

Heat Cramps – Loss of fluids and electrolytes can begin to produce painful spasms of skeletal muscles, generally in the legs and abdomen. Skin is moist. Body temperature is usually normal.

Treatment – Have person drink cool water and rest in a cool place.

Heat Exhaustion – Cool, moist, pale, clammy, or ashen, headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, exhaustion.

Treatment –Have person drink cool water and rest in a cool place.

Heat Stroke – Red, hot, dry. Body temperature continues to climb. Person may vomit and begin to show changes in level of consciousness. Sweating may stop because body fluid levels are low. When sweating stops, the body cannot cool itself effectively and body temperature rapidly rises. Soon the brain and other vital organs, such as the heart and kidneys begin to fail. Convulsions, coma and death will result.

TREATMENT ON NEXT PAGE

Treatment for Heat Stroke

- ❖ Check ABC's
- ❖ Call 911
- ❖ Remove person from the hot environment.
- ❖ Have the person lie down in a cool or shady area. Elevate the legs slightly.
- ❖ Loosen or remove clothing.
- ❖ Apply cool, wet towels or sheets or cold packs to the body.
- ❖ Fan the person to help increase evaporation.
- ❖ If you only have ice or cold packs, place them on the person's wrists and ankles, in each armpit, and in the groin to cool the large blood vessels.
- ❖ Give small amounts of water to a fully conscious person.
- ❖ Do not apply rubbing (isopropyl) alcohol. The alcohol may cause poisoning through the skin or through inhalation.
- ❖ Monitor vital signs.

Concussions

After recent discussion of concussions, our program has adopted recommendations each coach will follow for the season. The following guidelines were established by the CDC.

1. Every coach will receive "A Fact Sheet for Coaches" provided by the CDC at the beginning of the season at a coaches meeting. We will also explain signs and symptoms a coach will look for at the coaches meeting.
2. Every coach will also receive a couple copies of "A Fact Sheet for Parents" that will be distributed to a parent of a child that shows signs and symptoms of a concussion.
3. Review the four steps in an action plan with each coach if they suspect a child has a concussion:
 - a. Remove athlete from play.
 - b. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by an appropriate health care professional. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
 - c. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion.
 - d. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health care professional says they are symptom-free and it OK to return to play. A player must bring a written clearance to the main office before the player can start back playing. League supervisor will notify the coach when a player is cleared to play.

VII. PREVENTING PROBLEMS

Develop Policies and Procedures: *Clearly defined organizational policies and procedures help clarify the rights and responsibilities of parents and how they should behave within the confines of the youth sports environment. Without boundaries and guidelines for behavior it is difficult to hold individuals accountable for their actions later. Often, parents are out of control because no one has ever told them they are not supposed to be out of control!*

Communication: Communication is the key to so many things a youth sports administrator is responsible for and dealing with parents is no exception! Policies and procedures will have no effect unless all involved, including the parents, are made aware of them and understand them. This is where communicating with the parents is vital. Parents must be acknowledged for the important role they play.

Parent Meeting: A parents' meeting is a vital tool in developing a positive youth sports experience for children. It allows the coach to get to know the parents he/she will be dealing with during the season. A healthy two-way communication process should be encouraged and initiated at the parent meeting. Time should be left at the end of the meeting for questions from parents.

Topics to be discussed at this meeting should include:

- Structure of the league – who should parents contact with concerns or questions.
- Philosophy of the league – equal play, skill development, FUN, etc.
- Program specifics – rules, location, times, etc.
- Season specifics – duration, special events, etc.
- Equipment specifics – what is needed, what is optional, etc.
- Transportation guidelines
- Health & safety guidelines – inclement weather policies, etc.
- How parents can get involved
- The rights & responsibilities of the youth sports parent
- Parent's Code of Ethics

Get to Know the Parents Informally: The administrators and coaches of each team should make a point of getting to know the parents of the children. The coach should be aware that all families are different and the motives for children being involved in sports will vary. It may be useful for the coach to have the parents complete a simple questionnaire, asking them specifically what they want their child to get out of the youth sports experience. This questionnaire can be completed at the time of registration and then given to each coach.

By informing each parent of the organizational philosophy many problems may be prevented in the future. Also, if the parents feel comfortable, it is more likely that youth sports administrators will have an open, constructive relationship with them. Coaches may make the effort to contact each of his/her players' parents on an individual basis or simply spend time talking to each parent at the orientation meeting. What is important is that during and after practices and games the coaches and administrators acknowledge the parents as a valued part of the youth sports experience. If ignored or shown any disrespect, parents feel less secure and are less likely to be supportive.

VIII. CHEERLEADING GENERAL INFORMATION

1. **Coaches** - Each squad will have two (2) coaches, if possible. All coaches must complete a national background screening form before performing their role as a coach.
2. **Eligible Players:**
 - A. Pee Wee Squad - This program is for 4-8 years old. – **Flag Football**
 - Pee Wee squad will cheer on Saturdays.
 - 8 years old can choice between Pee Wee and Junior squads
 - B. Junior Squad- This program is for 8-13 years old. – **Tackle Football**
 - Junior squads will cheer on Tuesday or Wednesday evenings.
3. **Equipment-** Tallahassee Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs will provide a shirt for each cheerleader to keep and pom poms for use during the season.
4. **Number of Players Per Squad-** Pee Wee will have 12 and Junior will have 18 cheerleaders per squad and two (2) coaches.
5. **Rain Policy** – All squads and coaches are encouraged to come to all scheduled practices and games. Games will not be canceled before the scheduled time, unless decided by the league supervisor. Please encourage all parents to attend the games even with the threat of rain or cold weather.
6. **Cheers/Chants** - Squads can use the cheers and chants found in the back of this manual.
7. **Player Supervision** - To ensure the safety of all cheerleaders, Tallahassee Parks, and Recreation. is asking each coach to stay with your cheerleaders after practices and games until all cheerleaders have been picked up. If the same parents are consistently late, let your supervisor know. The supervisor will talk to the parents about this. If it continues, a cheerleader may be dismissed from the league. **Under no circumstances shall a coach leave a cheerleader unattended.**
8. **Mandatory Parents Meeting** - All coaches **must** have a preseason meeting with parents to discuss the philosophy of the program, expectations, parental conduct, various rules and regulations, and other necessary team information.
9. **Accident Reports** - Fill out an Accident Report for any injury that you feel will either need or potentially need medical attention. A copy of the report should be turned into the Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Affairs Department within 24 hours.
10. **Approved stunts** – The only approved stunts that are allowed are “thigh-stands.” Only the Junior squads re allowed to perform stunts.
11. **Team Pictures/Trophies** – Tallahassee Parks and Recreation cannot endorse or take responsibility for team activities beyond what is established as standard procedures in conducting this activity. Activities such as team pictures, trophies etc. are activities that parents must understand are their personal choice and ultimate responsibility if they opt to participate in them. **Coaches are advised to refrain from organizing "outside" activities.** If parents want to undertake these activities, it must be understood that mandatory donations for these events from team members is prohibited. All donations are voluntary and cannot affect a participant's rights to any benefits afforded any other player.

12. Halftime cheering-- You may do just a cheer or dance during halftime on the field facing your crowd. If you do a dance, it must be under 60 seconds.

Rules

- all music **MUST** be approved by one of the supervisors.
- no cursing, no vulgar language (no sexual content)
- no inappropriate dance moves (no air “humping”)
- Any type of thigh stands is allowed – **Junior Squad only.**
- Tumbling will be allowed if your girls know how to tumble but it is not required.
- Girls are allowed wear makeup / glitter (approval from their parents is required)
- You may get the parents involved in making up the routine or finding an acceptable routine on YouTube.

REMEMBER TO HAVE FUN WITH IT!!

IX. Cheerleading Rules and Guidelines

- No Gum or candy allowed while practicing or performing.
- No jewelry (Only stud earrings are acceptable)
- Always wear tennis shoes while practicing or performing
- Stretch and warm up prior to any cheer activity
- Be aware of the distance between you and other cheerleaders. Spread out at least arm's length apart.
- Listen to your team captain/coach to hear the cheers being called
- Use your voice effectively. Yell your words loudly and articulate. DO NOT sing or scream cheers!
- No "woooo" ing. Use words when showing spirit!
- Do not walk off the field without permission from your team parent/coach.
- Make sure hair is always up and out of the face.
- Face the audience when you cheer.
- Smile!!

APPENDIX A

Teaching Cheerleading Skills

Although it is helpful to have performed the skill, teaching it successfully requires much more than that. Even if a coach has never performed the skill, the skill can still be taught successfully with the acronym **IDEA**.

- I** Introduce the skill
- D** Demonstrate the skill
- E** Explain the skill
- A** Attend to those practicing the skill

Tips to Engage the Crowd

These are five steps to crowd success, keys that your squad members should be aware of when they are in front of a crowd: unity, material, direction and instruction, delivery, and timing.

Unity: Squad's main goal is to lead the crowd and to create group pride. Achieve this by employing group dynamics in cheers and chants.

Material: A crowd's vocabulary is limited, and attention span is limited. Keep the words simple and familiar so that they are easy to remember.

Direction and Instruction: Squad members must tell the crowd what to do, so you need to teach them every chance you get. A common way to help the crowd become involved is to use visual aids, such as signs. Make sure to keep them simple and easy to see. The key is to "keep it simple" for the fans!

Delivery: A squad's delivery is the key to involving the crowd. The delivery should be enthusiastic, positive, and encouraging for the crowd.

Timing: Squad members need to know when it's appropriate to make the crowd yell, so make them aware of the game situation. Timing is important. For example, the squad shouldn't be yelling "Defense" when the team has possession of the ball. The key to proper timing is to be aware at all times of what is happening in the game.

*Courtesy of American Sport Educator Program – 2009 "Coaching Youth Cheerleading"

APPENDIX B (Chants)

A chant is a short simple yell usually with motions, which is repeated three times. A chant is to be performed on the sidelines while the ball is in play.

What do we want?	P-S-Y-C-H-E-D	Parks and Rec
T-D	Psyched is what we want to be!	We're jammin' with
What's that?	GET PSYCHED! Alright (team name)!	Parks and Rec
Touchdown!	GET PSYCHED! Alright!	Red and White
		Red and White (Clap, Clap, Clap)
M-O - V-E	Who rocks the house?	Touchdown, team!
Move that ball for	The (team name/mascot) rock the	Score 6 (Clap, clap, clap)
a T-D!	house	
	And when the (team name/mascot)	Defense!
Offensive, Offensive	rock the house	Become the Offense!
Score to win!	We rock it all the way down	Get that ball!
	1... We are the (team name/mascots)	Now is the time,
Push 'em back! Push 'em back!	2... A little bit louder	Defense hold that line!
Go Big (color)!	3... I still can't hear you	
	4... More, more, more	O-F-F-E-N-S-E!
		Offense Score for Victory!
Grab it!		
Steal it!	R-O-W-D-I-E	If you want to win,
Take it away!	That's the way we spell rowdie!	you've got to cheer with all your
We want the ball to go the other	Rowdie!	might.
way!	Let's get rowdie!	When we say GO, you say
	Get Rowdie!	FIGHT!
		GO! FIGHT! GO! FIGHT!
Be aggressive! B-E aggressive!		GO! GO! FIGHT! FIGHT!
B-E-A-G-G-R-E-S-S-I-V-E!	Let's get a little bit rowdy	GO! GO! FIGHT! FIGHT!
	R-O-W (pause) D-Y	
Explode!		
Ignite!	We've got spirit! XX XX	
Defense, let's fight!	S-P-I-R-I-T, spirit!	
	Let's hear it!	
L-E-T-S G-O	Big G! (clasp clasp)	
Let's go, Lets go	Little O! (clasp clasp)	
L-E-T-S G-O	Big G! Little O!	
LET'S GO!	Let's go!	

APPENDIX C (Cheers)

A cheer is a longer yell that involves motions and sometimes jumps. A cheer is not repeated. A cheer is usually performed during time-outs, half time, or when the ball is not in play.

Two Bits

Four Bits

Six Bits

A Dollar

All for the (team mascot)s

Stand up and holler!

(Team name) fans in the stands

Yell with all your might

When we yell out (team name)

You yell out fight!

(team name)! FIGHT!

(team name)! FIGHT!

Y-E-L-L

Y-E-L-L

Everybody Yell!

Go (team name)!

Let's go (team name)!

Let's get fired up! GO!

Let's get fired up! FIGHT!

Let's get fired up! WIN!

Let's get fired up!

GO! FIGHT! WIN!

Hey (mascot name) are you there?

We're here!

Throw your hands up in the air and cheer!

(Mascot name) fans, clap your hands!

Yell, WE ARE THE BEST!

Yell it, WE ARE THE BEST!

1-2-3-4, Big Red

Is here, Stand up and cheer

Yell It, Go Team Go!

Go Team Go!

Hey, You (team name) fans,

Stand up and clap your hands!

Go, (team name), Go!

Go, (team name), Go!

Hey, You (team name) fans,

Now let's see you wave your hands!

Go, (team name), Go!

Go, (team name), Go!

Hey, hey its time to fight

Everybody yell (colors of team)

(Colors of team)!

Hey, hey let's do it again

Everybody yell GO! FIGHT! WIN!

Go, Fight, Win!

Go, Fight, Win!

If you want to win,

You've gotta cheer with all your might

When we say GO, you say FIGHT

GO! FIGHT! GO! FIGHT!

GO! GO! FIGHT! FIGHT!

GO! GO! FIGHT! FIGHT!

(Team name)!

Lets Win! (clap)

First and ten!

Do it again!

(Team name)! Lets Win! (clap)

Hey, Hey (team name) team

Show 'em how it's done!

(team name/ mascot)

Are number 1!