

2021-22 CYO CHEERLEADING RULES

I. CYO CHEERLEADING

CYO does not offer competition for cheerleading squads. However, because many parishes do field squads, CYO is continuing to make an attempt to bring cheerleading coaches and athletes more in line with the other athletic programming of the diocese. The philosophy of the CYO program does not include any “cutting” of children who wish to participate. Any child who meets the eligibility requirements must be given the opportunity to participate on a parish squad if one is offered regardless of their appearance and/or athletic ability.

CYO cheerleading is open to grades 5th - 8th. Younger athletes have been included in the past by cheerleading squads as “mascots” or “junior cheerleaders”. Although this is always a “cute” idea it can lead to hurt feelings because it is not open to everyone in the younger grades. An issue of safety must also be considered.

II. COACHES

Coaches must fulfill all requirements of CYO Coaches’ eligibility as outlined in Policies & Procedures.

III. ATHLETES

Athletes must fulfill all requirements of CYO Player’s eligibility.

- A. All squad members must be members of the parish and/or the parish’s educational system of that parish in order to participate on a parish squad.
- B. All squad members must have a completed “Emergency Medical Authorization Form” on file with the head coach prior to participating in any practice or event.
- C. All squad members are required to be examined by a doctor once every 13 months and obtain a medical examiner’s signature on the CYO player/parent contract.
- D. All squad members are required to have a signed Ohio Department of Health Concussion Acknowledgement sheet and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Acknowledgment form on file prior to practicing in any practice or event.
- E. All squad members are required to wear parish-approved uniforms. The uniform shall include at least a t-shirt with the parish name or identifying emblem and a skirt or shorts. All uniforms must be of modest nature and length.
- F. Jewelry is prohibited during practices and game performances. Jewelry is any object worn on the wrist or ankle; around the neck, finger or toe; in the ears or nasal or through the skin or nails.

IV. FORMS/FEES

- A. All cheerleading squads are required to submit rosters to the CYO Office prior to deadline for rosters in the Fall or for basketball season. The CYO office is located on the 3rd floor of the The Pastoral Center (1933 Spielbusch Avenue) and is open Monday-Friday from 8:30am-4:30pm.
- B. Squads are required to register/re-register for each season of participation.
- C. There will be no participant fee required for cheerleading squads.

V. GENERAL RULES

- A. All National Federation Rules on “Spirit” will be followed by CYO cheerleading squads.
- B. All cheers and music must be reviewed by the coach to ensure good sportsmanship.
- C. Cheerleaders should be cheerful, friendly, provide team spirit-not belittle an opponent or another squad.
- D. All cheers should be directed toward your team to succeed and not directed toward your opponent to fail.
- E. No actions by the squad should be made to purposely distract the players.
- F. All partner stunts and/or pyramids are limited to two levels high.
- G. Hip and thigh mounts are the only allowable mounts.
- H. Split lifts are not permitted.
- I. Acrobatic routines are permitted, but there will be no throws or lifts allowed.
- J. A spotter should be used in practice and performance until a tumbling stunt or jump is perfected and approved by the coach. One of these spotters must be the adult certified coach.
- K. Coaches must put the safety of the athletes ahead of all else. Coaches must never lose site of the fact that these athletes are grade school students and are not capable of performing stunts and tumbling that high school and college squads perform.

VI. GAME PERFORMANCE

- A. Cheerleading squads should go to mid-field/court and join the teams, coaches, and officials for the CYO Team Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance prior to the start of the game.
- B. Cheerleaders must cheer from an area where both the athletes participating in the game and the cheerleaders remain safe.
 - 1. In some gyms there is not enough room for cheerleaders to stand during the game. In these situations, the cheerleaders should sit together in the bleachers (chairs) during play.
 - 2. If the gym has ample room for the cheerleaders to stand safely on the end line (3-4 feet from the boundary line) they may do so, but they may NOT stand within the area of the free throw lane extended.
 - 3. At no time may cheerleaders obstruct the view of spectators or interfere with the athletic competition in progress.
 - 4. Squads should be aware of actions occurring within the contest at all times and be prepared to move as play advances. They should be aware of the movement of game officials and not interfere with their game responsibilities.
 - 5. During games, squads are permitted to perform from the sidelines within reasonable distance of the out-of-bounds line.
- C. Football games
 - 1. No on-field cheers are allowed during football time-outs.
 - 2. Cheers are allowed during half-time of football games.
 - 3. All cheerleading will stop when there is a player "down" (injured) on the field. When a player is down both cheerleading squads should remain quiet. Once the player is back to his feet or removed from the field, the cheerleaders from both teams should clap in support of that player. This shows extremely good sportsmanship.
 - 4. If each team has cheerleaders, they must alternate performances and split time evenly.
 - 5. One squad should perform at half-time while the other one politely watches. The squads should be supportive and friendly toward each other.
 - 6. Any music which is used for a performance must be reviewed and approved by the cheerleading coach and/or moderator. Absolutely no music which contains vulgar or profane language or connotations is allowed to be used. If there is any doubt in the mind of the coach whether the music is appropriate or not, a new selection should be made.
 - 7. During football games cheerleaders should be positioned on the sidelines between the goal-line and the 25-yard line. In the event that both squads need to stand on the same side of the field then the home squad will be on the west end and the visiting squad shall be on the east end.
- D. Basketball games
 - 1. Short cheers may be allowed on the floor during basketball time-outs.
 - 2. Squads should alternate their time-out performances.
 - 3. Squads must leave the floor at the referee's whistle.
 - 4. Sites may limit/restrict performances/size due to space and safety concerns.
 - 5. Squads may not move from one side of the court to the other throughout the game. Once a safe location has been established the squad must cheer there for the remainder of the game.
 - 6. A squad may never be located directly behind the basket.