

Westosha Falcons Youth Cheer (WFYC) Handbook

Mission Statement

The mission of the Westosha Falcons Youth Cheer (WFYC) Program is to offer grade-school athletes a no-cut sport that develops safe cheerleading skills for local competitions. Ultimately, our goal is to prepare athletes for high school cheerleading. We strive to teach commitment, hard work, integrity, leadership, self-confidence, a positive attitude, and a love for the sport.

Philosophy

Each athlete and parent participating in the WFYC Program is expected to make a serious commitment and adhere to the following philosophy:

The WFYC Program is designed to:

1. Prepare cheerleaders for cheerleading at the high school level.
2. Develop strength, technique, and confidence through regularly scheduled practices. Safety is our top priority. While coaches provide instruction and encouragement, no athlete will be forced to perform an activity they are uncomfortable with.
3. Provide choreography and instruction to ensure a well-executed, high-energy routine.
4. Foster team cohesion and a supportive environment.

Commitment Expectations

Athletes must:

- Uphold the rules and policies of WFYC.
- Contribute positively to team success by respecting coaches' decisions.
- Invest practice time to strengthen the team.
- Communicate appropriately with coaches when necessary.
- Practice safely.
- Have fun.

Coaches must:

- Serve as role models in athletics and daily life.
- Encourage positivity and hard work among athletes.
- Foster team spirit and treat all athletes fairly.

- Support athletes with dignity, even in unsuccessful efforts.
- Prioritize athlete safety.

Parents must:

- Support WFYC rules and policies.
 - Encourage their children in positive, realistic ways.
 - Communicate with coaches when necessary.
 - Serve as role models for all team members.
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Team Details

- Open to athletes in **grades 6-8**.
 - Registration is **first-come, first-served** and closes **May 31st**, or when maximum team capacity is reached.
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Communication

- All communication is conducted via **email and the Band app**.
 - Families must check their email or Band app **at least once per week**.
 - Program rules, schedules, and events are posted on our **website**.
 - For questions, email the **Director of Communications** at westoshafalconsyouthcheer@gmail.com.
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Code of Conduct

WFYC emphasizes **respect and sportsmanship**. Athletes must display courtesy, responsibility, dependability, compassion, and honesty at all times, whether on or off the mat.

- At competitions, performances, or while representing WFYC, athletes must always show respect and good sportsmanship.
- Team unity and a **safe, positive environment** are priorities.
- Disrespectful behavior—including negativity toward other programs, WFYC teams, staff, judges, or event officials—will not be tolerated, including on **social media** (Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, etc.).

Anti-Bullying Policy

- WFYC is committed to **providing a safe and nurturing environment**.

- Bullying of any kind, including **cyberbullying**, will not be tolerated.
 - Coaches will address inappropriate behavior, and parents will be contacted if necessary.
 - If a second offense occurs, the athlete will be removed from the program **without a refund** unless before uniform purchases.
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Attendance Policy

- **All camps, performances, and competitions are mandatory.**
- Absences negatively impact the team and may result in **routine placement changes or removal from performances.**
- The **Board** will enforce all attendance policies. If you have any questions, please reach out to westoshafalconsyouthcheer@gmail.com.

Excused Absences

Permitted for:

- **Illness** (athlete or immediate family emergency requiring travel/attention)
- **School-related athletic activities** (must notify coaches in advance)
- **Non-school-related sports** (schedule conflicts must be discussed with coaches in advance)
- **Three excused absences per season for:**
 - Family vacation/wedding
 - Required school/religious obligations

All excused absences must be submitted via the **Absence Form** at least one month prior.

Unexcused Absences

- Any absence requests **within less than a month's notice may be unexcused.**
- **First unexcused absence:** In-person meeting between parents and program staff.
- **Second unexcused absence:** Additional meeting and possible removal from the team or competition.
- All absence requests (excused/unexcused) **must** be submitted via the Absence Form.

Absences Due to Injury

If an athlete is injured, they are still expected to attend practices, even if they cannot physically participate. Their presence helps them stay informed, support their teammates, and maintain team unity. Athletes may sit out or modify activity as advised by a medical professional, but they must remain involved unless otherwise excused by the coaching staff.

Tardiness

- Athletes must arrive **10-15 minutes before practice**.
 - **First tardy**: Warning.
 - **Second tardy**: Parent meeting.
 - **Third tardy**: Parent meeting and possible removal from routine or event.
 - Arriving more than **halfway through practice** may count as an **unexcused absence**.
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Choreography & Safety

- **No athlete is guaranteed a specific position** in a routine.
- Coaches consider **various factors** beyond ability when assigning roles.
- WFYC follows the **National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) and American Association of Cheer Coaches and Administrators (AACCA)** safety guidelines.
- Athletes may not attempt tumbling or stunts without **proper supervision**.

Injury Protocol

- **If your athlete is hurt and needs to sit out more than one practice**: we'll need a doctor's note before they return to full participation (especially stunting/tumbling). This helps us make sure they're truly ready and cleared to be back.
 - **If an injury happens at practice**: we'll sit them out and contact you if needed. Safety always comes first.
 - **In the event a more serious injury occurs where emergency services are needed**: we'll follow the emergency contact info and medical release you provided in your registration form. We'll always try to reach a parent/guardian first, but in urgent situations, our priority is getting your athlete the care they need as quickly as possible.
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Tumbling

- Tumbling classes are **highly encouraged**.
 - Competition team athletes **must** attend **Elite Tumbling** sessions at WFYC practices (\$45 monthly, June - August).
 - \$135 total.
 - If this cost is a concern, please don't hesitate to reach out!
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Dress Code

- **No jewelry** at practices or performances.
 - Hair **must** be secured away from the face.
 - Crop tops or wearing only a sports bra is not permitted.
 - Shorts must be worn over spandex.
 - Cheer shoes are **required** and should be put on **before stepping onto the mats**.
 - Athletes are responsible for their **uniform items**.
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Intellectual Property

- All **music, choreography, cheers, and stunts** are WFYC property and **must not** be shared outside the program.
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Registration & Fees

- Registration Fee: **\$550** (covers uniform, competition fees, practice rental, insurance, practice wear, choreography, and music).
 - Paying with a debit or credit card is an additional \$20
- Additional costs:
 - Cheer shoes (~\$35)
 - Spandex shorts & body liner (link provided at uniform ordering)
- Payment: Online (credit/debit) or in person (cash, credit, debit, or check).

Refund Policy

- No refunds **after apparel and/or uniform purchases**.
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Competitions & Performances

- All teams will compete in **3-4 local competitions**.
 - Finalized competition dates will be announced once confirmed.
 - Competitions are **rarely canceled for weather**—plan travel accordingly.
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