

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 3–8**.
 - Registration is **first-come, first-served** and will close on May 31, or once team capacity is reached.
 - **Registration will close on May 31 for all teams** to allow time for uniform ordering and ensure they arrive on time.
 - Our **6th–8th Grade Traditional Competition Team** requires a tryout. All 6th–8th grade athletes are **guaranteed** a spot on the **Game Day Competition Team**.
 - Athletes selected for the Traditional Competition Team **may also participate** on the Game Day Team. Traditional athletes who choose to compete in Game Day as well will have an **additional \$100 competition fee** to help cover competition-related costs.
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Communication

- All communication is conducted via **email and/or 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 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

WFYC is a competitive program. Attendance at all practices, camps, performances, and competitions is mandatory. Athletes are committing to a team that relies on full participation to safely and successfully perform routines.

Absences negatively impact stunt groups, choreography, timing, and team scoring. Repeated or significant absences may result in routine placement changes, removal from performances, or removal from the team.

All absence requests (excused or unexcused) must be submitted through the official Absence Form.

The Board reserves the right to enforce all attendance policies.

Excused Absences

Permitted for:

- Illness (doctor's note required if absence impacts a competition or extends beyond 2 consecutive practices)
- Immediate family emergency requiring travel/attention
- School-related athletic activities (must notify coaches in advance)
- Pre-approved non-school sports conflicts (discussed in advance)
- Up to three (3) pre-approved absences per season for:
 - Family vacation/wedding
 - Required school or religious obligations

All pre-planned absences must be submitted at least one month in advance to be considered excused.

Approval of an excused absence does not guarantee routine placement will remain unchanged.

Unexcused Absences

Absences submitted with less than one month's notice may be considered unexcused.

Consequences:

1st unexcused absence:

- Parent meeting with program staff

2nd unexcused absence:

- Possible routine placement change or removal from competition

Further unexcused absences:

- Possible removal from team without refund
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Competition Attendance – Zero Tolerance Policy

All competitions are mandatory.

Missing a competition significantly impacts the entire team. Therefore, WFYC enforces a strict competition attendance standard.

If an athlete misses a competition:

Illness Before Competition

- A doctor's note is required for any illness resulting in absence from a competition.
- Documentation must be provided within 72 hours of the missed event.
- Verbal reports of fever, strep, or illness without medical documentation may be considered unexcused.

Non-Emergency Travel (Vacation, etc.)

Competitions may not be missed for vacations, surprise travel, or non-emergency plans.

If a competition is missed without required documentation:

- The absence will be considered unexcused.

- The athlete may be removed from the routine for the remainder of the season.
- The athlete may be removed from the team at the Board's discretion.
- No refunds will be issued.

Competition participation is a commitment to the entire team. Protecting team integrity and competitive performance is the program's priority.

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 only as advised by a medical professional, but must remain involved unless otherwise excused by the coaching staff.

A doctor's note is required at the time of injury if participation restrictions are necessary or more than 1 absence is a result of the injury. A second doctor's note is required before the athlete may return to full participation. No athlete will be allowed to resume activity without written medical clearance.

If an athlete is out due to injury, routine positions may be adjusted depending on the length of recovery and the timing of medical clearance. This is not a punishment. Adjustments are made to ensure the team can continue progressing safely and effectively without being held back.

Once an athlete is officially cleared, coaches will determine the safest and most appropriate way to reintegrate them into the routine based on team needs, timing, and overall readiness.

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**.

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 verifying the type of injury, and another doctor's note before they return to full participation (especially stunting, tumbling, & jumps). 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 **mandatory for the 6-8th Grade Traditional Competition team**. Optional for 6-8th Game Day Competition team & 3rd-5th Traditional Competition team.
 - For tumbling, the 6-8th Grade Traditional team will use **Twisters Elite** from the beginning of the season - end of August. Twisters Elite is \$15 a class, which we will have once a week at Twisters Elite. Then for the remainder of the season, we will use **Elite Tumbling** at WFYC practices once a week (\$45 monthly, September - January).
 - If this cost is a concern, please don't hesitate to reach out!
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Registration, Costs, & Payment Plans

Early Bird Registration:

- **\$675** (cash or check)
- **\$690** (credit/debit card)
- Early Bird pricing ends April 1, 2026.

Registration:

After April 1, 2026 (or if selecting a payment plan) registration is **\$750**.

Payment Plan Option:

We understand that cheer is an investment. That's why we offer payment plan options to help families manage costs.

Our priority is keeping the program accessible to our community. If you have questions or need flexibility, please reach out – we're always happy to work with you.

We also offer **optional personal fundraising opportunities** throughout the season to help athletes lower their individual costs.

A \$200 minimum payment is due by June 1, 2026 to secure your athlete's uniform order.

The remaining balance may be paid in a way that works best for you, as long as the full amount is received by July 31, 2026.

Registration Includes:

- Uniform rental
- Competition fees
- Facility costs
- Insurance
- Practice wear + bows
- Choreography & music
- Poms, signs, and other props used in routines
- Practice equipment (mats, stunt stands, etc.)
- First Aid supplies

Not Included in the program cost:

- Cheer shoes
- Black Spandex
- **For the 6th-8th grade traditional team only:** Mandatory team tumbling classes (approx. \$45/month)
- **For the 6th-8th grade traditional team only:** 1 outsourced Stunt Camp (approx. \$120)

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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Refund Policy

- No refunds **after choreography is created for the team.**
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Competitions & Performances

- All teams will compete in **multiple local competitions and WACPC JEM State.**
 - Finalized competition dates will be announced once confirmed.
 - Competitions are **rarely canceled for weather**, so plan travel accordingly.
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