

PARA CHEER- PARENT AND CHEERLEADER CODE OF CONDUCT

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PARA Cheer is a recreational cheer program based in Pace, Florida, dedicated to fostering excellence in our community. Through experienced coaching, we teach the fundamentals of cheer with a focus on participation, education, safety, and fun. Our program empowers young athletes by building confidence, skills, teamwork, and good sportsmanship.

In addition to supporting our local football teams, PARA Cheer offers diverse activities such as local competitions, high school camps, Friday night lights performances, pep rallies, and community parades. Proudly partnered with the Varsity Cheer Squad at Pace High School, we provide opportunities for athletes to develop skills that prepare them for high school cheer and beyond.

Committed to community involvement, PARA Cheer takes pride in shaping the future of our athletes and celebrating the spirit of teamwork and excellence.

Registration and Uniforms:

1. Registration

- Cost & Payment: Registration is \$225 per athlete. Payment plans are available.
- Registration Period:
 - Returning Athletes: Registration opens in early March and closes by the end of April.
 - New Athletes: Registration opens two weeks after the returning athlete period.
- A returning athlete is someone who completed the previous PARA Cheer season.
- Athletes who quit before completing the previous season must register as new athletes.
- If an athlete quits mid-season for two consecutive years, they may not register the following year.
- Spots are first-come, first-served.
- Registration Fee Refund Policy: No refunds will be issued after August 1st.
- Uniforms:
 - Uniform costs are separate from the registration fee.
 - If the uniform is not paid in full by the due date, the athlete will not receive their items and will forfeit their spot. Payment plans are subject to vendor's payment policies.
 - Uniforms are non-refundable!

2. Squad Placement

- Athletes are placed based on their age as of August 1st of the current year per league rules:

Squad Age Groups:

Mighty Mites: 5/6U (Up to two 4-year-old mascots allowed)

Blue Mini Mites: 7U

Red Mini Mites: 8U

Blue Mites: 9U

Red Mites: 10U

Blue Midgets: 11U

Red Midgets: 12U

Juniors: 14U

- Mascots:
 - Older squads may have mascots no older than five years old, at the coach's discretion.
 - A mascot does take a roster spot.
- Squad Limits:
 - Each squad is limited to 32 athletes per league rules.
 - A maximum of two "move-ups" (athletes placed outside their age group) are allowed per squad per league rules. If permitted to move up, athletes are only allowed to move up one age group.
 - Move-ups require approval from the VP of Cheer and the head coach.

Attendance Policy:

1. General Attendance Expectations:

- Athletes are expected to attend all practices, games, and events.
- We understand that emergencies and illnesses occur, but consistent attendance is crucial for team success.

2. Game Day Attendance:

- If an athlete misses more than two games due to illness, a doctor's note must be provided.
- If a doctor's note is not provided, the athlete may be removed from game day routines to prevent confusion in performances.

3. Competition Season Attendance:

- Athletes competing in competitions may have no more than two unexcused absences from practice.
- Unexcused absences include: vacations, playing other sports, or non-emergency conflicts.
- After two unexcused absences, the athlete will no longer be allowed to compete, and the routine will be re-choreographed.
- If an athlete misses two practices due to illness, a doctor's note is required for the absence to be excused.

4. Practice Restrictions & Scheduling

- No practices are permitted during worship times, including:

- Wednesday evenings
 - Sunday mornings
- Practice is allowed on:
 - Friday evenings
 - Sunday afternoons (only within two weeks of competition)
- Vacations in September and October are strongly discouraged for competition cheerleaders.

5. Competition Commitment

- In August, all cheerleaders and parents will receive a Letter of Intent to Compete, outlining competition requirements and expectations. Competition practices will begin no earlier than late August and no later than mid-September.
- Practices will increase in frequency in the weeks leading up to competition (throughout November).
- Attendance during this time is vital to the team's success.
- If you cannot fully commit to the attendance policy, please do not sign up for competition cheerleading.

Game Days & Practices:

1. Practice Schedule:

- Informal practices may begin as early as June, at the discretion of the coach.
- Official practices begin in late July, typically the week after the Pace High School Cheer Summer Camp (dates may vary).
- Practice frequency & times:
 - Most squads practice three days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday).
 - Practices run from 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM for all squads, except Mighty Mites, who practice from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM.
 - Practice locations may vary depending on weather conditions. Some squads may have a designated rain-out location. Coaches will communicate any changes in time or location directly.

2. Attendance & Conduct Expectations at Practice:

- If you or your child cannot commit to the practice schedule, please consider that PARA Cheer may not be the right fit.
- Because practice time is crucial, all athletes must arrive on time and fully prepared to start. This includes:
 - Hair up
 - Jewelry off
 - Bug spray applied (if needed)
 - Restroom breaks taken before practice begins
- Cheerleading is a team sport, and attendance is vital. If one person is absent, it may impact up to four other cheerleaders, especially in stunt groups. Frequent absences may affect participation in performances.
- Behavior & Focus:
 - Cheerleaders are expected to be attentive, respectful, and cooperative during practice.
 - The more cooperation received, the more productive and enjoyable practices will be.
 - Coaches will not spend entire practices addressing misbehavior. If issues persist, parents will be contacted.

2. Game Day Schedule & Requirements:

- Football season runs from mid-August to late November.
- Games are held on Saturdays at times and locations determined by the football league.
- Game schedules are issued by the league no earlier than one week before the Kickoff Classic Games and are subject to change.
- Postseason (Playoffs & Championship):
 - Playoffs begin in early November, with the championship towards the end of November.
 - If the squad's football team advances to playoffs or the championship, the cheer squad is required to attend and cheer at their designated game.
 - Failure to cheer at a required postseason game may result in a fine for the squad per league rules.

3. Pep Rallies:

- Occasionally, the program hosts pep rallies for parents and football players.
- Pep rallies typically take place on Thursdays at 7:00 PM before important games or events.
- Coaches will notify parents when a pep rally is scheduled.
- Squad Attire & Performance:
 - All cheerleaders are expected to wear their designated pep rally uniform.
 - Each squad will perform a short routine or presentation for the audience.

Safety Policy:

1. Jewelry & Attire:

- Jewelry of any kind is strictly prohibited during practices, games, and competitions.
- All jewelry must be removed before practice or games begin.
- Earrings are not allowed under any circumstances. This is both a safety precaution and a league rule.
- Ear piercings should be scheduled after the cheer season, as newly pierced ears cannot be an exception to the no-jewelry rule.
- Athletes must be dressed appropriately for practice (i.e. t-shirt, athletic shorts, and cheer shoes).

2. Hydration & Heat Safety:

- Hydration is essential, especially in the summer months when practices and games take place in extreme heat.
- Athletes should always bring:
 - A water bottle to every practice and game.
 - A cooling rag or other means to stay cool.
 - Parents are encouraged to ensure their child is properly hydrated before arriving at practices or games.

3. Field Access & Game Day Safety:

- Parents are not permitted on the field under any circumstances.
- Only coaches and staff members with an official league badge are allowed on the field.

- This rule is in place to ensure the safety of all athletes.
- Any unauthorized person found on the field during games may be fined and removed by the league.

Competition, Sponsorships & Fundraising:

1. Competition:

- PARA Cheer will participate in a minimum of one and a maximum of three competitions per season.
- PARA covers the following expenses:
 - Squad's entry fee for each competition
 - Competition music for routines
 - Bows for competition
- Additional expenses that are the responsibility of parents include:
 - Pace High School Cheer Camps
 - Two camps are offered—one in the summer and one in August or September (exact dates may vary).
 - Prices for these camps vary and are paid directly to the high school.
 - Attendance at these camps is optional but encouraged.

2. Sponsorships:

- Each squad is required to raise sponsorship funds to help cover park operating and game day expenses.
- After practices begin, sponsorship information will be distributed to parents.
- Each cheer squad must raise \$750 in sponsorships, which will be used to purchase sponsorship signs that will be displayed on the game field fence.
- All sponsorship money is paid directly to PARA.
- Why sponsorships matter: PARA does not receive county funding. Sponsorships help cover:
 - Field lights
 - Security
 - Grounds maintenance
 - Other park expenses

3. Fundraising:

- PARA Cheer may have mandatory fundraising events throughout the season.
- Funds raised will go toward:
 - Homecoming festivities
 - Any shortages in competition entry fees
 - End-of-season party and additional program expenses
 - Fundraising details will be provided as or if events are scheduled.

Student-Athlete & Parent Conduct Policy:

1. Representing PARA with Integrity:

As a student-athlete, you represent Pace Athletic & Recreation Association (PARA) and the surrounding communities. You are expected to always conduct yourself in a respectful and positive manner, both in-person and online.

2. Social Media & Online Behavior:

- Keep all social media content clean and respectful.
- Prohibited online behavior includes, but is not limited to:
 - Profanity, graphic violence, or any content that portrays you in a negative light.
 - Disrespectful or derogatory language toward teammates, coaches, or PARA.
 - Incriminating photos or statements depicting:
 - Violence, hazing, or harassment of any kind.
 - Inappropriate gestures or behavior.
 - Vandalism or stalking.
 - Underage drinking, selling, possessing, or using controlled substances.
 - Any action that creates a serious danger to another person or makes a credible threat of serious physical or emotional harm.
 - Indicating knowledge of an unreported school or team violation, whether intentional or unintentional.
- Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated.

- Disciplinary Action: If an athlete is found violating these policies, it will be at the discretion of the coaches and VP of Cheer to determine if removal from the squad is necessary.

3. Parent Conduct & Expectations:

- Parents must set a positive example for their athletes in person and online.
- Do not engage in or encourage negative behavior such as:
 - Posting negative comments about coaches, trainers, or other cheerleaders on social media.
 - Policing social media on behalf of the program.
 - Demonstrating disrespect, bullying, or disruptive behavior at games, practices, or events.
- If an issue arises, parents must:
 - Communicate respectfully with coaches and program officials.
 - Address concerns directly with the coach or VP of Cheer rather than posting publicly.
- Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including removal from the team without a refund.

4. Teamwork, Respect & Sportsmanship

- Cheerleading is a team sport, and all athletes and parents must demonstrate:
- Respect for teammates, coaches, and officials.
- Good sportsmanship at all times.
- Cooperation and teamwork to ensure a positive experience for everyone.
- PARA will not tolerate any behavior that disrupts the team environment or creates a negative atmosphere.

Athlete Signature

Parent Signature