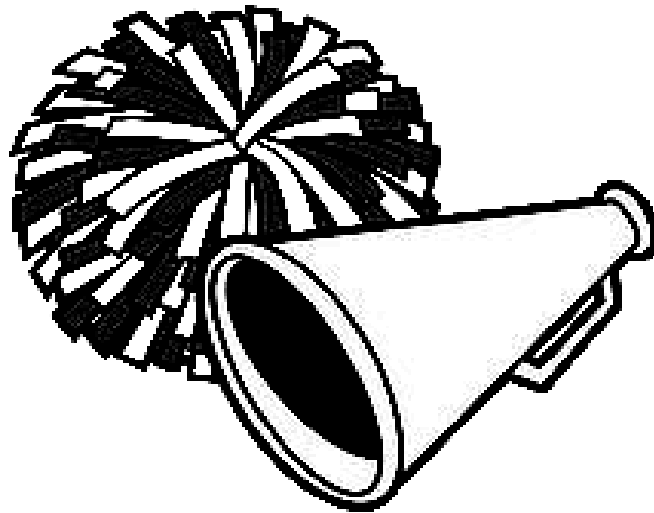


2023
Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation
Cheerleading
Coaches Handbook



CHEERLEADING HANDBOOK - 2023

PHILOSOPHY OF YOUTH ATHLETICS

The Rome-Floyd Unified Football/Cheerleading (UFC) Committee was established in 1992. The committee is made up of eight members, four from the staff and Board of Directors of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia, four from the staff and Board of the Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority. The Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia and the Director of the Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority appoint these members yearly. The committee has the responsibility of overseeing all aspects of the Rome-Floyd UFC rules and regulations.

It is the intent of the Rome-Floyd UFC Committee to offer this youth cheerleading program on an equal opportunity basis. All individuals wishing to participate in the program must not be disqualified or discouraged from doing so. Teams will be organized to accommodate all that register and wish to play. Participants are assigned to teams according to the school district in which they attend. All cheerleaders dressed out in each game must participate, according to the program's participation policy. Participation is most important in building character and confidence in youth. The UFC Committee hopes to make every athletic activity serve as a training ground for life.

Coaches are members of the program organizational team. Cooperation is required to maintain a quality experience of the participants. Coaches must establish a good working relationship with parents, players, and the Parks and Recreation Authority and Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia. Children tend to use their coaches as role models. What coaches say and do has a tremendous effect on their personality development and self-confidence level. This philosophy has been developed to give volunteers a clear understanding of how important youth are to Floyd County. By following this philosophy, coaches will become valuable volunteers and tremendous assets to our community.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- That each participant learns and understands the basic fundamentals of cheerleading, safety procedures, good sportsmanship, and team concept, as it relates to cheerleading and its fundamentals.
- To embrace the principles of cheerleading by always supporting your teammates, including those on the opposing team, with a positive and energetic attitude.
- That each team has a great experience and successful season.

ELIGIBILITY

- All cheerleaders must pay the registration fee and be registered by the deadline in order to participate in the program.
- There are NO try-outs. A coach CANNOT deny or "cut" a cheerleader from the team.
- Children meeting age and registration requirements may not be prohibited from participating based on creed, national origin, gender, or any other factors. We promote equal opportunity.
- All participants must be of age group (minimum of five years old) prior to September 1, 2022.

PROCEDURE

- **NO Cheerleaders may practice before they have registered.**
- Only the Unified Football and Cheerleading Committee can implement mandatory cheerleading practices/events.

During regular season

- Maximum of 3 practices are allowed weekly.
- No practices on Sunday.
- Cheerleaders can only miss 1 practice weekly and still be eligible to cheer at the following game, unless approved by coach.
- Practices cannot exceed 1 hour and 30 minutes.
- All practices should end no later than 7:45 p.m.

- It is **mandatory** that at least 24 hours' notification be given to the Cheerleading Coordinator for any cancellation of games or events.

BANNERS/SIGNS

- Banners, spirit sticks, and signs are permitted providing all debris is removed from the area before each game begins and disposed of after each game ends.
- No advertisements or promotions can be displayed on team banners, signs, or uniforms.

UNIFORMS

- Uniforms may be ordered from the head coach's vendor of choice but must adhere to all uniform guidelines. NO EXCEPTIONS. If any coach does not abide by the uniform guidelines, disciplinary action will take place.
- A matching uniform is required - Top, Bottom, Bloomers, a bow and Pom-Poms - Nothing other than the uniform is mandatory to purchase.
- The most ONE uniform can cost (top, bottom, bloomers, and pom-poms, shoes and bows) is \$125.00.
- Accessories can NOT be required, and should be optional. (Sweatshirts, sweatpants, pink out gear, socks, etc.)

FUNDRAISING

- No official sponsorships are allowed. Therefore, no uniforms, signage, or other items may market the names of businesses or individuals that supported the team's fundraising efforts. Make sure that companies understand this before asking for donations. **Disclaimer: Coaches may wear coaching matching shirts with a sponsor's logo on the back. Shirts MUST be the same color and likeness of the girl's uniforms.**
- **Each head coach MUST show receipts of monies collected and where it was spent. Get this to us as quickly as possible after you purchase uniforms, accessories, etc.**
- **It is highly recommended to NOT do cash, instead do venmo, paypal, cashapp, etc. to have a paper trail of transactions.**

CHEERLEADERS RESPONSIBILITIES/EXPECTATIONS

- Being part of a squad is a commitment. Cheerleaders are expected to attend practices, games, exhibition, etc.
- Cheerleaders are responsible for having transportation to and from practice, games, and events.
- They are responsible for their own behavior. Disrespectful or disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated. If disruptive behavior occurs, proper disciplinary action will take place as set in place by individual team rules.
- Always show good sportsmanship to all squads as they perform. Support and encouragement are a constant in cheerleading.

DISCIPLINARY PROBLEMS

- All disciplinary problems *are to be reported* to the Cheerleading Coordinator.
- Incidents should be typed up, detailing all pertinent information of the situation and either emailed or given in person.
- No cheerleader will be penalized or dismissed from the team without the permission of the Unified Football & Cheerleading Committee.
- If a conflict arises amongst parents and coaches, attempts should be made to resolve and address the conflict amongst the involved parties first. If no resolution can be made, either party may contact the Cheerleading Coordinator for assistance with the matter. The situation should be type-written in detail concerning all areas of the matter.
- Disrespectful or disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated from the coaches, parents, or youth participants. If a child is disrespectful or displays disruptive conduct, the coach will be allowed to restrict that cheerleader from participation for the next game, upon approval from the Unified football and Cheerleading Committee. A child may not be disciplined in any way because of school related matters, or any other activity unrelated to the team practice and games.

HALFTIME ROUTINES

- **All music must be screened and approved by the Cheerleading Coordinator PRIOR to being played at the Boys & Girls Club or at the Levee.** The CD/phone you submit will receive an official Boys & Girls Clubs sticker that will be the mark of approval. CD's without this sticker will NOT be played at games. This music is the ONLY music permitted for use at the Boys & Girls Club or Riverview.
- All coaches must provide the press boxes with the approved music CD/phone and information on the needed track number.
- It is the responsibility of the coaches to bring the approved music CD/phone to the games.
- NO explicit or suggestive language/dance will be tolerated in halftime routines. If deemed inappropriate, the squad will get **only one** warning to change/alter their dance.
 - If you get a warning, the coach MUST schedule a time for the Cheerleading Coordinator to meet and watch the routine for approval.
 - If the coach fails to do this and/or the squad continues to perform the warned inappropriate routine, the squad will lose all privileges to perform at half-time.
- Routines must be **under 2½ minutes** long.
- All approved music and track requests must be submitted to the press box **AT LEAST 10 minutes before the game time, NOT halftime.**
- All squads must be ready to perform immediately when halftime starts. The visiting team will perform first at halftime. It is best if each squad is organized, ready and prepared for each performance!

COACHES

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia's and Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority's primary mission is to develop character and build good citizenship in the youth of this community. The UFC Committee recognizes the importance of physical and mental fitness in fulfilling this mission. It is our belief that one of the most important influences that a child encounters is his/her coach. For that reason, if a coach fails to follow any of the guidelines or coaching requirements, he/she could lose their right as a volunteer with the Boys & Girls Club of Northwest Georgia and the Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority. Coaches may or may not be asked to coach again depending on their actions and attitudes.

All head coaches must be at least 21 years of age. Assistance coaches must be at least 18 years of age unless approved by RFPRA. Head Coaches shall be responsible for proper conduct of their assistant coaches and spectators. All volunteers will undergo criminal background checks. Violation of the following policies could result in suspension or probation from the program:

- Use of drugs or alcohol prior to or during a practice or game.
- Use of any tobacco products during a practice or game.
- Profanity, abusive language or unsportsmanlike conduct during a practice or game.
- Failure to report violations of rules or policies of an opposing team or coach in a timely manner.
- Pulling a squad off the field for any reason.

General Guidelines and Policies

- Always be fair when enforcing rules or when taking disciplinary actions. Discipline is a good teacher of responsibility. Be firm, but fair.
- Constructive criticism should be reserved for a private moment. NEVER CRITICIZE OPENLY.
- Coaches should keep parents and players well informed on practices, games, rainouts, etc.
- Establish a good working relationship with both players and parents.
- Be concerned with safety at all times. Report all accidents or injuries to the Program Coordinators.
- Abide by doctor's decisions in all matters of cheerleader's health, injuries, and physical ability to participate.
- Always strive to make every athletic activity serve as a training ground for life.
- If coaches have children in different age divisions, they are allowed to move siblings up or down one division so they may be on the coach's team. Non-coaching parents may also be given this division waiver with the permission of the Team Coach AND the Cheerleading Coordinator.

Responsibilities & Requirements

- Attend a Coaches Certification/Training Meeting.
- Provide a copy of Unified Cheerleading By-Laws to parents, if it is requested.
- Coordinate a parent/cheerleader meeting at the beginning of the season to explain expectations, requirements, By-Laws, plan for the season, and parent obligations.
- If you are a veteran coach for a specific team & age division, you will have seniority over new coaches, unless deemed otherwise by the Unified Committee.
- Supervise the squad at all times.
- Only the head coaches are allowed to hold money for cheerleading purchases. **The Unified Football and Cheerleading program is not responsible for any financial loss.**
- Leave no child alone after practice or a game.
- Provide cheerleaders with water during practice and games.
- Ensure that AT LEAST one spotter is provided during practices and games if a stunt is being performed.
- The committee has the authority to approve or deny one's affiliation as a voluntary coach at any time.
- Provide an updated schedule of practices including location and time to the Cheerleading Coordinator.
- Provide a copy of special team rules (if any made by coaches)

Assistant Coaches

- The head coach will appoint all assistant coaches.
- All assistant coaches will be the responsibility of the head coach.
- A head coach will have the authority to suspend or dismiss any assistant coach.
- An assistant coach will carry over duties as assigned by the head coach.
- An assistant coach will **NOT** have the authority to discipline any participant.
- An assistant coach will not be given the same consideration as a head coach during games. Assistant coaches MUST NEVER get involved in any discussions during the game with officials or parents.
- Assistant coaches should support the decisions of the head coach and should never publicly second-guess the head coach.
- An assistant coach can be appointed by a head coach to act as a head coach during the absence of the actual head coach.
- Assistant coaches should be able to communicate information to parents concerning the program, practice times, and locations.
- Ultimately, all assistant coaches are under the supervision and authority of the RFPRA and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Northwest Georgia.
- **Any assistant coach should not try to overstep, go against, or overrule their head coach. This will be grounds for dismissal as a coach.**

Banquets/End of Year Parties

- You may use one of our banquet rooms, or pavilions for your banquet
 - If you wish to use the gymnastics center you will have to book it and pay the gym rental fee.
- Food and drinks for your cheer banquet or party will be the responsibility of the team/coaches.
- You may choose to hold the awards that we give you, and give them out at your banquet if you wish to do so.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Football/Cheerleading Contact: Blake Lambert
Work Phone: 706-290-7677
Email Address: Blake.Lambert@floydcountyga.org

Sports Coordinator: Rick Nelson
Work Phone: 706-290-7676
Email: Rick.Nelson@floydcountyga.org

***Note: Please do not call the Boys and Girls Club if you have a cheerleading question or concern. Please contact Blake Lambert or Rick Nelson.**

Policy on Practices in Excessive Heat Situations

The following procedures have been established to protect the youth of Rome-Floyd County as well as the volunteers that serve as coaches in this program.

Football/Cheerleader Practice Procedures

Level 1

Under 82.0 degrees (based on heat index reading)

- Normal activity
- Provide at least three separate rest breaks per hour for a minimum of three minutes each.
- Serve plenty of water

Level 2

82.0 - 86.9 degrees (based on heat index reading)

- Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise
- Watch at risk players carefully
- Provide at least three separate rest breaks per hour for a minimum of four minutes each.
- Serve plenty of water

Level 3

87.0 - 89.9 degrees (based on heat index reading)

- Maximum time limit on practice is two hours
- Helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts only
- All protective equipment must be removed for conditioning activities
- Provide at least four separate rest breaks per hour for a minimum of four minutes each.
- Serve plenty of water

Level 4

90.0 - 92.0 degrees (based on heat index reading)

- Maximum time limit on practice: 1 hour
- No protective equipment may be worn during practice
- There may be no conditioning activities
- Provide at least 20 minutes of rest breaks per hour of practice
- Serve plenty of water

Level 5

Over 92.0 degrees (based on heat index reading)

- NO OUTDOOR ACTIVITY
- Delay practices until a cooler heat index reading occurs

CHEERLEADERS must also observe all heat policies related to practicing such as the maximum time limits based on the heat index levels and consuming plenty of water. It is the responsibility of all coaches to check each day to verify conditions of practice.

**** Each head coach will get a text with the current wet bulb readings. It is the head coach's responsibility to abide by the above guidelines! ****