

**SPRINGFIELD/SOUTH COUNTY YOUTH CLUB CHEER PROGRAM GUIDE
(April 2010 – April 2011)**

Cheer Commissioner – Rosemary Florez

Any questions pertaining to the program after reviewing the guide may be sent via e-mail to lbrosemary@aol.com



PURPOSE

The purpose of Springfield/South County Youth Club (SYC) Cheerleading is to provide area youth with the opportunity to cheer for both SYC Football and SYC Basketball in a controlled environment that provides entertainment and enjoyment. In addition, SYC Cheerleading focuses on the development of Cheerleading skills, facilitation of “team spirit” and instilling confidence in all children involved within the program.

AGE/GRADES FOR CHEER

As of January 2006, Cheerleaders must be current grade 1-12 (or rising 1-12 if Summer/Fall registration) to participate in Cheerleading.

CHEER SEASON/PRACTICE GAMES

Cheerleading is offered as a fall and winter sport. Practice for the football season begins late August. Practice for the basketball season begins late-December. Cheer Clinics may be offered prior to the beginning of each practice season and participation is optional. Squads are assigned to football and basketball teams as soon as those programs and the cheerleading program have completed their rosters and communicated with each other as to comparability of teams versus squads available for assignment. As soon as the corresponding sport has their schedule, they will communicate with the cheerleading coach, the game schedule and location. Most games are held on Saturday, but there are occasional game assignments on Sunday. Additionally, some make-up games due to inclement weather during football season, may take place on a weekday evening, but participation in such games is optional and determined by the Cheer Coach based on availability of the majority of the Squad. All practices are held on a weekday evening for 60 minutes (4th grade and younger) and up to 90 minutes for older squads (5th grade up). Additional special practices may be scheduled prior to the end of season Pep Rally's if needed, for those squads requiring/desiring extra preparation time. The exact time and day of week of practices will be determined based on facility/gym availability and selection of practice evening by the Cheer Coach. Parents/Players cannot request a specific night or time for practice. Cheerleaders receive dates/times as soon as the coaches receive confirmation. The privilege of using school facilities is not to be taken lightly by the coaches, cheerleading participants and parents. The following rules are to be observed at all time:

- Only persons directly involved with the activity are allowed to stay directly in the practice area.
- Waiting parents and/or siblings should wait in an area far enough away from the Squad practicing, in order to avoid causing unnecessary interruptions. Bringing younger siblings to a practice is discouraged, and if a younger sibling must attend a practice, the parent must make sure the sibling is sitting quietly and not disturbing the practice and is supervised at all times.
- Absolutely no food or drinks are to be brought into the facilities. School and Community Recreation Services policy prohibit eating or drinking in all gym/facilities. Water bottles are permitted for cheerleaders and basketball/football players.
- No animals may be brought onto school property or inside gym/school facilities.

- No child is to be left unattended and/or left alone inside or outside of the school. Parents must physically walk their child to the practice area if they will not be staying with their child during practice and return to the practice area to retrieve their child at the conclusion of practice.
- There is no use of mats or other equipment belonging to the school without permission by the school and only with the direct supervision of coaches. If permission to utilize mats is granted, they must be returned to their original positions after use. Most schools DO NOT allow use of their mats, and a coach may not assume they can use without approval directly from the school.

TEAM SIZE/FORMATION

Cheer squads for football season will consist of 10 to 16 cheerleaders. Cheer squads for basketball season will consist of 9 to 12 cheerleaders. Cheerleading squads are paired according to comparably aged football/basketball teams whenever possible. Team cheerleaders are placed on squads using the following criteria:

- Grade at the beginning of the current registration period.
- Fair distribution of experienced cheerleaders and “new” cheerleaders on each squad.
- Special requests for coaches or squad placement will not be considered. A parent only may notify the Cheer Commissioner of a conflicting practice night, for example if the cheerleader has a known weekly conflict. The Cheer Commissioner will then try to find a squad practicing on another night, but the parent may not request a specific squad for a specific night. The best way to choose your own practice night is to volunteer to coach as the cheer coach chooses the practice night from the school allocations for their squad.

EXPECTED COSTS

- \$80.00 Activity Fee (*Includes Fairfax County Fees)
- \$60.00 Uniform Deposit (Fully refundable upon return of the uniform in good condition) and on time, during a regularly scheduled uniform return date and/or no later than 60 days following the end-of-season Pep Rally
- \$7.00 Red bloomers required for wear underneath uniform
- \$5.00 SYC Cheer Magnet or banner *OPTIONAL
- \$20.00 SYC Cheer Sweatshirt *OPTIONAL
- \$12.00 SYC Cheer Sweatpants *OPTIONAL
- \$12.00 SYC Cheer Practice T-Shirt *OPTIONAL
- \$11.00 SYC Cheer Practice Soffe Shorts *OPTIONAL
- Trophy/End-of Season Cheer Party *OPTIONAL and determined by each coach, squad participants and parents.

- Cheer Pictures (Each Season) *OPTIONAL – costs determined by vendor and parents selection from various packages available.

ALL-STAR/SPECIAL EVENTS SQUAD

The All-Star/Special Event squad shall consist of cheerleaders that have demonstrated exemplary team spirit, excellent cheer skills, reliability, and have cheered for a minimum of one complete season in the SYC Cheer Program. Inclusion on the All-Star squad requires one of the following 1) Selection by SYC Cheer Commissioner or All-Star Director, 2) Evaluation by an appointed All-Star evaluation member or committee and recommendation to the All-Star Director 3) written/e-mail recommendation from an SYC Cheer Coach and evaluation and approval from the All Star Director or Cheer Commissioner 4) Tryout or Submission of a videotape of the cheerleader performing (2) cheers and (1) short dance routine, and selection by the All-Star Committee, consisting of the All-Star Director and All-Star Coordinators/Evaluators. New additions to the Squad will take place only as space becomes available as determined by the All Star Director or Cheer Commissioner.

Participants on the All-Star/Special Events Squad must continue to participate in the regular cheer program for at least one season per year, either Fall Football Cheer or Winter Basketball Cheer to remain on the All-Star/Special Events Squad. The All-Star/Special Events Squad will represent SYC at special events outside of the regular cheer program in addition to special events within the SYC Cheer Program. The All-Star/Special Event squad shall serve as role models within the SYC Cheer Program and are expected to represent SYC in a positive manner at all times. SYC All-Star Cheerleaders are expected to attend a minimum of 75% of the All-Star Special Performances and must share their commitment (practices and events) 50/50 to only one other competitive sport, such as Travel Soccer, choosing the SYC All-Star events at least 50% of the time when there is a conflict. All mandatory practices (one practice that takes place just before a special performance) must be attended unless special permission is obtained from the All-Star Director. Non-competitive house games and practices should not take priority over an All-Star Performance and competitive sports activities must share 50/50.

Several key members within the Cheer Program will manage the All Star/Special Events Squad as follows:

- All-Star Director (Cheer Commissioner or appointed experienced Cheer Coach)
- All-Star Administrative Coordinator
- Up to four All-Star Coordinators (Experienced Cheer Coaches), determined by size of the All-Star Squad.
- Cheer Instructors/Floor Coaches for Camps, etc.

EXPECTED COSTS

- \$80.00 Activity Fee for either Winter Basketball Cheer or Fall Football Cheer. (Registration is required for a minimum of one regular season, with no additional "All-Star" registration fee required for All-Star participants)
- \$60.00 Uniform Deposit (Covers Regular Cheer Uniform and All-Star Uniform and is fully refundable upon return of the uniforms in good condition and returned on time. Uniforms returned more than 60 day late, after the final return date, will result in a

full loss of the uniform deposit. .

- ****All-Star Cheerleaders ONLY – Annual uniform fee of \$50.00** (required to absorb some of the cost of annual uniform replacement due to growth) This fee is due by April 1, on an annual basis.
- Mandatory fundraising as determine by the All-Star Director and budgetary needs may include, participating in at least one fundraising effort per year (or season for “one season only” cheer participants). Participants may choose to “opt out” of all fundraising. Opt out fees are as follows:
 - All-Star Cheerleader - \$50.00 OPT OUT per year or \$75.00 per family if multiple children participating within the All-Star Squad or a combination of for example: one child participating in All-Star and regular cheer, with an additional child participating in the regular cheer program only.
- \$80.00 Activity Fee (*Includes Fairfax County Fees) - *Fall or Winter Cheer Participation, that is required to remain on the All-Star Squad
- \$60.00 Uniform Deposit (Fully refundable upon return of the uniform in good condition) and on time, during a regularly scheduled uniform return date and/or no later than 60 days following the end-of-season Pep Rally
- \$7.00 Red bloomers required for wear underneath uniform
- \$5.00 SYC Cheer Magnet or banner *OPTIONAL
- \$20.00 SYC Cheer Sweatshirt *OPTIONAL
- \$12.00 SYC Cheer Sweatpants *OPTIONAL
- \$12.00 SYC Cheer Practice T-Shirt *OPTIONAL
- \$11.00 SYC Cheer Practice Soffe Shorts *OPTIONAL
- Trophy/End-of Season Cheer Party *OPTIONAL and determined by each coach, squad participants and parents.
- Professional Training Camps/Clinics & Competitions *OPTIONAL and determined by All-Star Director Coordinators, squad participants and parent agreement.

TEAM ANNUAL EVENTS

Football/Winter Cheer Opening Ceremony: Opening day is the first official day of the football season. SYC football players and cheerleaders kick off the season with introductions and speeches during a festive like atmosphere. The day is usually the first Saturday after school starts in September. The date is announced as soon as the Football program determines the date.

Pictures: Pictures are taken every SYC cheerleading season. This event usually takes place within the first three weeks of each season. Coaches will distribute picture envelopes and information with regard to time and location.

Pep Rally: The Pep Rally is a cheerleading event that is held at the conclusion of the football season and basketball season. The purpose of the Pep Rally is to demonstrate to parents, friends and other cheerleaders, what each Squad has accomplished since the beginning of the season and gather all the cheerleaders together for a fun evening. There is no competition among the Squads and spectators enjoy a 3 to 4 minute performance from each Squad. The performance typically consists of a few quick cheers and a short dance. Participants and spectators have a wonderful time watching the cheerleader's performance's, which demonstrates the results of the practice and dedication provided by our volunteer staff. Special recognition for outstanding cheerleaders for the season (nominated by their Coaches), and outstanding coaches/Volunteers may be awarded during this ceremony.

Cheer Clinics/Workshops: Cheerleading clinics/workshops may be held before football and basketball season. These events are fun practices that provide cheer instruction to both beginning and experienced cheerleaders in order to improve upon their cheerleading skills in a low-key environment. It is an excellent opportunity to get in some extra practice and learn new material that will enhance their cheer experience. Fall Football/Cheerleaders, Winter/Basketball Cheerleaders and newly registered cheerleaders are encouraged to attend, but participation is optional.

ORGANIZATION

Cheerleading Advisory Board (CAB):

The Cheer Commissioner may utilize a Cheer Advisory Board that shall act as an advisory body to the Cheer Commissioner (CC), assisting in facilitating a successful program. Specifically the CAB will assist with decisions to continually improve upon the program, including conducting research and making recommendations regarding cheer camps/clinics, fundraising activities, cheer assistants, cheer instructors, coaches, and suggest extracurricular activities in which the SYC cheerleaders may participate. The CAB may consist of up to 7 members.

Members interested in serving on the CAB, should contact the Cheer Commissioner, no later than June 30 each year, to prepare for the upcoming cheer seasons (Football/Basketball). The members will represent a broad cross section, based upon service to the youth club, time availability, previous youth cheerleading experience, and the desire to support the betterment of the program as a whole, not for just a particular group or individual. The CC shall be the Chairman of the CAB.

The officers of the CAB are as follows:

1) **Cheerleading Commissioner (CC)** – The CC is charged with the overall responsibility and authority to organize and operate a youth cheerleading program in compliance with the general policies of SYC.

2) **Deputy Commissioner (DC)**– It is desirable to have one or more responsible volunteers to serve as a DC. The Deputy Commissioners assists the CC in the overall day-to-day operations as needed and will assume the responsibilities as determined by the CC in the absence of the CC. The Deputy Commissioners may also issue and receive uniforms and serve as the uniform coordinator, issuing equipment to and from all registered cheerleaders, following the distribution and returns guidelines, or may assign a uniform coordinator (UC). The CC and DC's will work with the CAB and/or designated volunteers to maintain an inventory of uniforms/equipment. All purchases of uniforms, sweat suits, and cheer items, will be procured following SYC guidelines through the SYC

Procurement Specialist and must be approved by the Cheer Commissioner. If there is not a qualified DC, the Commissioner will solicit volunteers to assist in performing the duties above for each cheer season.

COACHES

Each squad requires at least one Coach. Coaches are selected from the pool of registered volunteers for that particular season. Coaches must be at least 18 years of age and must complete the SYC online background check. Coaches are also required to complete the Volunteer Building Director Exam. Coaches may work with an Assistant Coach or “Cheer Assistant”, typically a current high school cheerleader/volunteer, but must provide adult supervision and maintain responsibility for the Squad at all times throughout practices, games, and events. All coaches will be given the opportunity to receive coach training prior to the start of practice. Coaches are responsible for the cheerleaders from start to finish of all SYC events. Coaches may not request that specific children be assigned to their squad, other than their own child and the child of the Assistant Coach.

Parents should not offer instruction or interfere with the coach’s job. Parents are requested to not communicate with cheerleaders during games and practices, except during breaks and/or family emergencies. The coaches are volunteering their time and effort to the program and should be given the respect they deserve. All parents should consider volunteering for either cheer or another SYC Program to ensure the availability of teams and coaches. SYC is a non-profit organization providing sports programs to any child that would like to participate. The organization is only as strong as our volunteer pool! Parents can assist the coach by having participants at all practices and games on time and picking up their child immediately at the conclusion of practices or games. While it is understood that illnesses and conflicts in schedules will come up, the parents are expected to communicate with the Cheer Coach if their child is going to miss a game or practice.

A team member consistently missing practices and/or games has an overall negative effect on the Squad. If a Cheer Coach determines a team member is consistently absent from practices and games, the Cheer Coach may make a recommendation to the Cheer Commissioner for removal from the Squad. Additionally, a Cheer Coach may request, the withholding of participation of a cheerleader that is not prepared to perform for the end-of-season Pep Rally, or during a half-time performance, due to multiple absences from practices or games. It is mandatory that all coaches have an open line of communication with all members of their squad. It is highly encouraged that all coaches notify the Cheer Commissioner of any issues that take place at a game or practice that cannot be worked out amicably by the coach within 24 hours of the incident.

Coach/Assistant Coach requirements:

- Provide leadership and encourage camaraderie and unison amongst the squad.
- Supervise the activity in a safe and healthy manner.
 - Follow all instruction during games, practices and Pep Rally performance, pertaining to stunting restrictions, as instructed during the cheer coach pre-season meeting, for their squad’s specific age group and skill level/ability.
- Provide maximum participation of all participants.
- Treat each participant equally and encourage active participation of each cheerleader.
- Exercise good judgment and common sense.

- Instill team spirit and a positive attitude.
- Inform all individuals (including parents) of scheduled events and changes.
- Facilitate an open line of communication between CAB, CC and participants.
- Communicate via phone or e-mail and notify parents of any game time changes ASAP.
- No substance abuse and no inappropriate language.
- Must complete online background check. Please check the “Coaches Kids/Safe List” on the SYC home page, if you are not sure if you’ve completed the registration, and to ensure your approval has not expired.
- Must complete Volunteer Building Director online test.
- Must abide by all SYC policies both current and new policies that may be Issued, and specifically must follow all SAFETY policies provided during coaches training.
 - All Coaches must arrive on-time to each game and practice or have pre-arranged coverage until their arrival. Coaches should be actively engaged with their squad throughout each game.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Sport-related complaints should first be addressed to the team coach. An e-mail or phone call to the Coach will hopefully resolve the issue at the lowest level possible with the people who are most likely to understand the member’s concerns. Addressing a Coach during a practice or game is discouraged as this has an overall negative effect on the Squad. If resolution cannot be found, the problem should then be brought to the Commissioner’s attention. If the Commissioner does not resolve the issue, the complaint may then be directed to the Springfield Youth Club Board of Directors utilizing the Complaint Procedure. The Complaint Procedure may be found on the SYC web site at www.sycva.com.

FOOTBALL GAME PROCEDURES

Cheerleaders should arrive to each football game at least 10 minutes prior to game start time, in order to have time to assemble on the field to help kick-off the game with a sign “run through” for the football team. Each Coach will determine if their Squad is going to participate in this ritual at each game and should coordinate the preferred location with the Football Coach.

Proper times to cheer:

- Before games starts
- During game and half-time
- During Time-outs
- After a play has ended

Improper times to cheer:

- During a huddle
- After an injury
- During an injury time out

During an injury on the field that requires a lengthy time-out, cheerleaders must remain in a resting position or knee quietly on the sidelines. No negative cheers or chants toward opposing teams are allowed. During half time, the home cheerleading squad may go over to the opposing teams sideline, cheer and invite the cheerleaders (if applicable) of that team to the Home sidelines to perform.

Coordination with the opposing team's cheer coach prior to half-time is encouraged as to be clear as to the procedure.

BASKETBALL GAME PROCEDURES

Proper times to cheer:

- Before the game and during the game, but paying close attention to the Basketball Coach's need to be heard by the team for substitutions, etc.
- Between quarters
- Half-time
- During time-outs (*unless BB Coach has a preference for silence during this time)
- During positive plays (no negative cheering)

Improper times to cheer:

- During injury time
- During foul shots

During both injury and foul shots, squads should be sitting, kneeling or standing on the sidelines quietly. When there are two squads of cheerleaders, the coaches will meet before half time to discuss a mutually agreeable cheering arrangement for half-time and during the game. Squads should never be lined up directly under the basket at any time and the Cheer Coach must be the closest person to the basket to deflect a basketball coming in the direction of the cheerleaders if needed. Parents must sit in the spectator area away from the cheerleaders.

UNIFORMS

There is a **\$60.00 deposit required** for each uniform issued. The deposit is refunded in full after the uniform is returned in the same condition that it was issued. See chart below for deductible fees applicable to uniforms not returned on time or in the same condition. Uniforms must be cared for properly. Cleaning instructions are provided at uniform distribution. Wash (do not dry clean) the uniform in cold water on gentle cycle after each use. Hang or air dry. Do not wear uniforms for non-SYC sanctioned activities. Eating while wearing the uniform is highly discouraged and should only be done so with a jacket or cover over the uniform for protection. Additional accessories and merchandise may be available for sale through the SYC Cheer Program. For safety reasons, jewelry cannot be worn at practices or games. For example, rings, earrings, necklaces, bracelets and watches. Small starter-type earrings, similar to those used for newly pierced ears are allowed, but no other jewelry should be worn.

- Uniform alterations are not permitted.
- The CC and/or the office staff will assess fee disputes incurred as a result of tardiness or damage.

FEES:

- Cleaning fee for a uniform that is not returned clean - \$15.00

- Late fee (Uniforms returned after the uniform return date) \$20.00 (Late 60 Days + = no refund) **Permanently withholding a uniform will result in a revoking of membership at SYC and blocked access to register for any SYC sport.
- Lost Pom-Poms - \$12.00 (regular poms) \$18,00 All-Star Poms
- Repair fee for hems - \$20.00
- Any alterations - \$40.00
- Replace a uniform not returned or damaged beyond repair \$120.00
(The deposit will not be returned, plus an additional \$60.00 fee will be charged)

REGISTRATION/REFUND POLICY

Players must register for cheerleading either in person at the SYC office located at 7075

Newington Road, Unit-G, Lorton, VA 22079 or online at www.sycva.com during the SYC

Fall or Winter sports registration periods. Late registrants are required to pay a \$10.00 late

fee and may be “wait listed” and assigned only if space is available.

The following is the refund policy of Springfield Youth Club:

- The volunteer initiation fee is non-refundable.
- Upon written request via US mail or e-mail, participants will receive a full refund of the activity fee(s) prior to the close of online registration for applicable sport.
- Upon written request via US mail or e-mail, 50% of the activity fee will be refunded during try-outs, drafts, per-season clinics or uniform distribution.
- No refunds will be issued after the official draft (football and lacrosse) and/or first game (remaining sports).

Requests for refunds may be sent to:

BabetteJensen@sycva.com

Or

SYC – Attn: Babette Jensen

PO Box 2143

Springfield, VA 22152

Under extenuating circumstances, individual sport commissioners and/or members of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors may approve any deviations to the official SYC refund policy.

Cheerleaders may not wear the SYC Cheer Uniform while eating or other than for SYC Performances. If you must visit an eating establishment immediately following a game, care should be taken to wear a cover up and protect the uniform. Damage and stains to the uniform will result in a loss of your deposit.

SYC Cheerleaders may not post pictures while wearing the SYC Cheer Uniform that may be considered vulgar or distasteful on the internet or social sights for viewing by the public. Additionally, all cheerleaders must follow the standard SYC Code of Conduct policies outlined below:

All players, parents, coaches, and spectators must abide by the SYC Codes of Conduct. Spectators and Players Code of Conduct is below and may also be accessed by clicking on www.sycva.com.

SYC SPECTATORS CODE OF CONDUCT

Each spectator will ensure that his/her conduct is that of a lady or gentleman while observing the competition and after its conclusion. To satisfactorily meet these responsibilities, the spectator is expected to:

- Respect the rules of the game.
- Respect the game officials and refrain from questioning their decisions or from addressing them in a loud, disrespectful, or abusive manner.
- Cheer for their team in a positive, supportive manner, refraining at all times from making hostile, negative, or abusive remarks about the opposing team.
- Refrain at all times from coming onto the playing surfaces or from throwing objects or other foreign materials onto the playing surfaces. Exit in an orderly manner at the conclusion of the activity. Enter indoor facilities quietly and remain seated during the conduction of the activity in the spectator seating area, away from the players.
- Follow all building and facility rules and regulations, respecting at all times the property of others.
- Demonstrate appropriate gestures of sportsmanship at the conclusion of the game, win or lose.
- Realize, accept and practice the principle that a team's reputation is built not only on its playing ability but also on sportsmanship, courtesy and citizenship of its fans.

I (print name) _____ agree to abide by the Springfield Youth Club Code of Conduct and the SYC Cheer Program Guide whenever participating in an SYC sponsored activity. I also acknowledge that failure to follow the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or banishment from SYC activities.

(Signature) _____

Date: _____