

AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL, INC.
OFFICIAL CHEER RULES AND REGULATIONS
2014 Edition



A reproduction of this document whole or in part, without written permission is prohibited

© Copyright 2014. American Youth Football, Inc.

American Youth Cheer® will strictly enforce the age and skill level restrictions contained in this rulebook, as well as all other rules and regulations. In addition to the general regulations found in the Official Cheer Rules and regulations, all American Youth Cheer teams will follow the current published National Federation of State High School Associations Spirit Rules Book.

Falsifying birth certificates or any other documents to make a participant eligible is grounds for permanent suspension of the adult(s) and or organization responsible for the act and all evidence will be turned over to the local authorities for any criminal prosecution that may be relevant.

All Questions should be directed to cheer@americanyouthfootball.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEFINITION OF AN AMERICAN YOUTH CHEERLEADING TEAM	4
AMERICAN YOUTH CHEER - LEAGUE DESCRIPTION	4
Regional Coordinator.....	5
Regional Chairperson.....	5
League/Conference Coordinator	6
Association Coordinator	6
SECTION 1 - AYC RULES	6
RULE 1 - COACHES	6
AGE OF COACHES	7
Head Coaches	7
Assistant Coaches	7
Student Demonstrators	7
RULE 2 - SQUADS WITHOUT FOOTBALL	7
RULE 3 - FORMATION OF TEAMS	8
RULE 4 - OUTSIDE COMPETITION	8
RULE 5 - AGES OF CHEERLEADERS	8
RULE 6 - ROSTERS	9
RULE 7 - DROPPING A CHEERLEADER	10
RULE 8 - PRACTICE LIMITATIONS	10
RULE 9 - WARM UP AND COOL DOWN PERIODS	10
RULE 10 - TRADITIONAL AND SPRING CHEER SEASON	11
RULE 11 - CAMPS & CLINICS	11
RULE 12 - MASCOTS	11
RULE 13 - INSURANCE	11
SECTION 2: AYC COMPETITIONS REGIONAL/NATIONAL	12
AYC COMPETITIONS - CHEER	12
AYC National Qualification.....	13
AYC CHEER DIVISIONS FOR COMPETITIONS	14
SIZE AND SKILL LEVEL DIVISION GUIDELINES	15
SPLITTING DIVISIONS INTO SMALL AND LARGE.....	15
COMPONENTS OF AN AYC COMPETITION ROUTINE	15
CHEER PROGRESSION THROUGH THE DIVISIONS OF WHITE, RED or BLUE.....	16
SECTION 3: CHEER DIVISION - AYC REGIONALS & NATIONALS	20
AYC GENERAL CHEER GLOSSARY	20
AYC GENERAL CHEER SAFETY RULES & ROUTINE GUIDELINES	23
AYC SPECIFIC SAFETY RULES & LEGALITY GUIDELINES	23
AYC PENALTY INFORMATION	25
INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY.....	26
IN CASE OF A TIE.....	27
REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION.....	27

SECTION 4: DANCE DIVISION - REGIONALS & NATIONALS	27
DANCE DIVISIONS	27
COMPETING UP - DANCE.....	27
DANCE RULES	28
AYC Dance General Safety Rules	28
Specific Safety Rules	28
AYC DANCE ROUTINE GUIDELINES	28
INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY.....	29
PENALTIES - TRADITIONAL DANCE	30
SAFETY GUIDELINES PENALTIES:	30
TIME LIMIT PENALTY	30
IN CASE OF A TIE.....	30
DANCE GLOSSARY	30
SECTION 5: STEP DIVISION - REGIONALS & NATIONALS	33
STEP DIVISIONS	33
COMPETING UP - STEP	33
STEP RULES	33
AYC STEP GENERAL SAFETY RULES	33
AYC STEP ROUTINE GUIDELINES	34
INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY.....	34
PENALTIES - STEP	35
IN CASE OF A TIE.....	35
SECTION 6 - AYC GAME TIME GUIDELINES	35
GAME TIME GENERAL RULES	35
AYC GAME TIME ROUTINE GUIDELINES.....	35
AYC GAME TIME SAFETY GUIDELINES	35
TIME-OUT DANCE CATEGORY	35
ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS:	35
SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS:.....	35
SECTION 7 - LEGALITY QUESTIONS for CHEER, DANCE, STEP and GAME TIME	36
VIDEO APPROVAL.....	36
SECTION 8 - AYC ALL STAR GAME	36
PARTICIPANT AND COACH ELIGIBILITY.....	36
SECTION 9 - AYC SERVICES AND RESOURCES OFFERED	37
AYC SCORE SHEETS	37
2014 NEW RESOURCES.....	37
CHEER UNIFORMS	37
AYC TRAINING	37
AYC COMPETITION TOOLS	37
CONTACTING AYC.....	38

DEFINITION OF AN AMERICAN YOUTH CHEERLEADING TEAM

The American Youth Football (AYF) League has created a sister league uniquely for its cheerleaders. The name of this league is American Youth Cheer (AYC). Any cheerleading, dance or step team who cheers for, or is affiliated with, an American Youth Football Team is automatically welcomed into this organization. Cheer, dance and step squads are required to be members of AYF/AYC. Sign up is at MyAyf.com.

AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL strongly encourages cheerleading for all teams. It also encourages competition between squads for league (local), regional and national championships. AYF/AYC requires that each squad have a responsible adult in charge as outlined in Section 1: AYC Rules. In addition, the general football rules as stated in the Official Rules and Regulations which apply to players will also apply to the cheerleaders, with the exception of weight or weigh-ins and, of course, the rules of contact, except superseded by the Official Cheer Rules and Regulations. Governing of AYF/AYC Leagues occurs as stated in Section 3 & 4 of the Football Section.

In 2014 AYC WILL OFFER A CO-ED Division. AYC permits up to the maximum of 2 male participants on a traditional cheer team, 3 or more male participants the team MUST be CO-ED. 3 Teams must commit per division in order to hold a National Championship for ANY Co-Ed Division in 2014. If 3 Teams don't commit any Co-Ed may attend Nationals and put on an Exhibition Routine.

Inspiration Division - (Formerly Contender Division)

AYC offers the "Inspiration Division." The Inspiration Division exists to include any child with a disability. Participation in a sport will not only improve their motor skills but also inspire them socially and emotionally. Please see AYC Inspiration Division Team requirements or contact the National Cheer Director at cheer@americanyouthfootball.com

AMERICAN YOUTH CHEER - LEAGUE DESCRIPTION

American Youth Cheer, hereafter known as AYC, is an all-inclusive youth cheerleading, dance and step league. As local leagues enter a national program, AYC allows local autonomy except to the extent that basic safety rules must be followed. It is required that AYC leagues follow, at minimum, the safety rules of National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) including prohibitions against the use of trampolines, springboards, and over two-high pyramiding. Tryouts or combines used to eliminate participants based on skill level are not permitted. Local leagues may incorporate additional restrictions or guidelines for use during season play and their local competitions. Teams electing to compete in AYC-sanctioned regional and national competitions are required to follow Primarily the AYC cheer, dance, or step rules, where they are silent NFHS rules will be followed, and complete the necessary paperwork listed in the AYF documents. AYC Requires that leagues follow the AYC listed rules at local competitions for the sake of safety and consistency.

AYC is built on the premise that the same families who gather to watch the AYF/AYC football players compete on a weekly basis, will also gather to watch the AYC cheerleaders compete on a local, regional and national level.

To youth cheerleaders, competition is their time to shine. While they greatly enjoy their primary role at each local football game, they equally enjoy the opportunity to perform on the competition floor. If the option of competition is missing from the cheerleading experience, the full benefit of the experience is lacking. AYC is committed to creating a positive competitive environment, where your cheerleaders can highlight and showcase their skills, while learning how to win with grace and lose with honor.

Associations must commit their teams to the Regional and National Championship track by September 15th of each year with the approved form to the appropriate Region Cheer and Dance Director. These Declarations are then due to the National AYC OPS Director by the RCDD by 10/1 of the current year. Failure to submit your intent to participate may jeopardize the association's participations in the current years AYC National Championships. Associations that commit to their Conferences to participate in the Regional and National Championship and then do not fulfill their obligation, may be subject to suspension from the following years competition including but not limited to, Regional and National Championships. Any team participating in the Regional Championship, winning the right to advance, and not doing so, may be subject to suspension from the following year's Cheerleading Championships. Any team who does not follow through with their commitment will cause their Association, football and cheer, to be subject to suspension from the following year's postseason events. Teams finishing first, second or third at their Regional Championship or Conference Qualifier are expected to attend the National Cheerleading Championship.

All teams traveling to the AYF/AYC National Championships must book their stay through the AYF authorized booking agent and stay in AYF-approved accommodations. This insures that all of our members will receive the discounted accommodations we have secured and allow us to host the tournament in the chosen location.

Each Region/League and/or Association may appoint a Cheerleading Coordinator or Vice-President of Cheerleading or applicable title to their administrative staff. Coordinators will help manage and/or assist the local/regional/national organization with paperwork, staffing, formation of teams etc. for the Cheerleading programs. Definitions of "Organization" are found in the Official Rules and Regulations - Football "Organization" Section 1 through 3.

Responsibilities

Region Cheer and Dance Director (RCDD)

Serves as a liaison to National AYC for the geographical territory. She/he should be the contact person for disseminating information to the League/Conference level from National AYC, as well as assuring all paperwork for advancing teams are properly completed with all deadlines met; oversee the Regional Championships (if applicable); and serve as a delegate to any National Office meetings. Region duties are as detailed by the Region operating policies (see Section 3 Structure Rule Enforcement/Authority Football rules) It is highly recommended for each Regional Cheer and Dance Director to have an Assistant Cheer Director to assist in duties and communication.

Regional Chairperson

Serves as a delegate of the regional committees. Coordinates and corresponds communication to regional committees and acts as a liaison to local league conference/coordinators, if the two are separate.

League/Conference Cheer and Dance Director/Coordinator

Is a liaison to the Region Cheer and Dance Director to all association cheer and dance director/coordinators and serves as a delegate to the regional meetings? Performs League/Conference duties as detailed by the League/Conference by-laws or constitution. (See Section 3 Structure Rule Enforcement/Authority Football rules)

Association Cheer Coordinator

Is a liaison to the League/Conference Coordinator, while serving as a delegate at the League/Conference meetings. Performs local duties as detailed by their local league by-laws. (See Section 3 Structure Rule Enforcement/Authority - Football rules)

SECTION 1 - AYC RULES

RULE 1 - COACHES

All coaches through their appointment to coach are bound by the “Coaches Pledge,” “Coaches Code,” and “Standard of Conduct.” All coaches must be approved by and serve at the pleasure of the Local Association. Coaching assignments are for one season only and are automatically terminated at the close of each season. Coaches must re-apply for coaching positions annually. The local association determines the close of the season, which must not extend past the “End of the Year Banquet”.

Each team must have either the Head Coach, an Assistant Coach or Licensed Trainer is the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid or its equivalent. A copy of the certification card must be in the team book.

All AYF/AYC participating HEAD COACHES OF FOOTBALL AND CHEER are required to complete the AYF/AYC Online ASEP Coaches Course (includes the \$2 million coverage) found at www.ayfcoaching.com. The Association/Conference may also make this a requirement of assistant coaches. It is highly recommended that all coaches participate in the ASEP course or a cheer coaches training course. This course should be completed before the start of the season. Licensed Trainers **MUST** have a copy of their State Appropriate License in the team book.

****All Head and Assistant Coaches must complete a Concussion Course to be listed as a rostered coach. Courses can be a free course at www.cdc.gov or the American Academy of Neurology at www.aan.com/concussion . As in all rules, leagues/conferences may have more strict rules regarding concussion education. Test results from completion of course must be placed in team book.**

****This will be confirmed by an affidavit due at the Regional/National Championships for all qualifying teams.**

Below is the maximum staff allowed on an AYC Roster. Team Moms are not considered official, rostered staff for the purpose of staff access at the AYC National Championships.

One (1) Head Coach

Four (4) Assistant Coaches

Four (4) Junior Demonstrators

One (1) Licensed Trainer - (Qualifications Vary by State - Please Consult your State to Find out What Constitute a Licensed Trainer/Medical Examiner in Your State) - State License is Required For Participation

Only rostered coaches, demonstrators and Trainers will be able to accompany the team at events. All rostered personnel must have a background check completed. Team Moms Are Not Considered Staff For the AYC Region and National Championships. They Will Not be Granted Team Only Access at These Events.

AGE OF COACHES

Head coaches are in complete charge during practices, games, and championships. They are responsible for their own actions or inactions, their assistants' actions or inactions and the actions of their players

Cheerleading coaches are answerable to and under the supervision of administration of the local league or Association.

Head Coaches

Must be at least 21 years of age. The coaching staff will be under his/her direction and supervision. (See Rule 3 Formation of Teams)

Assistant Coaches

Must be at least 18 years of age and must have graduated from high school or hold a GED certificate. They must have a general knowledge of cheerleading and cheerleading safety rules.

Junior Demonstrators

Are ages 14-18, however, if a student demonstrator is attending high school, they may be 13 years old. Student Demonstrators may only carry out the instructions of the Head or Assistant coaches. AYC recommends that all Student Demonstrators work with teams a minimum of 2 years younger than his/her current age. Student Demonstrators shall not conduct a practice. Demonstrators are participants, all required participant paperwork must be filled out, certified, and in the team book. Demonstrators are NEVER to carry out ANY Disciplinary Action towards ANY Participants.

RULE 2 - SQUADS WITHOUT FOOTBALL

AYC recognizes cheer, dance or step squads without football.

In an effort to support Youth Cheerleading and help our organization grow, AYC is proud to continue to encourage Youth Cheerleading squads that are **not affiliated with AYF football teams** or recreation football programs to join AYC independently. It is required these Cheer squads join the nearest conference to their designated territory. To register squads and become a member visit MyAyf.com or

if you have any related questions please email the National Cheer Director at cheer@americanyouthfootball.com.

(See football formation of teams **Section D** for Participant Recruitment)

RULE 3 - FORMATION OF TEAMS

The formation of teams is based on a first come first serve participation policy. AYC does allow registration/sign-up for “veteran (returning) players” prior to “open” registration/sign-up. Each child must be afforded the opportunity to cheer regardless of ability. Once a participant is registered, the local association may assess the appropriate team levels in which to place the participant with regard to the age requirements. Assessments cannot result in dismissal of any cheerleader for ability or any other reason other than Rule 7 Dropping a cheerleader. Tryouts are not permitted.

AYC requires that for the first 12 participants there must be one (1) head coach (adult volunteer who is at least 21 years of age) assigned to the team. A squad with more than 12 participants (including mascots), there must be one (1) assistant coach (adult volunteer who is at least 18 years or older). For any team with over 24 cheerleaders, there must be one (1) additional assistant coach (adult volunteer at least 18 year old). (i.e. maximum 12 participants, one (1) head coach; 13 to 24 one (1) head coach and one (1) assistant coach; 36 participants one (1) head coach and two (2) assistant coaches.) Teams electing to compete in AYC Regional and National competitions are required to restrict teams to thirty-six (36) members. Mascots are not included in the total count of thirty-six (36).

RULE 4 - OUTSIDE COMPETITION

It is the First Priority of American Youth Cheer teams on the National track to support & participate in AYC Local, Regional, and National Championships. If, a scheduled “Outside” competition conflicts with an AYC sanctioned event you will be expected to participate in the AYC sanctioned event. The cheerleading coordinator, with the approval of the local league, shall be in charge of all outside competitions. All cheerleading teams report to the cheerleading coordinator for approval of any outside activities. Cheer teams may participate in outside competitions in the traditional cheer season in accordance with the traditional football season as stated in the AYF Playing Season/Practice which is the 4th Monday of July through the national tournament in December. Cheer teams may also participate in outside cheer competitions ALL Year Round, with AYC Sanctioned Competitions being First Priority. Cheer teams shall register in outside competitions in the age divisions comparable to AYC.

RULE 5 - AGES OF CHEERLEADERS

** Minimum age of all cheerleaders is 5 years old by July 31st of current year. Maximum age is 18 years old by July 31st of current year. 4 year olds are not able to participate in AYC as a mascot or participant. There are no waivers allowed for participants outside this range.

For determining the participants’ age (Protected Age), the term “On or Before” and the term “As Of” is intended to have the same definition (Age Cut Off Date):

An age cutoff date of (on or before as of 7/31) July 31 of the current season is as follows: 14 years old on July 31, turns 15 years old on August 1, the participant cheers as a 14 years old. (See the ages in AYC cheer, dance and step divisions).

RULE 6 - ROSTERS

Associations must collect, complete, and inspect all AYF Required Participant paperwork for compliance by **August 31**. Rosters must be submitted in birth date order beginning with oldest to youngest participants. Conferences must certify that their Associations have met this requirement and have a system in place for paperwork and roster certification. A Certified Roster means that all of the participants listed on the roster have submitted the AYF Required Paperwork and that all paperwork is authentic and compliant with AYF/AYC Rules and Regulations and the participant fits the criteria established for the specific team level and age division to which the Participant is certified.

Cheerleaders added to rosters after **August 31** must be certified prior to participating in any game or competition. Any participant moved to another division must be age eligible according to the AYC age divisions. There must also be room on the roster, as no participant shall be cut or dropped just to make room. On **September 15**, the Cheer roster will be final for the remainder of the season. If a cheer squad should drop participants after **September 15**, but prior to the Region Cheer Competition with prior notification being made to the RCCD the squad may move from the Large Division to the Small Division but **ONLY** if the participants quit or drop due to injury. If the roster drops participants below 19 after the Region Cheer Competition but before the AYC National Championships you cannot move from the large to small division (NO Exceptions), because you have already qualified through the Region Competition. In summary, if you compete in the large division at the Region Competition, **YOU WILL** compete in the Large Division at the AYC Nationals, regardless of your squad size. All final rosters are required to be submitted to AYF on **October 1**. Conferences must receive all of their Association rosters and certify all of their player documentation by **September 15**.

Below is the required paperwork order for each "Cheer Team Book". Please keep in mind, this is the book order for cheer only, as football has their own procedure. All cheer teams must follow this protocol.

1. Team Roster
2. Risk Management & Background Check Affidavit form
3. Head Coach's ASEP certification certificate - REQUIRED COURSE COMPLETION
4. All staff Concussion training participation certificates - REQUIRED COURSE COMPLETION
5. One staff member's CPR/First Aid certification certificate - REQUIRED COURSE COMPLETION
6. Scholastic Affidavit
7. Proof of Insurance - ONLY REQUIRED IF YOU ARE NOT A SADLER CUSTOMER

Listed below is the order that all participant's paperwork should be filed in the book. Any additional association and league paperwork must be placed behind the below required league paperwork. Participants should be filed in birthdate order **OLDEST TO YOUNGEST**. Junior Demonstrators will be placed at the end in alpha order.

1. Participant Tracker Card - front and back filled out
2. Emergency Consent Form
3. Medical Release Form
4. Birth Certificate (original or certified copy)
5. Image Release Waiver
6. Waiver and Release of Liability Waiver
7. Concussion Annual Statement and Acknowledgement Form

Conferences must maintain a copy of the final certified copy of all rosters in their possession. Conferences must then submit all rosters to AYF National via MyAyf.com and a copy to the designated Regional Committee member by **October 1**. All Conferences must submit rosters to the AYF National Office by entering them electronically to the MyAyf.com system by the deadline of **October 1**, of the current playing season. Failure to submit rosters may mean the loss of certain services provided by AYF, including postseason and championship eligibility. (See Football Section 12 - Participant Registration/Eligibility)

RULE 7 - DROPPING A CHEERLEADER

A) Dropping A Cheerleader Will Be Acceptable:

1. When a participant is found to have signed up as a result of parent or guardian pressure, or, he/she tells team management he/she does not really want to play football/cheer.
2. When a participant cannot furnish the required documents to be certified to a team roster, (e.g., Medical, Proof of Birth Date, etc.).
3. When a participant shows no interest in football/cheer, is disruptive to other participants and the instructions of the coaching staff, and becomes a discipline problem.
4. When a participant does not show up for practices. Participants must have a valid excuse from the parent(s), guardian(s) or a physician.
5. When a participant attempts to intimidate fellow participants by word and/or physical act.
6. When a participant is an active member of an AYF/AYC organization and is **COMPETING** with another organization before their AYC competition season has ended. A participant is allowed to try out and practice for a school team as long as it does not interfere with the AYC team.

B) Dropping A Cheerleader Will **NOT Be Acceptable:**

Excessive team or individual conditioning drills, disciplinary actions or assigning individual players' laps or intentionally placing player in intimidating situations for the purpose of encouraging weaker player to quit is not acceptable. Coaches determined to use this or any other tactic to drop weaker players.

RULE 8 - PRACTICE LIMITATIONS

Practice Length:

Pre-season practice can be on a daily basis until Labor Day, but must not exceed 10 hours per week, and two and a half (2.5) hours in duration per day. A mandatory 10-minute break ("Mandatory Break") after each hour of practice is required. Mandatory Breaks do not count against the hours per week or the maximum hours per day.

After Labor Day, all practices may not exceed a maximum of eight (8) hours per week, with a maximum of two and a half (2.5) hours per day. Mandatory Breaks are still required. All players, regardless of when they join the team, must have at least one week of conditioning (at least 10 hours) before they are allowed to engage in regular practice sessions. This requirement must be met even if a cheerleader joins the team after the start of the regular season schedule. Conditioning is defined as

Basic warm-up exercises; conditioning for jumps & tumbling (not tumbling), arm motion drills; and basic stunting at prep level; learning of cheers or chants.

PRACTICE STAFF REQUIREMENTS:

At least one coach (18 or older) must be present during every practice. There shall be at least one rostered person holding a Red Cross Card, or of similar equivalency, present at all practices. The team's emergency plan should be available at all times. Conferences are required to enforce this rule with its member Associations.

RULE 9 - WARM UP AND COOL DOWN PERIODS

Practice shall include a 15-minute warm up and a 15-minute cool down to minimize risk to your team.

RULE 10 - TRADITIONAL AND SPRING CHEER SEASON

The traditional AYC season coincides with the football AYF season which is the 4th Monday of July through the National Championship in December.

Cheerleaders are encouraged to attend camps/clinics in the non-traditional season as described in **Rule 11 - Camps & Clinics**

Teams shall be allowed to compete in outside AYC competitions in the traditional and spring season as indicated in **Rule 5**. The Spring Cheer season is from January 1st through June 30th.

If a competitive team is registered with AYC, it is highly encouraged and expected for the team to support AYC and participate in local and region competitions if they are competing in any outside competitions.

RULE 11 - CAMPS & CLINICS

Cheer teams are strongly encouraged in part or full squad to attend either a camp or clinic [defined as a training session] during the season and off-season. These camps or clinics should be designed as instructional for youth/recreation leagues and should not be made mandatory by any coach, league, or personnel associated within an AYF/AYC program. The focus of such camps should be on safety and proper execution of cheerleading skills to the team's age level.

AYC provides instructional Coaches clinics and hands-on Coaches training clinics. We highly recommend all coaches in AYC attend training clinics. AYC provides staff to facilitate and train you in your area. We can assist your association or league in hosting a camp/clinic. For more information please contact your Region Cheer and Dance Director or the AYC National Ops at cheer@americanyouthfootball.com

It is important to secure the proper insurance for any camps or clinics.

RULE 12 - MASCOTS

Mascots are at the discretion of any individual League. The following are guidelines for leagues that offer Mascots:

- A. A Mascot must be at least 5 years old.
- B. A participant can be a Mascot if they are not old enough to be included in any other offered age division.
- C. A Mascot shall register as any other applicant and is required to fill out registration paperwork.
- D. Mascots are our youngest cheerleaders and should not perform any stunts or any other activity with the exception of crowd participation sideline cheers/chants. Mascots should not be in the area of stunt groups performing in a halftime routine due to safety concerns caused by the difference in age, maturity and skill level between the mascot and roster of participants.

RULE 13 - INSURANCE

All teams/squads must furnish proof of General Liability and Accident Insurance. The required coverage can be seen at MyAyf.com. Additionally, American Youth Football must be named as an additional insured. All members, not covered under the AYF/AYC endorsed insurance policy are required to deliver to AYF/AYC a certificate of insurance prior to conducting any games or practices. For more information on the AYF/AYC endorsed insurance plan, visit MyAyf.com. A Cheer Team without football must have additional insurance.

SECTION 2: AYC COMPETITIONS REGIONAL/NATIONAL

AYC COMPETITIONS - CHEER

AYC understands when cheer, dance, and step teams from various regions across the nation come to compete; there must be a standardized set of rules under which all must comply. The following pages will list the age divisions, skill divisions, and safety guidelines that will be used in AYC Regional and National Cheerleading Competitions. AYC requires that local league competitions follow Ages Listed in the Cheer, Dance, and Step Matrix for the Sake of consistency and safety this is required.

AYC teams from various regions use a variety of terms to identify the same age division. As an example of this: Junior Midget, Junior Varsity, and Junior Prep can all be used to identify the same age group depending on what part of the nation is represented. For this reason, AYC is unable to define age divisions using these terms. Each area must register their teams using the National age divisions found in this rulebook if they intend to advance to National Championships. They also must follow all age requirements as determined In Age Divisions.

The age of a team member on **July 31** of the current calendar year becomes the age used through AYC Cheer, Dance and Step Nationals in December (see **Rule 5 - Ages of Cheerleaders**).

AYC Regions for Regional Competition are defined here. As regional location and registration information becomes available (October) it will be sent out via the AYC newsletter and be posted at MyAyf.com.

AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL, INC. has established three (3) separate skill levels for all AYC cheerleading teams. The AYC cheer skill levels have been created to provide safety and convenience for leagues whose cheer teams may perform at a different skill level than others. All AYC cheer teams shall make a determination of which one (1) of the three (3) listed skill level grids outlined in this section they will follow. Coaches must consider the AYC skill rubric located at myayf.com, when choosing the level in which their team will compete. Coaches must also refer to the AYC General Cheer Safety Rules, which apply to all levels, for further rule specifications and routine guidelines. The AYC cheer rules established in this section shall supersede any of the current safety rules of NFHS High School Safety Guidelines.



AYC NATIONAL QUALIFICATION

In order to qualify for the AYC National Championships, competition teams must be affiliated with AYF/AYC and have entered final rosters by **October 1**. Teams **must** participate in their League cheer competition and Region Cheer Championship to qualify for Nationals. AYC National qualifies teams who place first, second and third in a Regional AYC Competition. If an AYF/AYC Competition is not offered at the Regional level, ranking of first, second and third place finish must be accomplished at your local AYF/AYC Conference Competition. Final Placement and Advancement to AYC National Championships will be at the discretion of the Regional Cheer, Dance, and Step Director with Approval from the AYC National Ops Director. AYC reserves the right to grant a team qualification to the National Championship should an extraordinary circumstance arise which prevents the team from attending a qualifying event. For any questions regarding qualification for league, region and national competitions, please contact the National Cheer Director at cheer@americanyouthfootball.com.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

AYC does not disqualify teams from participation and/or advancement in any AYC affiliated competition unless the teams (administrators, coaches, participants, spectators) are displaying unsatisfactory sportsmanlike conduct before, during or after the event; or they are performing a routine that is overly vulgar in nature. Any violation of AYC and/or NFHS Rules must be assessed as a point deduction. It is further suggested that instead of taking the step of full disqualification, a 10-point deduction is made

Electing to participate in National Championships does obligate participants to follow a list of specific guidelines for their protection as well as AYF/AYC, note that this list is available at MyAyf.com

AYC CHEER DIVISIONS FOR COMPETITIONS

** An age waiver may be requested for a 15 year old to participate in Division 18 if their Association does not have a Division 15 team.*

DIVISIONS 2014	AGES	SKILL LEVELS
Division 8 (Tiny/Mitey Mite)	5, 6, 7, 8	White & Red Levels ONLY
Division 10	8, 9, 10	White & Red Levels - BLUE RESTRICTED
Division 12	10, 11, 12	White, Red, & Blue
Division 13	11, 12, 13	White, Red, & Blue
Division 15	13, 14, 15	White, Red, & Blue
Division 18 (ALL MUSIC)	16, 17, 18	Red & Blue ONLY
Inspiration Division (Contender)	5 Thru 18	White Level ONLY
<p>Note : Added Division 10 BLUE RESTRICTED- Red Level Stunting w/ Blue Level Tumbling</p> <p>Division 18 Has Changed to ALL MUSIC Division for 2014</p> <p>Inspiration Division is a Name Change for the Previously Named Contender Division</p>		

****Inspiration Division - (Formerly Contender Division)**

The AYC Contender Division enables youth with either cognitive or physical disabilities to participate in football and cheer. The Inspiration Division is further explained in the Official AYF/AYC INSPIRATION RULE Book at MyAyf.com.

COMPETING UP - CHEER

In order to allow all interested athletes to participate, athletes may compete in an older age division with the following restrictions:

Athletes may compete in an older age division ("compete up") ONLY if it is **NOT** possible to create a team in the division that corresponds to their age level.

Athletes may **NOT** compete in a younger age division without approval from AYC.

There is an "Age Waiver Request Form" that an association may use for an age waiver. The form is located on myayf.com. This Form for 2014 MUST be signed and approved by the Region Cheer and Dance Director and then submitted to National Ops Director.

SIZE AND SKILL LEVEL DIVISION GUIDELINES

SPLITTING DIVISIONS INTO SMALL AND LARGE

At the National Championship, divisions will be further divided into small and large, when there are at least two teams that will ultimately compete in each division.

- **Cheer Small Team:** 5-8 members, male and/or female
- **Cheer Large Team:** 19-36 members, male and/or female

AYC does offer a Co-Ed Cheer Division. Teams with three or more male participants will be placed into this division for Regional and National Competition. AYC does not set a limit of male participants that can be placed on a cheer, dance or step team.

Three levels have been created in the interest of providing safety and convenience for teams who may perform at different skill levels. Coaches must consider the skill rubric guideline on myayf.com when choosing the level in which their team will compete. Teams should choose to compete in the level that adequately matches the overall ability level of their team.

Teams will be required to comply with all AYC Cheer, Dance and Step Rules when they are silent they will defer to the current year **NFHS Spirit Rules**, as well as the skill restrictions that correspond to the Level Division that they choose. Any team that violates a safety guideline or performs a skill not permitted in their level division will be subject to a penalty.

COMPONENTS OF AN AYC COMPETITION ROUTINE

Up to a 2 ½ (2:30) minute routine. A competitive AYC routine consists of:

- Up to 1½ (1:30) minutes of music
- A cheer portion in the routine

A competitive cheer routine will be judged by the following. Please see all official score sheets on myayf.com. Failure to include required components in your routine will result in a zero (0) score in that category on your score sheet.

1. Cheer Fundamentals - 20 pts
 - A. Crowd Appeal - crowd leading, spirit, execution, prop incorporation
 - B. Motion Technique - variety, placement, sharpness
 - C. Voice - volume, pace, inflection
2. Basic Fundamentals - 50 pts
 - A. Partner Stunts - synchronization, technique, variety
 - B. Pyramids - same as above
 - C. Tumbling - same as above
 - D. Jumps - synchronization, height, form
 - E. Dance - visuals/levels, variety/originality, flow of routine/use of music
3. Overall Appeal - 30 pts
 - A. Formations/Transitions - flow, spacing, use of floor
 - B. Choreography of Routine - creativity, music incorporation, overall appeal
 - C. Performance - perfection of routine, enthusiasm, appropriateness

CHEER PROGRESSION THROUGH THE DIVISIONS OF WHITE, RED or BLUE

There are three skill divisions in AYC, White, Red and Blue Division. The divisions are for our athletes as they begin learning the basic safety and technical skills associated in cheerleading and then continue to follow a safe skill progression. The goal of cheer progression is to learn a skill, succeed at the skill, in hopes to begin learning the next logical skill that follows. One must master the basic skills then work toward next challenging skill.

Example: cartwheel, then back handspring, then tuck, then layout. - Progression has to be in that order.

- This will enable attainable goals as skills move forward from each division.
 - This progression will help to avoid being stagnant in skill development. Coaches should have continual coaches training while cheerleaders have continual growth of skills
-

White - Division 8, 10, 12, 13 and 15

<p>Standing Tumbling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All basic skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed. <i>Ex: forward rolls, backward rolls, front walkovers, back walkovers, cartwheels, round-offs, handstands.</i> Connection of more than one of the above skills is allowed. <i>Ex: cartwheel/back walkover</i> At least one hand must remain in contact with the floor during skill execution. Front and back handsprings, flips and aerials are prohibited.
<p>Running Tumbling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All basic skills with hand support are allowed. (see above) Front and back handsprings, flips and aerials are prohibited. At least one hand must remain in contact with the floor during skill execution. Series tumbling is allowed.
<p>Stunts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two leg prep stunts and below are allowed. No extended stunts are permitted. One leg thigh stand stunts are allowed. (<i>Single leg prep and all extended stunts are prohibited</i>) *Twisting during the load-in is limited to one quarter (1/4) twist. All inversions and Swing-up stunts are prohibited.
<p>Tosses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All tosses are prohibited. (i.e. quick toss, sponge toss and basket toss)
<p>Pyramids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. - NO Hand/Foot Connections are allowed at Prep Level or Above. A two leg extended stunt is permitted as long as flyer is braced hand to hand/arm on both side by 2 leg prep Stunts or shoulder sits. Hand to hand/arm bracing must be connected before executing this skill. A one leg prep stunt is permitted as long as flyer is braced hand to hand/arm on both sides by 2 leg prep stunts or below, or shoulder sits. Braced connection must be made and stay before executing and completing this skill. In pyramid transitions, the flyer (top) must maintain contact with at least one base at all times. Cradles From Braced Extended Stunts MUST be A Braced Connection & MUST be Made & Remain before Executing & Completing the Skill. Hanging and collapsible pyramids are prohibited.
<p>Dismounts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Straight cradles from prep level may not exceed more than one quarter (1/4) twisting rotation. <i>*Other positions during cradles are prohibited (i.e. arch, toe touch, pike, tuck, etc.)</i> Any inverted dismount, including double based suspended forward rolls, are prohibited. Cradles may not land in prone position (on stomach). Cradle dismounts to different bases are prohibited.
<p>Release Moves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No release moves are allowed other than those mentioned in the dismount sections. Barrell or log rolls are prohibited.

Red Division 8, 10, 12, 13, 15 and 18

<p>Standing Tumbling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed. <i>For example: forward rolls, backward rolls, front walkovers, back walkovers, cartwheels, handstands, round offs and handsprings are allowed.</i> Connection of more than one of the above skills is allowed. <i>Ex: cartwheel/back walkover or standing back handspring series.</i> At least one hand must remain in contact with the floor during skill execution. (Exception: both hands must remain in contact with the floor when performing front or back handsprings). Flips and aerials are prohibited.
<p>Running Tumbling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All skills with hand support are allowed. (All flips are prohibited) At least one hand must remain in contact with the floor during skill execution (exception: both hands must remain in contact with the floor when performing front or back handsprings). Series tumbling is allowed.
<p>Stunts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two leg extended stunts are allowed. One leg prep level stunts are allowed. (<i>Single leg extended stunts are prohibited</i>) *Twisting during the load-in is limited to one half (1/2) twist. Swing-up stunts are prohibited.
<p>Tosses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No tosses are permitted in Division 8 Quick and Sponge tosses are allowed in Div. 10,12,13,15 and 18 age divisions. One skill Sponge or Basket tosses are permitted in Div. 12, 13, 15 and 18 ONLY.
<p>Pyramids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. Single leg extended stunts are permitted as long as the flyer is braced, hand to hand/arm/foot on both sides. Braced connection must be made and remain before executing and completing skill. In pyramid transitions, the flyer (top) must maintain contact with at least one base at all times. Hanging and collapsible pyramids are prohibited.
<p>Dismounts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cradles from prep level one leg stunts and two leg extended stunts, may not exceed more than one and one quarter twisting rotation <i>Other positions during cradles are allowed (i.e. arch, toe touch, pike, tuck, etc.)</i> Double based forward suspended rolls are permitted. Cradles may not land in prone position (on stomach).
<p>Release Moves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No release moves are allowed other than those mentioned in the Dismounts and Tosses sections. One base or spotter must maintain contact with flyer. Exception: A single full twisting barrel (log) roll is allowed if it starts and ends in a cradle position.

Blue - Division 12, 13, 15 and 18

<p>Standing Tumbling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed. • Connection of more than one of the above skills is allowed. <i>Ex: cartwheel/back walkover, or standing back handspring series.</i> • Flips are allowed but may not exceed 1 flipping rotation and 0 twisting rotations. • Forward 3/4 flips to the seat and toe-pitch flips are prohibited.
<p>Running Tumbling</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All skills with hand support are allowed. • Flips are allowed but may not exceed one flipping and one twisting rotation. Flips may ONLY be performed from a round off or round off back handspring entry. • Flips may be performed in alternate positions (layout, x-out, pike, etc.). • Aerial cartwheels and running front tucks are allowed. • Tumbling after a flip is prohibited. <i>*Exception: a forward or backward roll out of a flip for safety is permitted.</i>
<p>Stunts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single leg extended stunts are allowed. • Twisting during the load-in is limited to one full twist by the base(s) and/or flyer. Swing-up stunts are prohibited.
<p>Tosses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basket and sponge tosses are allowed. • Tosses may not exceed one and one quarter (1 ¼) twisting rotations. • Half (1/2) helicopter tosses are allowed. • Flipping (front or back) and traveling tosses are prohibited. •
<p>Pyramids</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. • Flyers may flip forward or backward, in a pyramid as long as the flyer is braced, hand to hand/arm, on both sides by either a bracer in a prep or the rotating flyer's base. Flip may land in a cradle, load in or stunt position. • Hanging pyramids are allowed but must remain stationary. • Collapsible pyramids are prohibited.
<p>Dismounts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cradles from all one leg stunts are limited to one and one quarter (1 ¼) twists. • Cradles from all two leg stunts are limited to two and one quarter (2 ¼) twists. Prone Cradles are ALLOWED • Flips are prohibited (Exception: Double based suspended forward roll dismounts)
<p>Release Moves</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release moves are allowed but must not exceed more than eighteen inches above extended arm level (i.e. tic tocs would be allowed).

SECTION 3: CHEER DIVISION - AYC REGIONALS & NATIONALS

AYC GENERAL CHEER SAFETY RULES & ROUTINE GUIDELINES

Please refer to the National Federation of State High School Associations current year Spirit Rule Book for complete set of rules and explanation of all glossary terms. Please see the NFHS website for details www.nfhs.org.

AYC GENERAL CHEER GLOSSARY

STUNTS/TUMBLE

Forward/backward Roll - A foot-over-head rotation that is executed on the performing surface.

Stunt/Partner Stunt - One or more bases support one or more top persons off the performing surface.

Prep - The base(s) hold(s) a standing top person at approximately shoulder height.

Pyramid - Connected partner stunts.

Sponge - The base(s) absorb(s) the top person's downward momentum to push/lift the top person into position for the next stunt/skill.

Tumbling - Gymnastic skills including forward/backward rolls, inverted extended skills (cartwheels, handstands, walkovers, aerials, handsprings, etc.) twist and flips.

STUNTING PERSONNEL

Base - A person in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface who provides primary support for another person.

Bracer - A top person who stabilizes and/or assists another top person.

Post - A person in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface, who temporarily supports a top person during the execution of a stunt.

Spotter - A person in direct, weight-bearing contact with the performing surface whose primary function is to protect the top person's head, neck and shoulders.

Top Person - A person who is either being supported by another person(s) while off the performing surface or who has been tossed into the air.

BODY POSITIONS

Handstand - An inverted, straight-body position in which the arms are extended and beside the head, and the hips are directly over the head and shoulders.

Inverted Position - Shoulders are below waist.

Layout Position - A straight-body position

Pike Position - Bent at the hips with legs straight and together.

Prone Position - Face-down straight body.

Straddle Position - Bent at the hips with legs straight and apart.

Splits Position - Legs extended in opposite directions at right angles to the trunk.

Tuck Position - Bent at the hips and knees with knees drawn toward the torso.

DISMOUNTS

Cradle - A dismount from a partner stunt, pyramid or toss in which the catch is completed below shoulder height by a base or bases with the top person in face-up open pike position.

Dismount - Ending a stunt by releasing a top person to the performing surface or a cradle.

DROPS

Front Drop - Dropping to a horizontal, face-down position on the performing surface.

Knee/Seat/Thigh Drop - Dropping to the knee(s), seat or thighs onto the performing surface.

Split Drop - Dropping to a split position on the performing surface.

Tension Drop - A partner stunt (e.g., shoulder stand) in which the base leans forward until the top person dismount to the performing surface without assistance.

AERIAL STUNTS

Aerial - A skill performed free of contact with a person or the performing surface.

Flip - An aerial stunt involving foot-over-head rotation in a tuck, pike or layout position.

Twist - An aerial stunt involving rotation perpendicular or parallel to the performing surface in a straight body position.

EXTENDED STUNTS

Extended stunt - The supporting hand(s) of the base(s) is/are extended above the head.

Extension - An extended stunt in which the top person has both feet in the hands of a base(s).

SUSPENDED STUNTS

Forward Suspended Roll/Flip -- A flyer (top girl) at prep level dismounts in a continuous heels-over-head rotation while having both hands in constant, hand-to-hand/arm contact with 2 bases or 2 posts who control the flyer's descent to the performing surface or cradle.

Suspended Splits - A top person is supported in a split position between multiple bases. A stunt in which a person is assisted by bases or posts while performing continuous foot-over-head rotation.

NONRELEASE, SPECIALIZED STUNTS*

Assisted Inverted Floor Stunt - An inverted participant on the performing surface is partially supported by non-inverted participant(s) who is/are also on the performing surface.

Chorus-Line Flip - A stunt in which a participant on the performing surface performs a backward flip while being supported by the connected arms of other participants.

Cupie/Awesome - A stunt in which both feet of a top person are in one hand of a base.

Flatback - A stunt in which base(s) extend a top person overhead, face up or face down, in a horizontal straight-body position.

Hanging Pyramid - A stunt in which the top person(s) is suspended by another top person(s) who is/are in a shoulder stand.

Leapfrog - A non-release transition in which the top person moves over a front or back post while maintaining hands-to-hands contact with the post; or a skill in which a participant on the floor places hands on the back of another person on the floor, vaults over his/her back in a straddle and returns to the floor.

Liberty - A one-leg stunt, (usually extended) that may include variations such as a hitch, a torch, a heel stretch, an arabesque, a scorpion, etc.

Non-release Stunt - A stunt in which contact is maintained between a top person and base(s).

Side T-lift - A stunt in which the base(s) extend(s) a top person overhead in a forward-facing, horizontal straight body position.

Swedish Fall - An extended stunt in which the top person in a prone position supports her own upper body by placing her hands on the shoulders of a base while her lower body is supported by another base's extended arms.

Totem Pole - A pyramid that creates a tiered appearance by connecting stunts of increasing height, one behind the other.

**NOTE: Stunts in this section may also be known by other names. This section does not attempt to list every stunt mentioned in the NFHS rules book.*

RELEASE SKILLS/STUNTS

Basket Toss - A top person loads into interlocked hands/wrist and is tossed by multiple bases.

Elevator/Sponge Toss - A person loads into a prep/elevator loading position and is tossed by multiple bases.

Helicopter - A top person in a horizontal position is popped then rotates like helicopter blades in a horizontal plane before being caught by the original bases.

Log Roll - A top person in a horizontal position or a cradle is popped then twists parallel to the performing surface before being caught by the original base(s) in a horizontal position or a cradle.

Pop - A controlled upward release by a base(s) to initiate a dismount or a release transition.

Quick Toss - A toss that begins with the top person in weight-bearing contact with the performing surface and ends in a partner stunt or pyramid

Release Stunt - A stunt in which the top person becomes free of contact from all personnel on the performing surface.

Toss - A throwing motion by base(s) that begins from below shoulder level to increase the height of the top person. The top person becomes free from all bases, post or bracers.

TRANSITIONAL STUNTS

Release transition/Release Pyramid Transition - A top person changes from one stunt to another (including loading positions) during temporary loss of physical contact with his/her base(s).

Switch Liberty - A top person starts with one foot on the ground, is tossed and lands in a liberty on the other foot.

Tick-tock - A release stunt in which a top person switches from one support leg to the other.

Transitional Stunt - Involves a flyer moving from one stunt to another. The transition may involve changing bases.

PROPS

Props - Items which may be manipulated (e.g., poms, signs, flags, etc.)

AYC Cheer General Safety Rules:

In addition to the current years National Federation of State High School Associations Spirit Rules, AYC cheer teams must follow the following additional general safety guidelines. These additional guidelines supersede any conflicting rules.

- Banners, flags, megaphones, poms, and signs are the only props allowed. The use of props is prohibited during tumbling. Exception: a forward/backward roll may be performed with poms in hands.
- Props - When setting up Props at least a portion of the Prop MUST be within the boundary of the performance surface or a boundary violation will occur.
- Straight and twist cradles are permitted with poms. All other props are prohibited during cradles.
- When discarding props (signs, etc.) that are made of solid material or have sharp edges/corners, team members must gently toss or place the props so that they are under control. The placement of props or poms should be a safe distance away from skills being performed to eliminate any safety hazards.
- Hiding or hidden type props are prohibited. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited. The use of lighted signs with bulbs and batteries are prohibited.
- Performers may only set up props, coaches may not assist with prop placement prior to a team's performance.

AYC SPECIFIC SAFETY RULES & ROUTINE GUIDELINES

All cheer teams must follow the current years NFHS Safety Rules and the AYC supplement rule book. Please refer to the NFHS current years Spirit Rule Book for complete set of rules at www.nfhs.org.

Please email the AYC Technical Advisory Committee for clarifications or questions regarding both rule books at AYCTech@americanyouthfootball.com.

AYC Clarification for the most common safety violations:

Jewelry

- No jewelry may be worn except religious or medical medals that may be taped to the participant's body without a chain.
- Earrings must be removed - coverage with band-aids does not meet requirements for safe participation.
- Jewelry includes plastic and rope bracelets/anklets and hair elastics worn on the participants' wrists.

Hair/Ribbons/Pins/Hair Pieces/Nails

- Hair must not interfere with participant's ability to stunt safely. Hair must be secured away from the face as not to obstruct vision.
- Ribbons must be securely fastened as not to fall out onto the performing surface. Length of ribbons must not impair vision.
- Bobby pins and hair pins are PROHIBITED, if they fall during performance a safety deduction may apply for each infraction, gymnastic type clips are recommended to secure hair.
- All hair pieces must be securely fastened, if they fall onto the performing surface a safety deduction will apply.
- Fingernails, including artificial nails, must be kept at an appropriate length (short, near the end of the fingers) to minimize risk for the participants.

Glitter

- Glitter that does not readily adhere on the hair, face, body, uniform or costume is illegal. Glitter may be used on signs, props, or backdrops only if laminated or sealed.

Uniforms

- Uniforms must fit properly, covering the midriff when standing at attention. Safety pins may not be used on uniforms as they present a safety hazard.
- Knee socks, legging, stocking or tights during stunting is prohibited for flyers.

Casts/Braces/Glasses/Medical Equipment

- Casts: Participants may participate in limited capacity while wearing casts or air casts as long as casts are covered. Participants wearing casts may not stunt, or tumble during the performance. Jumping with a cast or air cast is permitted with the exception of the cast being on a foot or leg.
- Braces: Hard braces with metal hinges are prohibited. Braces may be made of fabric with covered hinges. Any covering may not restrict movement of hinges.
- Velcro: All Velcro closures must be completely covered with either medical/athletic tape or a neoprene or similar sleeve.
- Glasses: Glasses may be worn, but must be secure. If they fall off, they must be quickly retrieved, a sport strap for all participants wearing eyeglasses is highly recommended.
- Medical Equipment: Any participant requiring a medical device shall be allowed to participate as long as a medical documentation is available. The extent of the participation (ex stunting etc. should consider the safety of all participants involved)

Spotting

- All participants assigned as spotters in a stunt group must remain in the ready position during the entire stunt. Ready position means eyes are focused on the flyer/top at all times.
- All participants assigned as bases are required to keep eyes on their flyer, a glance when transitioning and pyramid building is allowed but the remainder of the time, bases need to be focused on their stunt group and not looking around.

AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines:

- **DIVISIONS 8 - 15:** Each team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed 2 minutes 30 seconds. Each team's performance must consist of a cheer AND a music component. The total music component must not exceed one (1) minute and thirty (30) seconds, or there will be a deduction for overtime. Gymnastic skills are required as a component of the total team score; lack of tumbling in a routine will result in a 0 in any tumbling category. Stunts are required; omission of stunts in a routine will result in a 0. Poms, megaphones, signs, and banners are encouraged.
- **DIVISION 18:** Each team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed 2 minutes 30 seconds (with no music time limit). Music may be positioned for a segment, half, or the entire performance. Gymnastic skills are required as a component of the total team score; lack of tumbling in a routine will result in a 0 in any tumbling category. Stunts are required; omission of stunts in a routine will result in a 0. Poms, megaphones, signs, and banners are encouraged
- Formal entrances (i.e. crowd response chants, choreographed marching, cheers, tumbling or stunts) to the competition floor are prohibited. Entrances to the competition floor should be brief with the sole purpose of walking, running, etc to position. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set for their routine.
- Timing begins with the first organized word, movement, or note of music following the team's announcement to take the floor. Timing will end with the last organized word, note of music, or movement by the team. Please note, stunt groups may get into position, but flyers must keep one foot on the floor at all times. Once both feet are loaded into a stunt, timing will begin.
- No tear away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.
- Midriffs and/or sheer/nude color uniforms are prohibited.
- All choreography, material, music, and uniforms should be age-appropriate and suitable for family viewing. Teams using excessively vulgar or suggestive movements, words, or music are subject to deduction and/or disqualification. Please see "Inappropriate Choreography and Music" section.
- When there is a music malfunction during a performance that is not the result of the coach or team representative error, the team will be offered the option to perform again.

AYC PENALTY INFORMATION

PENALTIES: SAFETY AND LEGALITY GUIDELINES:

******EFFECTIVE 2014 ALL SAFETY DEDUCTIONS WILL BE 50% OF THE DEDUCTION FROM 2013 (except 10 pt Out of Category and ALL .5 Deductions STAY THE SAME).***

Deductions will be taken from your total score for each infraction of the AYC Cheer Safety Rules, NFHS Rules and/or the AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines, unless otherwise noted.

10 points will be deducted from your total score for each violation of the level division requirements (white, red or blue). If multiple stunt groups and/or individuals make violation, in one sequence, a deduction will be made for the entire sequence, not each individual or group. Example: a team performs 3 out of category stunts in one sequence. The deduction will be 10 points in a whole, not 10 points for each group.

.5 point deduction will be given for hair piece, bow or ribbons that fall onto the performance mat or cheer shoe comes off during performance. A 2.5 point deduction will be given if the hair bow interferes with the performance, ie: stepped on, tripped over. The deduction will only be issued once during the entire performance.

Please refer to the Level Divisions, AYC Cheer Safety Rules, and AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines regarding specific skill allowances and restrictions.

Teams are responsible for following all NFHS rules as well as the Level Division skill restrictions that further restrict permitted skills within NFHS rules.

BOUNDARY PENALTY CHEER ONLY:

0.5 point per occurrence will be deducted from your total score if any team member steps or touches out of bounds with any part of the body. Stepping off (the entire foot) or touching (the entire hand or body part) outside the performance area is considered a boundary violation. Performers may not use the non-performing surface for transitions; the entire routine including transitions must remain on the performing surface. Stepping on or touching the edge of the mat does not constitute a violation.

Objects outside the performance area:

- Props may rest partially out of bounds without a penalty. A Portion **MUST BE ON PERFORMANCE SURFACE OR A DEDUCTION WILL BE ASSESSED.**
- A squad member may pick up a prop that is partially out of bounds; however a squad member may not step off the performance area to retrieve a prop outside of the performance area. When props are set up, they must touch the edge of the performing surface.
- Carefully discarding props completely off the performing surface is acceptable; however, they may not be touched again until the conclusion of the performance or a boundary violation will be assessed.

TIME LIMIT PENALTIES:

- .5 point will be deducted from your total score if your routine and/or music goes from 6 - 10 seconds over time requirements.
- 1.5 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine and/or music goes from 11 or more seconds over time requirements.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY

Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.

*2.5 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used. This deduction will be assessed as a violation of the AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines as many times as the infraction occurs in each routine.

In addition to this rule, please follow these guidelines regarding music:

- There cannot be a “bleep” over an inappropriate lyric.
- Lyrics cannot lead up to an inappropriate word which then has a voiceover on the inappropriate word or cuts off right at the inappropriate word
- Music legalities cannot be based on “meaning of the song”, although specific lyrics should be appropriate for family listening ie: avoid lyrics in regards to drugs, sex etc.

IN CASE OF A TIE

All ties will be broken at Regional/National competitions. Using the Basic Fundamental scores on the score sheet will break ties. Those categories include: Stunts, Pyramids, Tumbling, Jumps, and Dance. If it is necessary to break a second tie, the scores under Overall Appeal will be calculated along with the Fundamental score categories.

REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION

Teams with illegal competitor(s) will be disqualified. Reasons for disqualification include but are not limited to overage competitor(s), competitor(s) not listed on official AYF/AYC league roster, and/or illegal competitor(s) listed on AYF/AYC official league roster. If a team is found with unregistered competitors, the team will be disqualified. Teams registering and performing in incorrect divisions and/or categories will be disqualified. See the Youth Cheer Divisions General Routine Guidelines for further details.

SECTION 4: DANCE DIVISION - REGIONALS & NATIONALS

AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL, INC. has established two divisions of dance-- Traditional Dance, and Step. Each division will have their own set of specific rules. The AYF/AYC traditional dance rules incorporate the current rules of National Federation of State High School Associations and existing AYF/AYC General Safety Rules and General Routine Guidelines.

DANCE DIVISIONS

DIVISION 8	MINIMUM AGE 5
DIVISION 10	MINIMUM AGE 8
DIVISION 12	MINIMUM AGE 10
DIVISION 15	MINIMUM AGE 12
DIVISION 18	MINIMUM AGE 16

**Dance team 5 - 36 members

COMPETING UP - DANCE

In order to allow all interested athletes to participate, athletes may compete in an older age division with the following restrictions:

Athletes may compete in an older age division ("compete up") ONLY if it is **NOT** possible to create a team in the division that corresponds to their age level.

Athletes may **NOT** compete in a younger age division without approval from AYC.

There is an "Age Waiver Request Form" that an association may use for an age waiver. The form is located on myayf.com.

DANCE RULES

AYC Dance General Safety Rules

In addition to the current years NFHS Spirit Rules, AYC dance teams must follow the following additional general safety guidelines of AYC in the event of conflict between these rules and regulations. The AYC rules and guidelines supersede any conflicting NFHS rule.

AYC DANCE GENERAL SAFETY RULES

In addition to the current years NFHS Spirit Rules, AYC dance teams must follow the following additional general safety guidelines of AYC in the event of conflict between these rules and regulations. The AYC rules and guidelines supersede any conflicting NFHS rule.

- A qualified Coach should supervise all teams during all official functions.
- Dance teams may wear approved jewelry as part of their costume. Approved jewelry includes legal post stud earrings and hair accessories. Jewelry such as hoop earrings, bracelets, necklaces, rings, belly, tongue, and nose rings etc are prohibited. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces may be worn, but should be secured to the body with tape.
- Drops (knee, seat, thigh, tension and split drops from a jump, or inverted position are illegal unless most of the weight is first borne on the hand(s) or foot/feet or is controlled, to absorb the impact of the drop. Front drops from an airborne position are illegal. Tension drops and handspring/flips to any drop are illegal.
- Soft-soled dance shoes (jazz boots, dance sandals, jazz shoes) are acceptable when competing. Footed tights, bare feet and socks only are prohibited. Feet and toes must be covered.
- No tear away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed. Accessories such as capes, robes, jackets, hats may be removed as part of a choreographed section of the routine.
- Midriffs and/or sheer/nude color costumes are prohibited.
- Costumes and related accessories or props should be properly secured during the performance. Any items that accidentally falls off during the performance will result in a .5 deduction per infraction per person
- All partner lifts, partner stunts, pyramids, or tosses are prohibited. Dance lifts may be used if the flyers hips are not above the base's shoulders.
- Forward rolls, one shoulder Backward rolls, Cartwheels, Front Walkovers and Back Walkovers are the only tumbling skills allowed. Progressive tumbling ie: Front and Back Handspring are prohibited.
- Back bends and handstands are allowed so long as they are choreographed as a progression to another skill. They may not be sustained and/or involve a hip over-head rotation.

Specific Safety Rules

All dance teams must follow the current year's NFHS Rules for Dance Teams

AYC DANCE ROUTINE GUIDELINES

- Each team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed 2:30 minutes. Each team's performance must include techniques of Movement Skills, Hip Hop/Funk and Jazz skills.
- Routines usually display a theme, with accompanying attire (costumes) and integration of themed music. For safety, all dance routines will be performed on dance floor surface or cheer mat only. Concrete surfaces are not permitted.
- The use of Poms is NOT Required in an AYC Dance Routine.

Each team will be judged on the following techniques of Movement Skills, Hip Hop/Funk and Jazz skills.

- **Movement Skills** : Basic cheerleading motions emphasizing strong/ sharp motions and arm placement.
- **Hip Hop/Funk skills:** Refers to dance style primarily performed to hip hop music, freestyle, (improvisational) in nature. Movements comprised of funk and street styles with tempo variation. Dance style with an emphasis on rhythm, body isolation, creativity, and execution.
- **Jazz/Technical Skills** - Refers to the incorporation and execution of turns, (ie: pirouettes, chainesse, pique' etc.) leaps and kicks in proper form and technique.
- **Theme and Attire**
- Formal entrances onto the competition floor are prohibited. Entrances to the competition floor should be brief with the sole purpose of walking, running, etc to position. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set up for their routine.
- Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement, or note of music following the teams' announcement to take the floor. Timing will end with the last organized word, note of music, or movement by the team.
- Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.
- Hiding props is prohibited.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY

Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.

- 2.5 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used, including international versions. Instrumental music cannot be used as a replacement. This deduction will be assessed as a violation of the AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines as many times as the infraction occurs in each routine.
In addition to this rule, please follow these guidelines regarding music:
 - There cannot be a “bleep” or voice over to replace an inappropriate lyric.
 - Lyrics cannot lead up to an inappropriate word which then has a voiceover on the inappropriate word or cuts off right at the inappropriate word
 - Music legalities cannot be based on “meaning of the song”, although specific lyrics should be appropriate for family listening ie: avoid lyrics in regards to drugs, sex etc.
 - Teams using excessively vulgar or suggestive movements, words or music are subject to disqualification.
- Music is required throughout this performance. If music is interrupted due to technical failure, performers will continue to be judged on dance skills outlined in the routine specifics.
- The use of inappropriate choreography, music, or uniform/costume will be subject to a penalty. Extreme cases that require disqualification will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.

PENALTIES - TRADITIONAL DANCE

SAFETY GUIDELINES PENALTIES:

Deductions will be taken from your total score for each infraction of the AYC General Safety Rules, NFHS Safety Rules for Dance Teams, and the Dance Routine Guidelines.

Teams are responsible for following all AYC General Safety Rules for dance teams, as well as the NFHS Safety Rules, and Dance Routine Guidelines. AYC safety rule, and dance routine guidelines supersede ALL rules and guidelines.

TIME LIMIT PENALTY

- .5 point will be deducted from your total score if your routine and/or music goes from 6 - 10 seconds over time requirements.
- 1.5 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine and/or music goes from 11 or more seconds over time requirements

IN CASE OF A TIE

All ties will be broken at Region/National competitions. Using Dance Fundamentals scores will break ties in dance. If necessary, a second tiebreaker will consist of Dance Fundamentals scores plus Theme and Presentation scores. All decisions of the judges are final.

NOTES :

AYC Dance Routine Glossary

Airborne: To be free of contact with a person and/or the performing surface. (*Clarification: an example of airborne hip over head rotation is a back handspring.*)

Aerial Cartwheel: An airborne tumbling skill which emulates a cartwheel executed without placing hands on the ground.

Axle: A turn in which the working leg makes a circle in the air to passé as the supporting leg lifts off the ground enabling the dancer to perform a rotation in the air and then lands on the original supporting leg.

Back Walkover: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer reaches backward with an arched torso through an inverted position, hands make contact with the ground, then the hips rotate over the head and the torso hollows bringing the dancer to an upright position, landing one foot/leg at a time.

C- Jump: A jump in which the dancer creates an arch in the back allowing the knees to bend and the feet reach behind the body.

Cartwheel: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer supports the weight of the body with the arm(s) while rotating sideways through an inverted position landing on one foot at a time.

Calypso [ka-lip-SO]: A turning leap in which the working leg extends making a circle in the air as the supporting leg lifts off the ground enabling the dancer to perform a rotation in the air then the supporting (back) leg reaches behind the body, often in an attitude, and then lands on the original working leg.

Coed: An All Star Division that includes 1 or more males.

Coupe [koo-PAY]: A position in which one foot is held lifted and close to the ankle. Also known as Coup de Pied: quickly takes the place of the other; meaning to cut or cutting.

Dance Lift (executed as partners or in a group): A skill in which a dancer(s) is elevated from the performance surface by one or more dancers and set down. A Dance Lift is comprised of "Lifting" dancer(s) and "Elevated" dancer(s).

Dance Trick (executed as partners or in a group): A skill in which a dancer(s) executes a skill with support from one or more dancers. A Dance Trick is comprised of "Supporting" dancer(s) and "Executing" dancer(s).

Dance Trick (executed as an individual): An acrobatic or gymnastics skill executed by an individual dancer without contact, assistance or support of another dancer(s) and begins and ends on the performance surface.

Developpé [develop-AY]: An action in which the working leg moves through passé (bends) before extending into position; meaning to develop.

Dive Roll: An airborne tumbling skill in which the dancer does a forward roll where the hands and feet are off of the performing surface simultaneously. This skill is allowed only if the dancer is in a pike position.

Elevated: An action in which a dancer is moved to a higher position or place from a lower one.

Elevated Dancer: A dancer who is lifted from the performance surface as a part of a Dance Lift.

Executing Dancer: A dancer who performs a skill as a part of a Dance Trick or uses support from another dancer or dancers when Partnering.

Fouetté [foo-eh-TAY]: A turning step, usually done in a series, in which the working leg makes a circle in the air and then into passé as the dancer turns bending (plié) and rising (relevé) at each revolution; meaning to whip. Fouette turns can also be done to the side or in second position (fouette a la seconde).

Fouetté a la Seconde: A turning step done in a series in which the working leg makes a circle in the air and extends at a 90° angle from the supporting leg remaining parallel to the ground as the dancer turns with a plié and relevé at each revolution.

Flying squirrel: A jump in which the dancer executes with forward momentum with the dancers arms extended in front, legs behind, creating an "X" position in the air.

Front Walkover: A non-airborne tumbling skill where the dancer rotates forward with a hollow torso through an inverted position and arches up bringing the legs and hips over the head to a non-inverted position legs landing one foot/leg at a time.

Hand to Hand Vertical Inversion (All Star teams): A lift in which the lifted dancer is perpendicular to the ground with the hips directly over his/her shoulders and maintaining contact with only his/her hands in the lifting dancer(s) hands. (All Star teams-Hand to hand vertical inversions are not permitted above shoulder level [of the Lifting/Supporting Dancers when standing upright]).

Handstand: A non-airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill where the dancer supports his/herself vertically on his/her hands in an inverted position and the arms are extended straight by the head and ears.

Head Spin: A trick typically performed in hip hop, in which the dancer spins on his/her head and uses his/her hands to aid in speed. The legs can be held in a variety of positions.

Head Spring (front/back): A trick typically performed in hip hop, in which the dancer approaches the head spring much like a hand spring, and can be executed either to the front or to the back. Beginning in a standing or squatting position, the hands are placed on the floor with the head between the hands, and the legs come over/whip through the body similar to a kip up and the dancer lands on two feet.

Headstand: A non-airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill, where the dancer supports his/herself vertically on his/her head in an inverted position and the hands are on the floor supporting the body.

Hip over head rotation (executed by individuals): An action where hips move over the head in a tumbling skill (*Example: Back Walkover or Cartwheel*).

Hip over head rotation (executed in groups or pairs): An action where the Executing Dancers' hips rotate over the head in a lift or partnering skill.

Inversion: A position in which the dancer's waist/hips and at least one foot are higher than his/her head and shoulders. (*Clarification: An arch in a back lift is not considered an inversion*)

Jetté [juh-TAY]: A skill in which the dancer takes off from one foot by brushing the feet into the ground and swiftly 'whipping' them into the position and then landing on one foot. A jetté can be executed in various directions, sizes and positions.

Kip up: An airborne, non-rotating, tumbling skill, typically performed in hip hop, where the dancer brings the body to a non-inverted (upright) position by bending the knees, thrusting the legs into the chest rolling back slightly onto the shoulders, and then kicks up. The force of the kick causes the dancer to lift and land with both feet planted on the floor.

Leap: A skill in which the dancer pushes off the ground, from a plié (bend), off of one leg becoming airborne and landing on the opposite leg. (also known as grand jetté)

Passé [pa-SAY]: A position or movement in which the working leg bends connecting the pointed foot to or near the knee of the supporting leg; meaning to pass. Passé can be executed with the hips parallel or turned out.

Partnering (executed in pairs): A skill in which two dancers use support from one another.

Pirouette [peer-o-WET]: A skill in which the dancer bends (plié) with one foot in front of the other (fourth position) and rises (relevé) to one leg making a complete rotation of the body; meaning to whirl. A pirouette can be executed in a variety of positions.

Plié [plee-AY]: A preparatory and landing skill in which the dancer bends, softens his/her knees; meaning to bend.

Prop: An object that can be manipulated. When a glove is worn, it is a part of the uniform.

Prone: A position in which the front of the dancers' body is facing the ground and the back of the dancer's body is facing up.

Relevé [rell-eh-VAY]: An executing skill in which the dancer lifts up to the ball of his/her feet; meaning to rise.

SECTION 5: STEP DIVISION - REGIONALS & NATIONALS

Step is a form of percussive dance in which the participant's entire body is used to produce complex rhythms and sounds through a mixture of sophisticated, synchronized chanting and rhythmic beats from participant hands, feet and mouth. Today, youth across America have embraced this art form, which provides groups with a sense of unity, teamwork, discipline, self-esteem and responsibility. AYC supports this philosophy and is excited to offer this dance category.

STEP DIVISIONS

DIVISION 8	MINIMUM AGE 5
DIVISION 10	MINIMUM AGE 8
DIVISION 12	MINIMUM AGE 10
DIVISION 15	MINIMUM AGE 12
DIVISION 18	MINIMUM AGE 16

**Step team 5 - 36 members

COMPETING UP - STEP

In order to allow all interested athletes to participate, athletes may compete in an older age division with the following restrictions:

Athletes may compete in an older age division ("compete up") **ONLY** if it is **NOT** possible to create a team in the division that corresponds to their age level.

Athletes may **NOT** compete in a younger age division without approval from AYC

STEP RULES

AYC STEP GENERAL SAFETY RULES

In addition to current years NFHS Spirit/Dance Rules, AYC step teams must follow the following additional general safety guidelines. These additional guidelines supersede any conflicting NFHS rule. All General Safety Rules in Dance also pertain to Step.

- A qualified Coach should supervise all teams during all official functions.
- Step teams may wear approved jewelry as part of their costume. Approved jewelry includes legal post stud earrings and hair accessories. Jewelry such as hoop earrings, bracelets, necklaces, rings, belly, tongue, and nose rings etc are prohibited. Medical alert bracelets or necklaces may be worn, but should be secured to the body with tape.
- Drops (knee, seat, thigh, tension and split drops from a jump, or inverted position are illegal unless most of the weight is first borne on the hand(s) or foot/feet or is controlled, to absorb the impact of the drop. Front drops from an airborne position are illegal. Tension drops and handspring/flips to any drop are illegal.
- No tear away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed. Accessories such as capes, robes, jackets, hats may be removed as part of a choreographed section of the routine.
- Midriffs and/or sheer/nude color costumes are prohibited.

- Costumes and related accessories or props should be properly secured during the performance. Any items that accidentally falls off during the performance will result in a .5 deduction per infraction per person
- Dance shoes are acceptable when competing.
Footed tights, bare feet and socks only are prohibited. Feet and toes must be covered
- All partner lifts, partner stunts, pyramids, or tosses are prohibited. Dance lifts may be used if the flyers hips are not above the base's shoulders.
- Forward rolls, one shoulder Backward rolls, Cartwheels, Front Walkovers and Back Walkovers are the only tumbling skills allowed. Progressive tumbling ie: Front and Back Handspring are prohibited.
- Back bends and handstands are allowed so long as they are choreographed as a progression to another skill. They may not be sustained and/or involve a hip over-head rotation.

AYC STEP ROUTINE GUIDELINES

- Each team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed 3 minutes.
- Timing will begin with the first organized word, movement, or note of music following the teams' announcement to take the floor. Timing will end with the last organized word, note of music, or movement by the team.
- Props may be used but is not mandatory. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.
- Costuming is required because you will be judged on appearance, uniformity, originality, synchronization, style, energy and showmanship.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY

Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.

- *2.5 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used, including international versions. Instrumental music cannot be used as a replacement. This deduction will be assessed as a violation of the AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines as many times as the infraction occurs in each routine.

In addition to this rule, please follow these guidelines regarding music:

- There cannot be a “bleep” or voice over to replace an inappropriate lyric.
- Lyrics cannot lead up to an inappropriate word which then has a voiceover on the inappropriate word or cuts off right at the inappropriate word.
- Music legalities cannot be based on “meaning of the song”, although specific lyrics should be appropriate for family listening ie: avoid lyrics in regards to drugs, sex etc.
- Teams using excessively vulgar or suggestive movements, words or music are subject to disqualification.
- Music is required throughout this performance. If music is interrupted due to technical failure, performers will continue to be judged on dance skills outlined in the routine specifics.
- The use of inappropriate choreography, music, or uniform/costume will be subject to a penalty. Extreme cases that require disqualification will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.

PENALTIES - STEP

SAFETY GUIDELINES PENALTIES:

Deductions will be taken from your total score for each infraction of the AYC Step Safety Rules & Step Routine Guidelines (when applicable).

Please refer to the AYC Dance General Safety Rules and Youth Dance Routine Guidelines for details.

TIME LIMIT PENALTY:

- .5 point will be deducted from your total score if your routine and/or music goes from 6 - 10 seconds over time requirements
- 1.5 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine and/or music goes from 11 or more seconds over time requirements

IN CASE OF A TIE

All ties will be broken at Regional/National competitions. Using Showmanship & Originality scores will break ties in Step dance. If necessary, a second tiebreaker will consist of Originality plus Appearance scores. All decisions of the judges are final.

SECTION 6 - LEGALITY QUESTIONS for CHEER, DANCE, STEP and GAME TIME

Coaches and Coordinators are responsible to comprehend and comply with all AYC Age Division Requirements, AYC General Safety Rules, NFHS Safety Rules for Cheer, Dance Teams, and/or Step Routine Guidelines pertaining to the competing division. Questions concerning any AYC Safety Rule should follow the below process:

All legality questions must be addressed in writing. By reason of terminology and misunderstandings, answers will NOT be provided by phone. The AYC Technical Advisory Committee will address all questions in writing. All questions should be emailed to: AYCTech@americanyouthfootball.com. Questions must be submitted 14 days prior to any AYC competition to ensure a reply. Questions submitted 13 days or less prior any AYC competition are NOT guaranteed an answer prior to the event.

When you e-mail your questions make sure to include:

- 1) Event/Competition Date
- 2) Your name
- 3) Your team name and Region
- 4) Your division
- 5) Your category

(A written answer will be provided)

VIDEO APPROVAL REQUEST

If you have a legality question in regards to a portion of your routine and you wish to send a video to our Technical Advisory Committee for approval, please email the Video Request Form on Myayf.com along with a video for approval to AYCTech@americanyouthfootball.com. Videos must be submitted 14 days prior to any AYC competition to ensure a reply. Questions submitted 13 days or less prior any AYC competition are NOT guaranteed an answer prior to the event.

SECTION 8 - AYC ALL STAR GAME

PARTICIPANT AND COACH ELIGIBILITY

The Annual AYF National All-Star Game was established to allow the older participants, those leaving youth football/cheer, the opportunity to travel and experience participation with kids from other teams they may have competed against over the years of their involvement. It will allow some better understanding and friendships to develop and require coaches from different organizations the opportunity to work together to further the objective of providing and giving back to the youth of their communities. It should be understood that while the participation is a competition for the football players it is the exposure and experience being offered to the kids that is the most important feature of this effort. Winning is the result of the contest the reward is the wisdom one will gain from this opportunity.

- The Annual AYF National All-Star Cheer teams will be made up of the oldest participants 15 and Under, with the minimum age of 12, from all regions.
- Any player/cheerleader/coach may be nominated postseason competition or not. Nominations must be made by November 1st. Nominations must be made directly to the National Commissioner at Cheer@americanyouthfootball.com. There is an application process, which must be completed by each nominee with a portion to be filled out by the coach.
- A maximum of 6 - 8 cheerleaders can be nominated from each region. Nomination does not guarantee the cheerleader will be selected. The National staff will make the selection.
- Nomination will include a scholastic component, as academic achievement must be a factor when nominating a cheerleader for the All Star squad. Also included is a community service factor and history of participation in AYC.
- Only players who were certified and submit final rosters by the Sept 15 deadline as well as actively participated with their team during the entire regular season are eligible for the All Star squad.
- One Assistant Coach will be nominated from each region. The nominee will have a minimum of three years (3) coaching experience on the competitive level.
- Two AYC All Star Managers and two AYC All Star Head Coaches will be appointed by the National Cheer Director
- The AYC All-Star team announcement will be made in the beginning of November of each year.

SECTION 9 - AYC SERVICES AND RESOURCES OFFERED

AYC SCORE SHEETS

Please find all updated AYC approved score sheets for Skill Execution/Deduction Sheets, Cheer Score Sheets, and Step Score Sheets at MyAyf.com.

2014 RESOURCES

For the 2014 Season AYC has created and updated many useful manuals and resources for coaches, teams, associations, leagues and region leaders that can be found at MyAyf.com.

- JUDGES MANUAL
- COMPONENTS OF AN AYC ROUTINE
- SCORING GRID
- SKILL COMPARISON GUIDE
- AYC CAMP AND CLINIC GUIDE
- A GUIDE TO HOSTING AN AYC COMPETITION
- CHEER, DANCE AND STEP SCORE SHEETS AND DEDUCTION SHEETS

CHEER UNIFORMS

AYC now offers its members the best prices to outfit cheer teams. Visit MyAyf.com for more information on how to contact a representative in your area and retain exclusive AYC pricing.

AYC TRAINING

ayfcoaching.com: AYF has created the best Coaches Training/Certification program available. Not only will coaches get the training they need, they also receive \$2 million in personal liability protection. Coaches who complete the course will also be listed in a National Coaches Database. Learn more at ayfcoaching.com.

AYC Cheer Camps: One-day, two-day, & three-day camps will be offered to all AYC leagues/conferences. AYC will run camps for your leagues; local leagues can use camps as a fundraiser and may promote camps locally. All instruction will be in line with AYC and NFHS Rules.

AYC Coaches Clinics: A new Coaches education program and clinics are currently being offered by AYC. Clinics and education/training programs will be available for all teams, whether local or championship declaration. AYC members should contact the National Cheer Director at cheer@americanyouthfootball.com for information.

AYC COMPETITION TOOLS

‘Planning Guide’ for Conference Cheer Competitions: AYC will provide a ‘Planning Guide’ to assist local conferences in producing a cheer competition. Some AYF/AYC conferences have a long-standing tradition of conducting competitions for their cheerleaders. For these conferences, this planning guide will simply be a check off list of tasks already performed. However, in many parts of the country, local events are building for AYF/AYC cheerleaders to showcase their skills. A conference-planning guide will assist conference coordinators in the tasks required to produce an excellent competition.

Regional Competitions: For information on participating in Regional Competitions, check for information and forms on the MyAyf.com control panel and keep updated via www.AYFChampionships.com.

AYC National Competition: A National AYC Cheerleading competition will be held on an annual basis. Invitations will be given to teams that qualify from their regional competitions. There will be a competitor and spectator cost associated with the competition. The cost will vary each year, based on venue and production expenses. This high-energy competition will offer a fitting end to each season. We highly encourage any team who qualifies, to begin fundraising early to ensure every eligible cheerleader have the opportunity of experiencing this excellent event.

CONTACTING AYC

All AYC members have the ability to communicate directly with the AYF National Staff. The AYF National Staff will not tolerate disciplinary actions being taken against members or parents who choose to contact the National Office directly. Contact information can be found online at www.AmericanYouthFootball.com.

A complementary monthly electronic newsletter will be sent to each AYC member wishing to receive one. It will contain information on AYC programs and details of upcoming events in *The Huddle*.

AYC National Headquarters will gladly answer any questions. You may contact AYC via email at: cheer@americanyouthfootball.com.