



# 2008 CHEERLEADING HANDBOOK

Welcome to the Boys & Girls Club of Pequannock Cheerleading program. Our program is designed to familiarize girls with skill fundamentals of cheerleading and the game of football, to promote and inspire teamwork, camaraderie, sportsmanship, promote physical fitness and to create friendships. But most of all, our main goal is for all participants to have fun!

The following is intended to provide you with information about our program and key dates you should be aware of.

The Boys & Girls Club of Pequannock Football program is a member of the North Jersey Junior Football League (NJJFL). There are three divisions within the league based on grade: Pee Wee (2<sup>nd</sup> through 4<sup>th</sup> grade), Junior (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade) and Senior (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade). Within each division can be up to 3 levels of squads, based on skill and experience: A Squad, B Squad and C Squad.

The Cheerleading program follows the Pee Wee, Junior, and Senior divisions. Cheering squads within the divisions are based on enrollment numbers, grade and skill. Each cheering squad will be assigned a specific football squad to cheer for throughout the season. Squad assignments are **generally** as follows:

- 2nd Grade: Pee Wee C
- 3rd Grade: Pee Wee B
- 4th Grade: Pee Wee A
- 5th Grade: Junior B
- 6th Grade: Junior A
- 7th Grade: Senior B
- 8th Grade: Senior A

Squad assignments noted above are preliminary and are subject to change based on the number of players enrolled within the program and the total number of football squads. Cheering squad assignments will be finalized in late August when the 2008 game schedule is published.

## CHEERLEADER EXPECTATIONS

### PRACTICE

Cheerleading practice is mandatory. Practices will be held every Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings – weather permitting - from 5:00pm to 7:00pm on Monday and Friday, and 6:00pm to 8:00pm on Wednesdays beginning July 29<sup>th</sup>, through August 29<sup>th</sup>. All practices are held at

Greenview Park, on the Lacrosse fields (next to the Tennis Courts). Bathrooms will be open and accessible

All squads will learn a Hello Cheer, Half Time Routine and Sideline Cheers – which will be performed at both home and away games.

**It is important that parents have their children to practice on time, every week.**

Once the football season begins, practices will not generally be held unless a squad's Coach determines the squad needs additional practice. In such cases, practices are usually limited to one evening during the week at a mutually agreeable date and time.

Cancellation of an evenings practice due to foul weather will be made as early in the day as possible. An email will be sent to parents from Team Moms, and if possible, phone calls will also be made to parents notifying them that practice has been cancelled. **Please be sure to supply an email address to your Team Moms.**

**Siblings and/or friends who are not registered in the program are NOT allowed to practice with Club squads.**

#### **PRACTICE RULES/REMINDERS:**

- Girls are to come to practice on time and dressed appropriately
- No jewelry should be worn (i.e., rings, bracelets, hoop earrings)
- Hair must be neatly pulled back and away from face
- Girls must wear sturdy, athletic sneakers – no water shoes, sandals, flip-flops, mules, etc.
- No gum

#### **PRACTICE DATES:**

- July 30, August 1
- August 4, 6, 8
- August 11, 13, 15
- August 18, 20, 22
- August 25, 27, 29

**Please remember to send your child to practice with a water bottle - and take them home or throw them out when you leave the field.**

### **GAME SCHEDULE**

Game attendance at all home and away games is mandatory. Game schedules are finalized at the very end of August. Once received from the League, all participants will be provided a schedule. Game schedules and directions to all away games will also be posted on our website.

It is important to remember that the game schedule (dates and times) is subject to change at any time during the season. Participants are expected to be at all games even if there is a change in the

schedule. Please understand game changes occur during the season to accommodate postponements due to inclement weather. As such, you will be notified by your Team Moms. In addition, game information will be posted and available on our website, in as timely a manner as possible.

Games are typically played on Saturday nights, Sunday afternoons or Tuesday evenings – however this is subject to change based on the final schedule.

All home games will be played at the Boys and Girls Club of Pequannock. Directions to away games and will be distributed and posted on the Boys & Girls Club website. Please allow enough time for getting lost!

The end of the season will be determined by the outcome of the football squad for which your child cheers for. A successful season could play as late as Thanksgiving. All squads are REQUIRED to attend all games, including post season tournament play.

## **GAME DAY**

Cheerleaders should arrive at the field 1 hour prior to the start of their game. Hello Cheers and Half Time routines are choreographed to include all squad members. In the event girls are missing from games; routines will need to be re-choreographed with the girls in attendance. Pre-game time is when coaches will make those changes.

**NO FOOD, SNACKS or DRINKS (other than water) ARE PERMITTED DURING THE GAME.**

**Girls are not permitted to visit the snack bar during the game.** Girls may eat a quick snack outside the fence but must be back on the field prior to the beginning of the 3rd quarter. Parents are asked to help enforce this policy. Helpful suggestions:

- Provide a snack and water bottle from home;
- Parents purchase snacks prior to halftime and have available for your daughter upon the conclusion of the 2nd quarter;
- For younger squads, solicit parent(s) to volunteer and provide a light snack for the squad.

Suitable snacks (quick to eat and not too messy) include pretzels, fruit snacks, cookies, graham crackers, animal crackers, etc.

## **FIELD RULES**

Due to incidents in the past, some of which had been publicized in the local papers, the League has instituted strict field regulations regarding sideline and field access. Many of the guidelines the League has instituted have already been in place for our program; however they will now be strictly enforced.

- THERE WILL BE ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING ON THE BOYS & GIRLS PROPERTY
- Access to the field area will be limited to coaches, staff, cheerleaders, players wearing game jerseys, special guests and chain crews.

- Anyone entering the field of play to seek out a coach, official or member of the opposition in a confrontational manner is subject to ejection from the facility and may face possible banishment as a spectator at future NNJFL or Boys & Girls Club events.

Our program has been exemplary in many of these areas but wanted to make you aware of the rules as there is a zero tolerance policy for any type of misconduct.

## **EMAIL/WEBSITE**

Ongoing and timely communication with coaches and parents is one of the key factors to a successful program; we will keep all teams informed as information is provided to us.

On occasion, you will be provided information through the mail, at practice or at games, but **our main means of communications will be email**. If you do not have access to email, please let your Team Moms know and they will make arrangements to provide you the information. Most hardcopy information provided will also be posted on our website at [www.bgcnwnj.org](http://www.bgcnwnj.org). The site will be updated with any new information as it becomes available. I encourage you to visit the site especially in the event of inclement weather - for re-scheduled game information.

To access the site, enter [www.bgcnwnj.org](http://www.bgcnwnj.org). Click on the Boys & Girls Club of Pequannock Unit building. Locate the Sports, Fitness & Registration Tab, scroll to Traveling Athletics and select Travel Cheerleading.

## **UNIFORMS**

All girls will be provided a participation tee shirt, skirt, shell and jacket. Each girl is responsible for the care, maintenance and safe return of their skirt, shell and jacket at the end of the season. If necessary, uniforms are to be washed in COLD water and HUNG dry - no hot water, no hot irons, no dryers. Parents assume responsibility for the replacement costs of uniforms which are either damaged or not returned.

Uniforms will be distributed on Wednesday, September 3rd and Thursday, September 4th between 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. at the Boys & Girls Club. You will be notified prior to September when your daughter's squad is assigned for uniform pick up.

To supplement the club provided uniform, parents will be required to purchase a white bodysuit (samples and ordering information provided at fitting night) and white socks. Girls must also wear navy blue briefs and white athletic type sneakers (no slip on sneakers, mules or Keds).

As the weather becomes colder, girls may opt to wear pants, headbands and gloves. In order to maintain uniformity among the squads, girls are only allowed to wear the standard leg wear (specific navy blue sweatpants – available for order on fitting night). Please be aware parents are **NOT** required to purchase leg wear, however, this item is considered part of the standard cold weather uniform – and no other pants may be worn during the game.

Lastly, navy blue knit gloves and navy blue headbands (no hats) may also be worn which can be easily purchased at any Dollar Store, KMART, Kohl's, etc.

## **TEAM MOMS**

Each squad will have at least one Team Mom assigned to their squad. Team Moms are responsible for keeping a watchful eye on your child at both practice and games and for ensuring information is disseminated to the squad and parents. They are also responsible for initiating calls to parents related to game changes, practice cancellations and other logistical information. Team Moms assume a large administrative role. Should you want to help and assist with phone calls, or any other role, please let the Club know.

In addition please confirm with your Team Moms that your contact information is correct, including all telephone numbers and email addresses.

Team Moms are volunteers and are helping to look after your child. Please be prompt in picking up your child from practice. In addition, Team Moms and other volunteers keep a watchful eye on your child, **however**, a parent, guardian or family friend should be present at each game to ensure someone is available in case of an emergency and to take them home upon the conclusion of each game.

## **COACHES**

High School/College age coaches are assigned to each squad and are responsible for choreographing and teaching the squad their hello cheer, halftime routine and sideline cheers. These girls have volunteered their time to work with your children and are committed to attending practices and games. Please show these girls a positive, energetic and respectful attitude.

Cheerleading is a **team sport!** Absences are difficult for coaches to place girls in routines and stunts. Special family commitments are certainly understood; however, please make every effort to attend all practices and games.

## **SNACK BAR**

Each Parent is asked to volunteer their time and work the Snack Bar at home games.

The Snack Bar is a MAJOR source of income for the football/cheerleading program - as such, we ALL need to help.... and your participation and support is greatly appreciated !

**Children are NOT permitted in the Snack Bar (due to obvious safety and liability issues).**

## **BOOSTER BOOK**

Our annual Booster Book is a great way to show support for your cheerleader and our program. The Booster Book is also a major source of revenue for the program – please show your support in purchasing an ad or booster – forms, instructions and deadline dates will be forthcoming and will also be available online.

## **SENIOR NIGHT**

This year, at the last home game of the season, we honor our 8th grade football players and cheerleaders who are graduating from the program and moving on to High School. We will honor them at a pre-game ceremony where they are introduced on the field along with their parents/guardians. Details, game date and time to follow.

## **DISCIPLINARY MATTERS**

Parents, if you encounter any issues with any of the coaches or cheerleaders, you are to bring the matter to the attention of your Team Moms for immediate resolution. Team Moms are required to inform us of all situations and resolution/steps taken to resolve the issue. If a Team Mom is unable to resolve the issue or the issue involves a Team Mom, we will then become personally involved to address and resolve the issue in a professional manner with no distractions to the teams, girls, squads, etc.

## **COACHES CODE OF CONDUCT**

- Will not encourage any behaviors or practices that would endanger the health or well being of any girls on the squad
- Encourage good sportsmanship by showing respect, positive attitude and courtesy
- Encourage squad members to adhere to the rules and to resolve conflicts through the proper channels
- Take appropriate action to resolve any minor issue or incident under their control
- Report all incidents and issues to the Cheerleading Commissioner for proper and immediate resolution
- Treat each child on the squad equally and with respect at all times
- Provide supervision at practice and games
- Ensure all girls adhere and abide by the uniform and cold weather wear policies
- Provide timely communication to squad and parents

## **CHEERLEADER CODE OF CONDUCT**

- Be respectful to one another, coaches and opposing teams
- Follow club rules related to conduct, uniform, and attendance
- Show positive attitude at all times
- Shake hands with opposing cheerleaders after the game
- Watch and applaud opposing teams "Hello" cheer and "Half-Time" routine
- Stop cheering and stand quietly if a player on the field is injured and being attended to
- Applaud an injured player once taken off the field

- Will not use cell phone when cheering or on the field

## **PARENTS CODE OF CONDUCT**

- Will always keep in mind that children participate to have fun and the game is for youth, not adults
- Be a positive role model for your child and encourage sportsmanship by showing respect and courtesy, and by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, officials and spectators at every game
- Do your best to make this program fun for your child
- Require your child to treat other participants, coaches, officials, parents, and spectators with respect
- Strive to be a good role model for your child and the other children in the program
- Respect your child's Team Moms and coaches and do your best to have your child at all practices and games on time. When not possible, agree to inform the coach in advance
- If a problem or concern is identified, calmly seek solutions at a proper time and location, refraining from confrontations in front of the children

Please note your child's active participation in the cheerleading program is contingent upon you and your child's agreement to adhere to the aforementioned policies noted above.