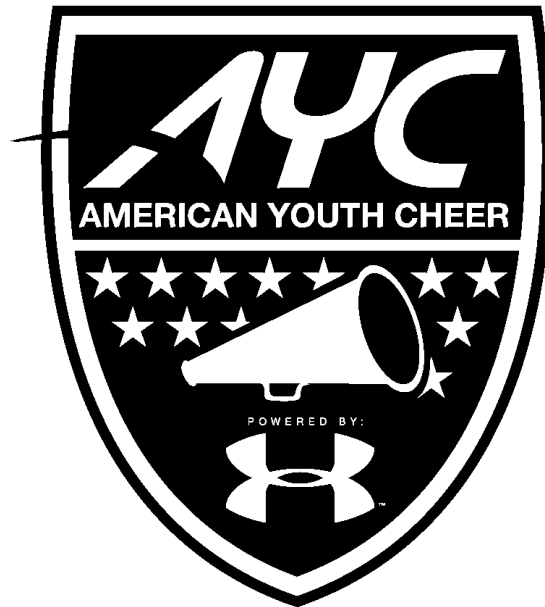


AMERICAN YOUTH FOOTBALL, INC.



AMERICAN YOUTH CHEER
OFFICIAL
RULES AND REGULATIONS
REVISED 2010

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American Youth Cheer will strictly enforce the age and level restrictions contained in this rulebook as well as all other rules and regulations. In addition to the general regulations found in the AYC Official Cheer Rules and Regulations, all American youth cheerleading teams must follow the current published American Association of Cheerleading Coaches & Administrators (AACCA) safety rules, listed herein.

Falsifying birth 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 prosecution that may be relevant.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	2
DEFINITION OF AN AMERICAN YOUTH CHEERLEADING TEAM.....	4
AMERICAN YOUTH CHEER – LEAGUE DESCRIPTION	4
SECTION 1 – AYC RULES	6
RULE 1 – AGE OF COACHES.....	6
RULE 2 – SQUADS WITHOUT FOOTBALL.....	7
RULE 3 – FORMATION OF TEAMS	7
RULE 4 – OUTSIDE COMPETITION	7
RULE 5 – AGES OF CHEERLEADERS.....	8
RULE 6 - ROSTERS.....	8
RULE 7 – DROPPING A CHEERLEADER.....	9
RULE 8 – PRACTICE LIMITATIONS	9
RULE 9 – WARM UP AND COOL DOWN PERIODS	10
RULE 10 – START DATES.....	10
RULE 11 – CAMPS & CLINICS.....	10
RULE 12 - MASCOTS	11
RULE 13 – INSURANCE	11
SECTION 2: AYC COMPETITIONS REGIONAL/NATIONAL.....	12
AYC COMPETITIONS - CHEER	12
AYC CHEER DIVISIONS FOR COMPETITIONS	13
LEVEL DIVISION GUIDELINES.....	14
SPLITTING DIVISIONS INTO SMALL AND LARGE.....	14
RED AND BLUE	14
AYC INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT	17
AYC NATIONAL QUALIFICATION.....	18
AYC SPECIAL NEEDS TEAM	18
SECTION 3: CHEER RULES – AYC REGIONALS & NATIONALS.....	19
AYC GENERAL CHEER SAFETY RULES & ROUTINE GUIDELINES.....	19
AYC PENALTY INFORMATION.....	21
INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY	22
IN CASE OF A TIE	22
REASONS FOR DISQUALIFICATION.....	22
LEGALITY QUESTIONS (prior to event).....	22
SECTION 4: DANCE – REGIONAL/NATIONAL.....	23

TRADITIONAL DANCE DIVISIONS.....	23
TRADITIONAL DANCE RULES	23
AYC DANCE ROUTINE GUIDELINES.....	24
PENALTIES – TRADITIONAL DANCE	25
INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY	25
IN CASE OF A TIE	25
LEGALITY QUESTIONS.....	26
STEP.....	27
STEP DIVISIONS	27
STEP RULES.....	28
AYC STEP ROUTINE GUIDELINES	28
PENALTIES – STEP.....	29
INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY	29
IN CASE OF A TIE	29
LEGALITY QUESTIONS.....	30
2010-2011 AYC GAME TIME GUIDELINES	31
AYC SCORE SHEETS.....	34
AYC ALL STAR GAME	34
AYC SERVICES OFFERED	35
CONTACTING AYC	35
2010-11 AACCA High School Safety Rules.....	36

DEFINITION OF AN AMERICAN YOUTH CHEERLEADING TEAM

The American Youth Football (AYF) League has created a sister league uniquely for its' Cheerleaders. This league is called 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. Cheerleading squads are required to be members of AYF/AYC. Sign up is at www.joinayf.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 applying 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.

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 American Association of Cheerleading Coaches & Administrators (AACCA). This includes a prohibition against the use of trampolines, springboards, and over two-high pyramiding. Local leagues may incorporate additional restrictions or guidelines to be used during season play and their local competitions. Teams electing to compete in AYC sanctioned Regional and National competitions are required to follow AYC cheer, dance or step rules and complete the necessary paperwork listed in the AYF documents. AYC recommends that leagues follow the AYC listed rules at local competitions for the sake of 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 basis.

To youth cheerleaders, competition is their time to shine in the spotlight. 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 youth cheerleaders can highlight their skill, and learn how to win with grace and lose with honor.

Associations that commit to their Conferences to participate in the Regional and National Tournament 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 tournaments. Any team participating in the Regional Tournament, Winning the right to advance and commit then does not travel 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 to be subject to suspension from the following year's post-season events.

All teams traveling to the National Tournament must book their stay through the AYF authorized booking agent and stay in 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 locations you have chosen.

AYC offers a "Special Needs Division." Special Needs is defined as any child with a disability. Participation in a sport could not only improve their motor skills but also inspire them socially and emotionally. Please see AYC Special Needs Team requirements.

AYC has also established an Invitational Tournament for our Mitey-Mite members. If you have a 5, 6 and/or 7 year old team who wishes to experience the excitement of Competition, please see the AYC "Invitational Tournament" requirements.

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 Coordinator - 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 all deadlines met; should oversee the Regional Championships (if applicable); a delegate to the National meetings. Region duties as detailed by the Region operating policies (see Section 3 Structure Rule Enforcement/Authority Football rules)

Regional Chairperson - a delegate of the regional committees, coordinates and corresponds to regional committees and liaison to local league conference/coordinators, if the two are separate.

League/Conference Coordinator - liaison to the Region Cheerleading Coordinator; a delegate to the regional meetings. League/Conference duties as detailed by the League/Conference by-laws or constitution. (See Section 3 Structure Rule Enforcement/Authority Football rules)

Association Coordinator - liaison to the League/Conference Coordinator; a delegate to the League/Conference meetings. 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 - AGE OF COACHES

All coaches by 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 therefore automatically terminated at the close of each season. Coaches must re-apply for coaching positions annually. The close of the season will be determined by the local Association but must not extend past the “End of the Year Banquet”.

Cheerleading coaches are under the supervision and answerable to the 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 have graduated from high school or hold a GED certificate. They must have a general knowledge of cheerleading and cheerleading safety rules.

Coach Trainees or junior coaches must be a minimum of 16 years old and may only carry out the instructions of the Head or Assistant coaches. Coach Trainees are not permitted to conduct a practice.

Student Demonstrators should be 14 years of age or older, 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. It is recommended that all Student Demonstrators work with teams a min of 2 years younger than his/her current age. Student Demonstrators are not permitted to conduct a practice.

All coach volunteers under the age of 18 must be certified in the same manner as all other minor participants (i.e. parental permission, proof of age, photo ID, physical and proof of scholastic eligibility)

Each Team must have a Coach or Volunteer that is the holder of a current Red Cross Certificate in Community CPR and First Aid or its equivalent.

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.

Head coaches may be required to be skilled through any available training program available to their Association/Conference. The Association/Conference may also make this a requirement of assistant coaches. It is highly recommended that all coaches attend at minimum a cheerleading safety program.

RULE 2 - SQUADS WITHOUT FOOTBALL

AYC recognizes cheer, dance or step squads without football.

Any independent cheer dance or step team not affiliated with a football program is welcomed into AYC. This independent cheerleading team must follow the same League entrance requirements and commitments required for an American Youth Cheerleading team as established in this rule book. Cheerleading squads are required to be members of AYF/AYC. Sign up is at www.joinayf.com and the option to join in this category is as a “non-affiliated cheer, dance/step squads”.

(See football formation of teams section D for Participant Recruitment)

RULE 3 - FORMATION OF TEAMS

The formation of teams is done on a first come, first served 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 their ability. Tryouts are not permitted. Once a participant is registered an assessment can be made to determine what team levels the participant will be placed within the age requirements. Assessments cannot result in dismissal of any cheerleader for ability or any other reason other than Rule 7 Dropping a cheerleader.

AYC requires that for every 12 participants there must be one (1) 21 year old head coach (adult volunteer) assigned to the team. After the first 12 participants (including mascots) there must be one (1) 18 year old assistant coach (adult volunteer). For any team over 24 one (1) additional 18 year old assistant coach (adult volunteer) must be added. (I.e. maximum 12 participants (1) 21 year old coach; 13 to 24 one (1) 21 year old coach and one (1) 18 year old coach; 36 participants one (1) 21 year old coach and two (2) 18 year old 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

The cheerleading coordinator, with the approval of the local league, shall be in charge of all outside competition. All cheerleading teams report to the cheerleading coordinator for approval of any outside activities. In accordance with the football season as stated in the AYF Playing Season/Practice, the cheer season for AYC shall be in accordance with the football season, traditionally last Monday in July through December 31.

Associations that commit to their Conferences to participate in the Regional and National Tournament 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 tournaments. Any team participating in the Regional Tournament, Winning the right to advance and commit then does not travel may be subject to suspension from the following year’s Cheerleading Championships.

RULE 5 - AGES OF CHEERLEADERS

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 cut off date of (on or before/as of 7/31) July 31st of the current season is as follows: 14 yrs old on July 31st, turns 15 yrs old on August 1st, the participant cheers as a 14 yr old. (See the ages in AYC cheer divisions).

RULE 6 - ROSTERS

Associations must have all AYF Required Participant Paperwork collected, complete, and inspected for compliance by August 31st. 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 31st must be certified prior to participating in any game. Any participant who is moved must be age eligible according to the AYC age divisions. There must also be room on the roster as no one can be cut or dropped just to make room. A Cheer roster will be final for the remainder of the season on September 15th. If a cheer squad should drop participants after September 15th the squad size will be determined by the roster as of September 15th. All final rosters are required to be submitted to AYF on October 1st.

Conferences must receive all of their Associations rosters and certify all of their player documentation by September 15th, (or a date designated by the Conference/league/association before October 1st). Conferences must maintain in their possession a copy of the final certified copy of all rosters. Conferences must then submit all rosters to AYF National via MyAyf.com and a copy to the designated Regional Committee member by October 1st. All Conferences must submit rosters to the AYF National Office by entering them electronically to the www.myAYF.com system by the deadline of October 1st, of the current playing season. Failure to submit rosters may mean the loss of certain services provided by AYF, including post-season 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 actively a member of another football team or cheerleader squad while actively participating with an AYF team. It is not permitted to practice or compete during the AYC season. 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 Player 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 players to quit is not acceptable. Coaches determined to be using this or any other tactic to drop weaker players will be immediately dismissed for the remainder of the season and may be permanently suspended.

RULE 8 - PRACTICE LIMITATIONS

Practice Length:

Pre-season practice can be on a daily basis until Labor Day, but must not exceed 10 hours a week, and two and a half (2.5) hours in duration. A mandatory 10-minute break ("Mandatory Break") after each hour of practice is required. Mandatory Breaks are not counted 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 duration 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. Even if a cheerleader joins the team after the start of the regular season schedule, this requirement must be met. 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 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. This can be a coach or any volunteer approved by the Association. 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.

Example of a warm up & cool down:

Jogging or walking is a good way to warm up. By requiring the team to warming up you improve your blood flow and increase the temperature of your muscles. A proper warm up, will decrease your chances of injury.

Stretching should also be included. Perform some "active" stretches such as squats, lunges, side lunges, crunches, and hip rotations. Do some limbering up. Raise your knees to your chest. Roll your shoulders and neck. Bend over and touch your toes. Relax while you are stretching. Exhale as you go into a stretch, and don't hold your breathe. Stretching prevents injury, increases your range of motion, and can reduce muscle soreness. Do not use quick or jerky motions while stretching. Use a partner to stretch. Use slow "static" stretches after you work out to warm down. Your muscles will be warm and need to cool down gradually. This will also return your muscles to normal relaxed length.

RULE 10 - START DATES

The AYC cheering season may start as defined in the football rules Playing Season A. Start Dates. Cheerleaders are not allowed to participate in any "Summer League" football activities. As an alternative they are encouraged to attend camps or clinics on the off season as described in Rule 11 - Camps & Clinics.

RULE 11 - CAMPS & CLINICS

Cheer teams are encouraged in part or full to attend either a camp or clinic [defined as a training session] during the 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 teams' age level. It is important that the proper insurance be secured for any camps or clinics.

RULE 12 - MASCOTS

Mascots are at the discretion of any individual League. The following are guidelines for leagues who 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 age division which is offered.
- C. A Mascot will be registered 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. Great care should be taken if allowed to be part of halftime activities. Mascots should not be in the area of stunt groups performing in a halftime routine. A safety concern exists caused by the difference in age, maturity and skill level between the mascot and rostered participants.

RULE 13 - INSURANCE

All teams/squads must furnish proof of General Liability and Accident Insurance. The required coverage can be seen at www.myAYF.com/tos.pdf. 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 the member's only section on www.MyAYF.com. A Cheer Team without football must have additional insurance.

SECTION 2: AYC COMPETITIONS REGIONAL/NATIONAL

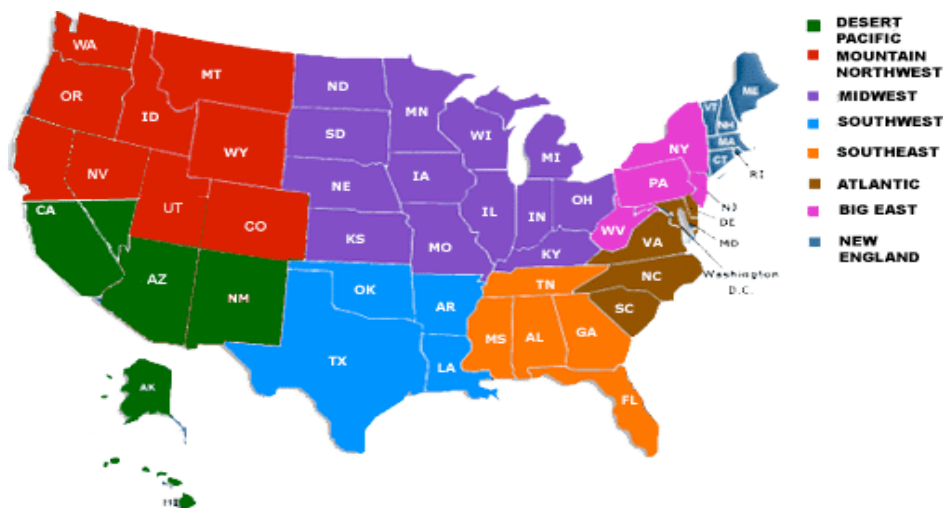
AYC COMPETITIONS - CHEER

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, level divisions, and safety guidelines that will be used in AYC Regional and National Cheerleading Competitions. Local competitions should follow these rules for the sake of consistency.

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 performance divisions using these terms. Each area must register their teams using the National identifiers found in this rule book, 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 31st 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 two (2) 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 two (2) listed skill level grids outlined in this section they will follow. Coaches must consider tumbling and stunting abilities 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 ACCAA High School Safety Guidelines.

7 & Under (Mitey Mites)	Minimum Age 5 Red Skills Only
10 & Under	Minimum Age 8 Red Skills Only
12 & Under*	Minimum Age 11 Red & Blue Skills
	*up to 5 - 13 yr olds can be placed in this division competing as BLUE only
15 & Under	Minimum Age 13 Red & Blue Skills

*To accommodate 13 year olds may not have fully transitioned to their high school squads, the 12 and under division blue division can have up to five (5) 13 year old cheerleaders on the competition squad. This allowance DOES NOT apply to red teams. The 13 year old athletes must be announced during competition registration and a special form will be distributed to you. Please remember, for the upcoming 2010 season, that all 12 and under blue tournament squads have the right to have up to five (5) 13 year old cheerleaders on the roster.

*The 13 year old athlete can compete on a 15 and under squad, as the 13 years is the minimum age for that age division.

COMPETING UP

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

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.

For example: A league has the following participation:

- 0 participants that are 8 years old
- 0 participants that are 9 years old
- 3 participants that are 10 years old

For example: A league has the following participation:

The 3 participants may compete with the 11 & 12 year olds ONLY because there isn't another option for them to compete in their respective age division.

If, however, there are 5 or more participants that are 10 years old, those participants can create a team in the 10 & Under Division and **MUST** do so.

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

Exception: Up to 5 participants that are 13 years old may compete in the 11-12 year old division without approval.

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.

New for 2010-2011

**Cheer Small Team - 5-16 members, male and/or female

**Cheer Large Team - 17-36 members, male and/or female

RED AND BLUE

Each of the age divisions above are divided into two skill levels - Red and Blue.

The following stipulations will be in place regarding red and blue level divisions:

7 & Under May compete in **Red** Only

10 & Under May compete in **Red** Only

12 & Under Must compete in **Blue** if there are 13 year olds participating

These levels have been created in the interest of providing safety and convenience for teams who may perform at a different skill level than others. Coaches must consider tumbling and stunting abilities when choosing the level in which their team will compete. Teams should choose to compete in the level which adequately matches the overall ability level of their team.

Teams will be required to comply with all AACCA Safety Guidelines 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 that is not permitted in their level division will be subject to a penalty.

	Red
Standing Tumbling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All skills with hand support performed from a standing position are allowed. <i>For example: front rolls, back 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.
Running Tumbling	<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.
Stunts	<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 by the flyer only (base cannot turn during the load-in). Split stunts and swing-up stunts are prohibited.
Tosses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tosses are prohibited.
Pyramids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. (<i>Single leg extended stunts are prohibited</i>) In pyramid transitions, the flyer (top) must maintain contact with at least one base at all times. Hanging and collapsible pyramids are prohibited.
Dismounts	<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> 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 that do not progress back to an upright/vertical position are prohibited.
Release Moves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No release moves are allowed other than those mentioned in the Dismounts and Tosses sections. (<i>No up and down release transitions that are braced by prep level or below stunts are allowed</i>) Exception: A single full twisting barrel (log) roll is allowed if it starts and ends in a cradle position.

*denotes change

	BLUE
Standing Tumbling	<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.
Running Tumbling	<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>
Stunts	<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. Split stunts, and swing-up stunts are prohibited.
Tosses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Basket and sponge tosses are allowed. Tosses may not exceed two twisting rotations. Half (1/2) helicopter tosses are allowed. Flipping (front or back) and traveling tosses are prohibited.
Pyramids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pyramids must follow stunt and dismount rules. Moving/walking pyramids are allowed. Hanging pyramids are allowed but must remain stationary. Collapsible pyramids are prohibited.
Dismounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cradles from all stunts are limited to two and one quarter (2 1/4) twists. Flips are prohibited (Exception: Double based suspended forward roll dismounts) Cradle dismounts to different bases that do not progress back to an upright/vertical position are prohibited.
Release Moves	<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).

*denotes change

AYC INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT

American Youth Cheer recognizes the importance of involving our youngest members in the excitement of a National Venue. Experience gained at this level instills a confidence in children that will follow them throughout their competitive years.

The following guidelines will be in place for the AYC season for any league wishing to participate in a National Invitational Tournament.

Division	Size	As of July 31, youngest participant must be	As of July 31, oldest participant can be
7 years old and under small	5 - 16 cheerleaders	5	7
7 years old and under large	17 - 36 cheerleaders	5	7

Format - This tournament is held in an invitational format. All teams will be scored using a modified score sheet. No level of difficulty will be considered. The teams will be critiqued and trophies will be awarded for placement in 1st, 2nd and 3rd.

Rules - All AACCA and AYC Rule Book guidelines apply.

Skill Levels - All **RED** level skills apply. No **BLUE** skills allowed.

Qualification - Any league registered and in good standing with American Youth Cheer may participate. There is no local or regional qualification to advance.

Rosters - Rosters as of September 15th will determine team size.

Participation - Leagues must submit an “intent to participate” to their conference no later than November 1st

Paperwork - All National paperwork requirements remain in effect.

AYC NATIONAL QUALIFICATION

In order to qualify for the AYC Nationals, Competition teams must be affiliated with AYF/AYC and have entered final rosters by October 1st. Teams must have ranked 1st, 2nd or 3rd place in a Regional AYF/AYC Competition. If an AYF/AYC Competition is not offered at the Regional level, a ranking of 1st, 2nd or 3rd place finish must be accomplished at your local AYF/AYC Conference Competition.

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.

AYC SPECIAL NEEDS TEAM

American Youth Cheer is proud to offer a Special Needs Division.

AYC believes that belonging to a team, enjoying friendships and having responsibility is important to every child. Participating in a sport not only improves their skills physically, but socially and emotionally.

Special Needs is defined as any child whose intellectual or physical disability has impaired their skills and overall intelligence in areas such as language, cognition, social skills and motor skills.

The following guidelines will be in place for the AYC season for any league wishing to implement a special needs team.

Division	Age	Size
Special Needs	7 (as if July 31 st) and older	5-36 cheerleaders

Staff Ratio - It is recommended that there be 2 (two) adult coaches and 1 (one) student coach for every 8 (eight) participants on the team. There is no special background needed, but experience with special needs is recommended.

Releases - Coaches must obtain all the same releases required by the league. Parents must supply in writing any specific issues relating to the participant.

Practice - is recommended to be held for one or two nights per week for no longer than 1 ½ - 2 hours.

Routines - are limited to 2 ½ minutes. AYC National guidelines apply. Dance and cheers are encouraged. Tumbling and stunting are allowed according to the abilities of the participants.

SECTION 3: CHEER RULES - AYC REGIONALS & NATIONALS

AYC GENERAL CHEER SAFETY RULES & ROUTINE GUIDELINES

AYC Cheer General Safety Rules:

In addition to 2010-2011 AACCA Safety Rules, AYC cheer teams must follow the following additional general safety guidelines. These additional guidelines supersede any conflicting AACCA rule.

- Banners, flags, megaphones, poms, and signs are the only props allowed. The use of poms and/or props is prohibited during tumbling, stunt/pyramid load ins, stunt/pyramid dismounts, and during stunt transitions. The top person/flyer may obtain and use poms or props when secure in a stunt or pyramid. Exception: a forward/backward roll may be performed with a prop or poms in hands)
- 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.

Specific Safety Rules:

All cheer teams must follow the 2010-2011 AACCA High School Safety Rules (please refer to the last section of the AYC rule book). Please access the most up to date AACCA High School Safety Rules at www.MyAYF.com in the Rulebooks & Manuals Section.

AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines:

- Each team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed 2-1/2 minutes. Each team's performance must consist of a cheer component AND a music component. The music component must not exceed one minute and thirty seconds or there will be a deduction for overtime.
- Formal entrances (i.e. crowd response chants or 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. A quick team huddle prior to performance is allowed. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set 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.
- Poms, Megaphones, signs, and banners are encouraged. No tear away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed. Hiding or hidden type props are prohibited. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.

- The team's name will be called at least twice (once as the team is on deck, and again once the team is next to perform). Teams missing their performance time will perform at the end of the division only if time permits.
- Gymnastic skills are required. Stunts, Lifts, and Pyramids are required.
- 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 disqualification. Extreme cases that require disqualification will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.

PENALTIES: SAFETY GUIDELINES:

5 points will be deducted from your total score for each infraction of the AYC Cheer Safety Rules (AACCA Safety Rules) and/or the AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines.

10 points will be deducted from your total score for each violation of the level division requirements (red or blue).

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 AACCA safety guidelines, as well as the Level Division skill restrictions that further restrict permitted skills within AACCA.

SKILL EXECUTION PENALTIES:

0.5 point per occurrence will be deducted from your total score for any hand touches on flipping or tumbling skills following the landing.

1 point per occurrence will be deducted from your total score for any falls during stunts, pyramids, or tumbling (see maximum below).

Falls are defined as:

Stunts - Drops from an individual stunt to a cradle, pop down, or to the ground.

Pyramid - Drops from an individual stunt (within a pyramid) to a cradle, pop down, or to the ground.

Tumbling - Individual drop completely to the floor in tumbling.

*3 points maximum will be deducted from your total score for any multiple falls per each pyramid, stunt or tumbling section.

BOUNDARY PENALTY:

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. Out of bounds is considered being completely off of the mat.

TIME LIMIT PENALTIES:

*1 point will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 6 - 10 seconds over time requirements.

*3 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 11 or more seconds over time requirements.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY

Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.

*5 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used. This deduction will be taken as a violation of the AYC Cheer Routine Guidelines.

IN CASE OF A TIE

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

LEGALITY QUESTIONS (prior to event)

Coaches and Coordinators are responsible to comprehend and comply with all AYF/AYC Age Divisions, Level Division Guidelines, AYC Cheer Safety Rules (AACCA Rules) and/or Cheer Routine Guidelines pertaining to the competing division. Questions concerning any AYC Cheer Safety Rules, Level Division Guidelines or questions regarding specific stunts and /or pyramids should follow the below process:

All Legality questions must be addressed in writing prior to the event. By reason of terminology and misunderstandings, answers will NOT be provided by phone.

AYF/AYC Rule judges will address all questions in writing. All questions should be emailed to: cheer@americanyouthfootball.com. Questions must be submitted 14 days prior to the event to ensure a reply. Questions submitted 13 days or less prior to the event 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)

SECTION 4: DANCE - REGIONAL/NATIONAL

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 and step rules incorporate the current rules of National Federation of State High School Associations and existing AYF/AYC General Safety Rules and General Routine Guidelines.

TRADITIONAL DANCE DIVISIONS

11 & Under	Min 8 years old
15 & under	Min 12 years old

Dance team 5 - 36 members

TRADITIONAL DANCE RULES

AYC Dance General Safety Rules

In addition to 2010-2011 AACCA Safety Rules, AYC dance teams must follow the following additional general safety guidelines. These additional guidelines supersede any conflicting NFHS rule.

- All teams should be supervised during all official functions by a qualified Advisor/Coach.
- 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 and split drops from a jump, stand 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) or bare feet are acceptable when competing. Wearing "socks only" is prohibited.
- All dance lifts, stunts, pyramids, or tosses are prohibited. Partner lifts may be used if the flyers hips are not above the base's shoulders.
- All tumbling skills (with the exception of forward rolls and one shoulder backward rolls) are prohibited. Tumbling is defined as any hip over-head rotation.
- 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 2010-2011 NFHS Rules for Dance Teams.

AYC DANCE ROUTINE GUIDELINES

- Each team will perform a choreographed performance not to exceed 2 minutes. Each team's performance must consist of a cheer component AND funk (hip hop) component. Routines may display a theme but must incorporate skills from both cheer and funk.
- Each team will be judged on:
 - Cheer skills: Basic cheerleading motions emphasizing uniformity, synchronization and strong/sharp motions/arm placement as well as ground work, level changes and roll-offs and visual effect.
 - Funk skills: Movements comprised of funk, hip-hop, and street styles with tempo variation. Dance style with an emphasis on uniformity, rhythm, body isolation, creativity, and execution.
- Technical skills (i.e. pirouettes/leaps) are not required, but if included will be credited towards the technical/difficulty score.
- 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. A quick team huddle prior to performance is allowed. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set 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.
- Props, Poms, and/or costuming may be used but is not mandatory. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.
- Hiding or hidden type props are prohibited. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.
- The team's name will be called at least twice (once as the team is on deck, and again once the team is next to perform). Teams missing their performance time will perform at the end of the division only if time permits.
- 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.
- Routines must be appropriate for family viewing. Appropriate choreography and music **MUST** be used. The use of inappropriate choreography, music, or uniform/costume will be subject to a penalty. Teams using excessively vulgar or suggestive movements, words or music are subject to disqualification. Extreme cases that require disqualification will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.

PENALTIES - TRADITIONAL DANCE

SAFETY GUIDELINES PENALTIES:

*10 points will be deducted from your total score for each infraction of the NFHS Safety Rules for Dance Teams, AYC General Safety Rules, and the Dance Routine Guidelines.

Teams are responsible for following all NFHS Safety Rules for dance teams, as well as the AYC General Safety Rules, and Dance Routine Guidelines.

BOUNDARY PENALTY:

*5 points 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.

TIME LIMIT PENALTY:

*5 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 5 - 10 seconds over time requirements.

*10 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 11 or more seconds over time requirements.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY

Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.

5 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used. This deduction will be taken as a violation of the AYC Dance Routine Guidelines.

IN CASE OF A TIE

All Ties will be broken at Region/National competitions. Ties in dance will be broken by using Dance Fundamentals scores. If necessary, a second tie breaker will consist of Dance Fundamentals scores plus Showmanship scores.

LEGALITY QUESTIONS

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

AYC Rule judges will address all questions in writing. All questions should be emailed to: cheer@americanyouthfootball.com. Questions must be submitted 14 days prior to nationals to ensure a reply. Questions submitted 13 days or less prior to nationals 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)

STEP

Step is a form of dance that has been in existence for decades. This type of dance is 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. AYF supports this philosophy and are excited to offer this dance category.

STEP DIVISIONS

8 & under	Min age 5 Yrs
10 & under	Min age 5 Yrs
12 & under	Min age 5 Yrs
15 & under	Min age 5 Yrs

Step team 5 - 36 members

STEP RULES

AYC Step General Safety Rules

In addition to 2010-2011 AACCA Safety Rules, AYC step teams must follow the following additional general safety guidelines. These additional guidelines supersede any conflicting NFHS rule.

- All teams should be supervised during all official functions by a qualified Advisor/Coach.
- 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 and split drops from a jump, stand 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) or bare feet are acceptable when competing. Wearing “socks only” is prohibited.
- All dance lifts, stunts, pyramids, or tosses are prohibited. Partner lifts may be used if the flyers hips are not above the base’s shoulders.
- All tumbling skills (with the exception of forward rolls and one shoulder backward rolls) are prohibited. Tumbling is defined as any hip over-head rotation.

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.
- Routines must be appropriate for family viewing. Appropriate choreography and music **MUST** be used. The use of inappropriate choreography, music, or uniform/costume will be subject to a penalty. Teams using excessively vulgar or suggestive movements, words or music are subject to disqualification. Extreme cases that require disqualification will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.
- Note - the age of the oldest participant will determine the age bracket that the group will be placed in.

PENALTIES - STEP

SAFETY GUIDELINES PENALTIES:

*10 points will be deducted 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.

BOUNDARY PENALTY:

*5 points 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.

TIME LIMIT PENALTY:

*5 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 5 - 10 seconds over/under time requirements.

*10 points will be deducted from your total score if your routine goes from 11 or more seconds over/under time requirements.

INAPPROPRIATE MUSIC/CHOREOGRAPHY

Age appropriate choreography and music must be used.

5 points per occurrence will be deducted from the total score if inappropriate choreography or music is used. This deduction will be taken as a violation of the AYC Dance Routine Guidelines.

IN CASE OF A TIE

All Ties will be broken at Regional/National competitions. Ties in Step dance will be broken by using Showmanship & Originality scores. If necessary, a second tie breaker will consist of Showmanship, Originality plus Appearance scores.

Coaches and Coordinators are responsible to comprehend and comply with all Step Age Division Requirements, AYC General Safety Rules for Step, NFHS Safety Rules for Dance Teams, and/or Step Routine Guidelines pertaining to the competing division. Questions concerning any AYC General Dance Safety Rules 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 AYC Rule judges will address all questions in writing. All questions should be emailed to: cheer@americanyouthfootball.com. Questions must be submitted 14 days prior to nationals to ensure a reply. Questions submitted 13 days or less prior to nationals 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)

The following guidelines will apply to teams competing in any of the three game time divisions.

I. GENERAL RULES

A. AYC GAME TIME ROUTINE GUIDELINES

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute and 15 seconds.
- Formal entrances (i.e. crowd response chants or 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. A quick team huddle prior to performance is allowed. Spirited entrances are allowed; teams should take no longer than 10 seconds to set 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.
- No tear away uniforms or removal of clothing is allowed. Hiding or hidden type props are **prohibited**. Items that may damage the performance surface are prohibited.
- The team's name will be called at least twice (once as the team is on deck, and again once the team is next to perform). Teams missing their performance time will perform at the end of the division only if time permits.
- 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 disqualification. Extreme cases that require disqualification will be under the discretion of the head rules judge.

B. AYC GAME TIME SAFETY GUIDELINES

In addition to 2010-2011 AACCA Safety Rules, AYC cheer teams must follow the following additional general safety guidelines. These additional guidelines supercede any conflicting AACCA rule.

- Banners, flags, megaphones, poms, and signs are the only props allowed. The use of poms and/or props is prohibited during tumbling, stunt/pyramid load ins, stunt/pyramid dismounts, and during stunt transitions. The top person/flyer may obtain and use poms or props when secure in a stunt or pyramid. **Exception: a forward/backward roll may be performed with a prop or poms in hands)**
- 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.

C. FIGHT SONG CATEGORY

A. ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS:

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute and 15 seconds.
- Teams are encouraged to use their traditional team fight song.
- Props (poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners) are permitted in this category.
- Performances can incorporate up to three (3) eight counts of skills (stunts, tumbling and/or jumps). The three (3) eight counts must be consecutive and the same three (3) eight counts can be repeated if the fight song is repeated.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria:
 - Crowd oriented material, fit to music, using effective spacing and formations, and incorporating visual effects.
 - Placement, synchronization and strength of motions
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 - Emphasis will be placed on practicality. All material should be suitable and able to be performed multiple times during a game or pep rally.

B. SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS:

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No inversions and /or twisting into or out of stunts regardless of contact with bases.
- No single leg extended stunts.
- A jump is considered a skill and can only be performed in the three (3) eight count segment.
- A kick will not be considered as a skill and can be performed at any time during the routine.
- Maximum difficulty in tumbling is a standing back handsprings.

D. TIME OUT CHEER CATEGORY

A. ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS:

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute and 15 seconds.
- No music may be used during the performance. Live drummer and / or drum track is allowed. All specialty skills (ie: jumps, stunts, tumbling) must be performed in a safe proximity with all Drummers. Drummers cannot be involved in any type of specialty skill.
- Each team's presentation must include at least two components required from the following: cheers, chants, traditional yells, and/or drum cadences.
- Teams should utilize all areas of their squad's crowd-leading strengths. The use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners is encouraged.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria:
 - Crowd communication, including; crowd effective material, spacing and formations, voice and pace, crowd leading skills and use of poms, signs, flags, megaphones and/or banners.
 - Placement, synchronization and strength of motions
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 - Emphasis on crowd involvement and practicality. All material should be suitable for a game or pep rally.

B. SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS:

- No baskets, sponge, elevator, or similar type tosses permitted.
- No inversions and /or twisting into or out of stunts regardless of contact with bases.
- No single leg extended stunts.
- Maximum difficulty in tumbling is a standing back handspring.

E. TIME-OUT DANCE CATEGORY

A. ROUTINE AND JUDGING REQUIREMENTS:

- Each team will perform a routine not to exceed 1 minute and 15 seconds.
- Any dance style that is appropriate for a time-out situation within a sideline cheering setting is acceptable (i.e. jazz, pom, hip hop, etc.)
- Traditional sideline uniforms required.
- Poms are the only props permitted.
- Judging will be based on the following criteria:
 - Creativity and musicality, variety and the execution of transitions and formations.
 - Placement, synchronization and strength of motions/movement.
 - Visual effect and spacing.
 - Overall impression and crowd appeal.
 - Emphasis will be on audience appropriateness and appeal. This is a performance-based division. Crowd leading components will not be judged.

B. SPECIFIC SKILL RESTRICTIONS:

- Tumbling and/or stunting of any kind is prohibited.
- Dance skills (i.e. turns, leaps, kicks, etc.) are permitted.

AYC SCORE SHEETS

Please find all updated AYC approved score sheets for Skill Execution/Deduction Sheets, Cheer Score Sheets, and Step Score Sheets at www.MyAYF.com in the AYF/AYC Forms Section.

AYC ALL STAR GAME

The Annual Under Armour AYF 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 Under Armour/AYF All-Star Cheer teams will be made up of the oldest participants 15 and Under.
- Any player/cheerleader may be nominated post season competition or not. Nominations must be made by November 1st. Nominations must be made directly to the National Commissioner at Cheer@americanyouthfootball.com.
- Cheerleaders that are nominated should be the oldest participants on the squad (15 and under with minimum age of 12)
- A maximum of 6 - 8 cheerleaders can be nominated from each region. Nomination does not guarantee the cheerleader will be selected. Selections will be made by the National office based on the nominations received.
- Nomination must include a scholastic component and academic achievement must be a factor when nominating a cheerleader for the All Star squad.
- Nominations should be reserved for cheerleaders that will no longer be eligible to play with the youth league.
- Only players who were certified and rostered by the Sept 15th deadline as well as actively participated with their team during the entire regular season are eligible for the All Star squad.

AYC SERVICES OFFERED

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

AYC/UCA Coaches Clinics: A new Coaches education programs and clinics (with options for certification programs) are currently being offered by UCA. Clinics and education/training programs will be available for any local AYC program to host, members should contact UCA for information.

UCA for AYC Support Staff: UCA state, regional and national support staff will be available year round for technical support, event planning support and more. Contact information will be posted at MyAyf.com

'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, there is no local event 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. UCA support staff will also be available to offer local competition planning support.=

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

AYC Updates: 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 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.

Cheer Uniforms: AYC now offers a service to provide members the best prices to outfit cheer teams. Visit www.MyAYF.com for more information on how to contact a Varsity Brands representative in your area and retain special AYC pricing

CONTACTING AYC

Any questions will gladly be answered by AYC National Headquarters. You may contact AYC via email at: cheer@americanyouthfootball.com

To contact UCA representatives, please contact your State Director. Contact information is posted at MyAyf.com

2010-11 AACCA School Cheer Safety Rules

New rules are in bold type.

A. Definitions

1. **Base** - A person who is in direct contact with the performing surface and is supporting another person's weight.
2. **Basket Toss** - A stunt in which a top person is tossed by bases whose hands are interlocked.
3. **Bracer** - A top person that is supporting another top person in a pyramid.
4. **Cradle** - A dismount from a partner stunt, pyramid or toss in which the top person is caught in a face-up, piked position before being placed on the performance area or remounting into another stunt, pyramid or loading position.
5. **Cupie/Awesome** - A stunt in which both feet of the top person are in one hand of a base.
6. **Dive Roll** - A forward roll where the feet leave the ground before the hands reach the ground.
7. **Double Based Suspended Roll** - Dismount or transition with a foot-over-head rotation.
8. **Elevator/Sponge Toss** - A stunt in which the top person loads in to an elevator/sponge loading position and is then tossed into the air.
9. **Extended Stunt** - A stunt in which the entire body of the top person is extended in an upright position over the base(s). Chairs, torches, flatbacks and straddle lifts are examples of stunts where the bases' arms are extended overhead, but are NOT considered to be extended stunts since the height of the body of the top person is similar to a shoulder level stunt.
10. **Hanging Pyramid** - A pyramid in which the top person's weight is primarily supported by another top person. Examples of hanging pyramids are: a person being suspended between two shoulder stands; a "whirlybird" stunt where one person's weight is being supported by the legs of a top person in a shoulder sit; and a "diamond head" where two persons are suspended from one shoulder stand.
11. **Helicopter Toss** - A stunt in which the top person is tossed into the air in a horizontal position and rotates parallel to the ground in the same motion as a helicopter blade.
12. **Inverted** - A body position where the shoulders are below the waist.
13. **Knee Drop** - Dropping to the knees without first bearing the majority of the weight on the hands or feet.
14. **Loading Position** - A position in which the top person is off the ground in continuous movement that puts the bases and top in a position to end the movement in a stunt.
15. **Post** - A person on the performing surface who may assist a top person during a stunt or transition.
16. **Prop** - Any object which can be manipulated or used as a base (ex: poms, signs, flags, megaphones, etc.)
17. **Quick Toss** - A toss technique where the top person begins the toss with both feet on the ground. The bases can apply an upward force on any part of the body other than under the feet.
18. **Released Pyramid Transition** - A pyramid in which the top person in a braced stunt is released from their bases and is in a descending mode before being caught in a cradle, stunt or loading position prior to being transitioned to another stunt.
19. **Spotter** - A person who is responsible for assisting or catching the top person in a partner stunt or pyramid. This person cannot be in a position of providing primary support for a top person but must be in a position to protect the top person coming off of a stunt or pyramid.
20. **Stunt** - One or more bases supporting one or more top persons off of the ground.
21. **Tension Drop** - A dismount from a stunt or pyramid where the top person(s) are directed toward the ground while their feet are held by the base(s) until just before the landing.

22. **Top** - A person who is either being supported by another while off of the performing surface or who has been tossed into the air by another person.
23. **Two Persons High** - A stunt or pyramid in which the base has at least one foot in weight-bearing contact with the performing surface.

B. General Guidelines

1. Cheerleading squads should be placed under the direction of a qualified and knowledgeable advisor or coach.
2. All practice sessions should be supervised by the coach and held in a location suitable for the activities of cheerleaders (i.e., use of appropriate mats, away from excessive noise and distractions, etc.).
3. Advisors/coaches should recognize a squad's particular ability level and should limit the squad's activities accordingly. "Ability level" refers to the squad's talents as a whole and individuals should not be pressed to perform activities until safely perfected.
4. All cheerleaders should receive proper training before attempting any form of cheerleading gymnastics (tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps).
5. Professional training in proper spotting techniques should be mandatory for all squads.
6. All cheerleading squads should adopt a comprehensive conditioning and strength building program.
7. All jewelry is prohibited during participation. (Jewelry of any kind is prohibited. Religious medals and medical medals are not considered to be jewelry. A religious medal without a chain must be taped and worn under the uniform. A medical alert medal must be taped and may be visible.)
8. An appropriate warm-up routine should precede all cheerleading activities.
9. Prior to the performance of any skill, the immediate environment for the activity should be taken into consideration including, but not limited to proximity of non-squad personnel, performance surface, lighting and/or precipitation. Technical skills should not be performed on concrete, asphalt, wet or uneven surfaces or surfaces with obstructions.
10. As a general rule, all programs should qualify cheerleaders according to accepted teaching progressions. Appropriate spotting should be used until all performers demonstrate mastery of the skill.
11. Supports, braces, etc., which are hard and unyielding or have rough edges or surfaces must be appropriately covered. A participant wearing a cast (excluding a properly covered air cast) shall not be involved in stunts, pyramids, tosses or tumbling.
12. Squad members must wear athletic shoes (no gymnastic slippers).
13. 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.

C. Partner Stunts, Pyramids and Tosses

1. All pyramids and partner stunts are limited to "Two persons high".
2. The top person in a partner stunt, pyramid or transition may not be in an inverted position and cannot transition to another stunt, the ground or a dismount in an inverted position. Exceptions to this rule are the following:
 - a. Double based suspended forward rolls where the top person has continuous hand-to-hand contact with two primary bases or with two posts who are controlling the top person are allowed to a cradle or the performing surface. They may not land in a loading position for a stunt. The top person cannot have contact with one base and one post.
 - b. The top person in a stunt may begin in an inverted position on the performing surface and be loaded into a non-inverted position shoulder height or below provided that they have constant contact with a base or spotter until they are in the non-inverted position. A base or additional

spotter if necessary must be in a position to protect the head, neck and shoulder area of the top person.

3. Suspended splits in a transition are allowed provided there are a total of four bases that support the top person; at least three of the bases must support under the legs of the top person, and the fourth base may support under the legs or make contact with the hands of the top person. Top person must have hand contact with bases during transition.
4. Partner stunts and pyramids higher than shoulder stand level must have a continuous spotter for each person over shoulder stand level. Spotters are considered part of the squad with regard to the squad member maximum limitation. For single-based extended stunts, the spotter may hold at the ankle of the top person and / or the wrist of the base. If the spotter is supporting under the sole of the foot in any way, they are considered to be a base and would require an additional spotter.
5. Released transition stunts must be braced on at least one side. Note: This applies to stunts such as tic tocs where a stunt has taken place and is then released to another stunt. It does not apply to releases during load-in stunts such as a Switch Liberty from the ground. An additional spotter for the bracer(s) is not required unless the release meets the definition of a "Released Pyramid Transition".
6. When one person is bracing another (including overlapping of arms), one of the individuals must be at shoulder height or below. Exceptions to this rule are the following:
 - a. Extensions (double or single based) may brace other extensions.
 - b. Double Cupies/Awesomes (two cupies/awesomes being held by the same base) are allowed. If the stunt is dismounted to cradles, there must be three people for each top person being cradled. This exception does not include variations such as Double Heel Stretches.
7. If a person in a partner stunt or pyramid is used as a brace for an extended stunt, that brace must not be supporting a majority of the top person's weight. (To demonstrate this, the foot of the top person's braced leg must be at or above the knee of their supporting leg.)
8. Extended Straddle Lifts must have an additional spotter for the head and shoulders of the top person (similar position to a Double Based Elevator/Extension Prep).
9. The bases of any extended stunt must have both feet in direct weight-bearing contact with the performing surface.
10. Hanging pyramids must have a continuous spotter for each shoulder stand involved in suspending another person. Hanging pyramids are not allowed to rotate.
11. In a Released Pyramid Transition the following rules apply:
 - a. At least 3 bases must be under the top person throughout the transition.
 - b. Bracers at shoulder level must have a spotter in place during the transition movement. Exception: Shoulder sits and double based thigh stands do not require an additional spotter.
 - c. The top person must be in hand/arm to hand/arm contact with at least one bracer during the entire transition.
 - d. The top person may not be supporting their weight on any other body part of the person(s) assisting (i.e. Shoulders of the bracer).
 - e. The top person must be continuous in motion and cannot be supported so that they pause at the top of the transition.
12. Basket tosses, toe pitch tosses, elevator/sponge tosses or similar tosses are limited to no more than four tossers and must be dismounted to a cradle position by two of the original bases, plus an additional spotter at the head and shoulder area. These tosses may not be directed so that the bases must move to catch the top person. The top person may not hold any objects (poms, signs, etc.) during the toss. (This rule does not apply to a "Quick Toss.")
13. Participants may not pass over or under other participants from tosses. Exceptions to this rule are the following:
 - a. Single based tosses can go over another person.
14. Free falling flips or swan dives from any type of toss, partner stunt or pyramid are prohibited.

15. Partner stunts, pyramids and participants may not pass over, under or through other partner stunts or pyramids.
16. Single based stunts in which the top person is parallel to the performing surface and the bases' arms are extended must have a continuous spotter at the head and shoulder of the top person. (i.e. Bird, Side T, Single Based Flatback, etc.)
17. Multi-based tosses that land in stunts (i.e. basket to elevator/extension prep, etc.) are allowed; however, they cannot significantly exceed the height of the intended stunt and cannot include a skill (twist, toe touch, etc.) during the toss. Multi-based tosses cannot land in a loading position. Multi-based tosses that include a skill (twist, toe touch, etc.) must be cradled. (This rule does not apply to a "Quick Toss.")
18. A single based toss (one base touching during the toss movement) is allowed into a loading position to that original base.
19. Backward suspended rolls and single based suspended rolls are prohibited.
20. Cradle dismounts from partner stunts or pyramids shoulder height or above require one spotter in addition to the original base(s).
21. Cradle dismounts from multi-based tosses require one spotter in addition to the original base(s).
22. Cradle dismounts from partner stunts (other than basket tosses, elevator/sponge tosses or similar tosses) to another set of bases must be caught by three bases. Any type of gymnastics movement (1/2 turn, twist, toe touch, etc) is prohibited.
23. The total number of twists in a dismount from stunts or tosses cannot be greater than two rotations. Exception to this rule:
 - a. Side facing stunts and tosses (i.e. Arabesque, Scorpion, Kick Double Full Basket, etc.) may add a one-quarter twist in order to cradle to the front.
24. A minimum of three catchers are required when the top person falls away from the bases to a horizontal, flat-body position.
25. Tension drops are prohibited.
26. Helicopter tosses greater than a 180 degree rotation (half-turn) are prohibited. Helicopter tosses require 4 bases to be in position during the entire release. There must be a base at the head/shoulder area during the initiation of the toss as well as the catch. The bases are not allowed to change positions during the release.
27. Single based split catches are prohibited.
28. The use of mini-trampolines, springboards, spring-assisted floors or any other height-increasing apparatus is prohibited for competition or performance. These devices may be used for skill development and practice under the supervision of a coach trained in their use.
29. Basket tosses, elevator/sponge tosses and similar multi-base tosses are prohibited on surfaces other than a mat, grass or rubberized track.

D. Tumbling and Jumps

1. Dive rolls are prohibited.
2. Flips greater than one rotation are prohibited.
3. Twists greater than one rotation are prohibited.
4. A forward three-quarter flip to the seat or knees is prohibited.
5. Participants may not tumble over, under, or through partner stunts or pyramids, or over or under individuals.
6. Participants may not tumble over a prop including poms. Example: Back handspring or back tuck with poms in the hands are illegal. Exception: A forward roll over a prop is legal. This rule does not apply to inverted load-in skills as they are not tumbling and are required to have a head and shoulders spotter.

7. Participants may not land in a partner stunt or in a catching position from an aerial tumbling skill. (Example : A back flip from a tumbling pass into a cradle is prohibited, however, rebounding from a back handspring into a cradle is allowed.)
8. Landings for all jumps including knee drops must bear weight on at least one foot. (Example : A toe touch jump or kick to a hurdler position, to the seat, knees, or landing with both feet back, or to a push-up position are prohibited.)
9. Any type of hurdler position or the position with both feet back (sitting, landing or lying) is prohibited with the exception of a "Z" sit.
10. Airborne drops to a prone position on the performing surface are illegal. (Examples: A back flip or a jump landing in a pushup position is illegal. A handspring to a pushup position is legal as it is not airborne prior to the prone landing.)

E. Specific Basketball/Indoor Court Restrictions

1. The following skills are prohibited at basketball and other athletic contests conducted on courts, except where the area is free of obstructions and non-cheer personnel, and all skills are performed on a matted surface.
 - a. Basket tosses, elevator/sponge tosses and other similar multi-based tosses.
 - b. Partner stunts in which the base uses only one arm to support the top person.
 - c. Released twists into or from stunts or pyramids.
 - d. Twisting tumbling skills.

F. Additional Restrictions for Elementary, Middle and Junior High School

*Section F of the 2010-11 AACCA School Cheer Rules does not apply to recreational league cheerleading. It is specifically for elementary, middle and junior high school teams with a limited selection pool. American Youth Cheer stresses the importance of following progressions for any skills, especially those allowed in the BLUE division.

Copies of these guidelines should be distributed to all squad members and any administrators involved with the cheerleading program. All guidelines should be understood and accepted by all parties involved in the cheerleading program including advisors, coaches, assistants, squad members, parents, and administrators.

Note: The above safety guidelines are general in nature and are not intended to cover all circumstances. All cheerleading gymnastics including tumbling, partner stunts, pyramids and jumps should be carefully reviewed and supervised by a qualified adult advisor or coach.

Cheerleading jumps, gymnastics and stunts may involve height and inversion of the body and there is an inherent risk of injury involved with any athletic activity. While the use of these guidelines in coordination with the AACCA Safety Course will help minimize the risk of injury, the American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators makes no warranties or representations, either expressed or implied, that the above guidelines will prevent injuries to individual participants.

For more information, visit AACCA.org. If you have questions regarding a specific skill, contact us at 800-533-6583.