



**Parent Handbook
2011/2012**

www.stormcheer.ca



STORM CHEER PARENT HANDBOOK

STORM CHEER

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STORM CHEER

We recognize that there are many demands on your time and choices available to families for activities. At Storm Cheer, we desire to give each of our athletes and families an exceptional experience that can satisfy them athletically but also by meeting other needs. Storm Cheer is a place of excellence where we strive to serve our families through our commitment to quality of coaching, athletic training, communication, and relationships. Each athlete will be challenged in their physical development while we also strive to challenge them in emotional, relational and mental development. Storm Cheer is committed to constantly improving how we do things and being sure that our families' needs are being met. ***Cheerleading is all we do and we are committed to being the best.***

Mission Statement

Storm Cheer exists to provide a place of excellence for athletes in Manitoba. Our program provides a fun and elite cheerleading experience where every athlete can find a place to belong and reach their fullest potential. We value each athlete who comes through our doors, believe in developing intentional and meaningful relationships with them and strive to equip our athletes with the skills to succeed in life and sport.

Vision Statement

Storm Cheer's vision is to be a family that works together to be a leading cheer program in the country. Being a leader means having championship teams, graduated athletes who are used as experts across the country, training coaches for other programs and teams, existing as a model for other gyms and being recognized for the values that motivate us.

Coaching Staff

All Storm Cheer coaches have IASF certification to the level that they coach as well as Standard First Aid with CPR certification. Coaches have a minimum of three years cheerleading experience. All coaches have had reference checks and Criminal Record Checks. At Storm Cheer, we are committed to excellence in coaching and ensuring the highest standards of safety are in place for our athletes.



Facility

Storm Cheer will be making its home at Waverley Heights Community Centre located at **1885 Chancellor Drive.**

Website

Our website is the main source of information for the program. Forms, schedules, directions, etc., can all be downloaded from the site. The site will be updated regularly so please make a habit of checking it. This is your way of staying informed!

www.stormcheer.ca

Mailing Address

Storm Cheer
295 Amherst Street
Winnipeg, MB
R3J 1Y8

Email

Stormcheerleading@gmail.com

All email inquiries will be returned promptly.

Coach & Team Contact

A team list will be made available in October with contact numbers and emails of the athletes and coaches. Please respect the privacy of teammates and coaches and only use these lists for team purposes. Our coaches are very committed to their athletes, however, it is important that their time outside of the gym is protected. Please respect the coach's time and only contact them for urgent matters. ***Email is always the encouraged form of communication.*** If an athlete is going to be missing practice, the coach should be contacted a minimum of 48 hours in advance via email.

PROGRAM POLICIES

Behavior and Attendance Policies

We function under the “three strikes, you’re out” standard. Only the Head Coaches will administer a strike and this will usually be preceded by a warning, depending on the circumstances. If an athlete receives three strikes, they will be suspended or expelled from the team as determined by the Head Coach. If an athlete receives a strike, a letter will be sent home to their parents detailing the circumstances and must be returned to the coach signed by the parent and athlete.

The following are the standards we hold for our athletes. Failure to meet these standards will result in a strike:

- Athletes will treat their teammates and coaches with respect. Disrespectful attitude and/or language is unacceptable. This includes conduct at competitions where sportsmanship and a positive attitude are expected.
- Athletes will attend all practices and arrive on-time (an unexcused absence or 2 unexcused lates will result in a strike). All absences require an Absence Request form and 2 weeks’ notice, unless an athlete is extremely ill. Absence Request forms are available for download on the Storm Cheer website.
- Athletes should arrive 10-15 minutes before the scheduled start of practice to help with set-up and to begin warming up. “Being on time” means being ready to go for the scheduled start time (not just walking in the door).
- All appointments, work and other commitments should be scheduled outside of practice time. Injured athletes should attend practice to observe. Within reason, an athlete should attend practice when ill and observe *only if they are no longer contagious*.
- Athletes will provide a note from parents and/or Doctor if they are not able to fully participate in practice, which will include the reason for non-participation.
- Athletes must attend all scheduled competitions.
- Athletes will come to practice prepared to train and in appropriate practice attire (please see dress code).
- Athletes who engage in inappropriate behavior outside of practice time should, in no way, implicate the Manitoba Cheerleading community or Storm Cheer. This would include wearing any cheer clothing and engaging in inappropriate, offensive or unsafe

behavior. We encourage all our athletes/parents to closely monitor what is posted on Facebook and to ensure there are no inappropriate pictures/videos posted (including bloopers or practice videos).

- Athletes will, under no circumstances, engage in stunting outside of practice. Tumbling skills may only be practiced at a gymnastics facility under the care of a qualified coach.
- Athletes may participate on a school based team but may not participate on another open team once they have committed to Storm Cheer.
- Videos of routines may not be posted on Facebook until after a routine has been competed in or out of province.
- Athletes will put forth 100% effort at every practice, *putting the team ahead of themselves.*

We ask for parents support in these behavior and attendance policies.

Dress Code

Athletes are expected to attend all practices in proper training attire. This includes running shoes, practice shorts & practice t-shirt with hair tied back. Hair must be off the face and neck in a pony tail or braids. All jewelry and piercings must be removed for practice and competitions. These requirements are for safety reasons and we ask for your compliance with them. ***Please have shoes reserved only for Storm Cheer practices. These shoes should not be worn outside at any time.***

Refunds

If a parent wishes to withdraw his/her athlete from our program, he/she must contact the directors in writing. Refunds are not issued for the month(s) that the athlete has already participated in or is currently participating in. Registration and clothing is non-refundable.

Late Payments and NSF

We ask that all athletes have up to date financial accounts. Tuition may be paid in a lump sum at the beginning of the year or via post dated cheques. A grace period of 2 weeks will be allowed for outstanding fees at which time an athlete will be suspended from the team until the fees are paid (a maximum of 2 weeks suspension before the athlete is removed permanently). There will be a charge of \$25 for any NSF transactions.

Canceled Practices

The unscheduled canceling of practices does occur throughout the season for different reasons. If necessary/possible, coaches will reschedule a cancelled class and notify the athletes. These rescheduled classes will not fall during regular practice times. Storm Cheer is closed for all statutory holidays.

Parental Involvement and Conduct

As coaches, we strive to provide the most positive experience possible for your son/daughter. We will do our best to ensure proper communication especially through our website. We invite you to stay actively involved in the communication process. Please take the time to visit our website for pertinent information and check your email often. We request that you attend all scheduled parent meetings and most importantly, we encourage you to be at all competitions to cheer our athletes on!

In order to provide the most positive experience possible for our athletes, we ask that parents not discuss their concerns with or in front of athletes. A scheduled time with the coach to discuss any concerns can be arranged in private. Our goal is to work with parents in providing the best care possible for all our athletes.

Email is an essential form of communication at Storm Cheer. Our goal is to be as “paperless” as possible to save on cost and environmental waste. Announcements, calendars, competition information and more will be emailed to our athletes and families. In order to ensure effective communication, we ask that each parent have an active email account that is checked on a weekly basis.

Team Fundraising

If they chose to, athletes and parents will have the opportunity to raise funds to subsidize their competition costs and/or travel costs. Parents will organize these fundraisers with profits going directly to the participating athletes. Parental involvement will be necessary to execute these events. **If a Fundraising Parent is willing to volunteer to oversee all events, please contact Storm Cheer (stormcheerleading@gmail.com).** Events must get the permission of the Head Coaches and have all finances managed by Storm Cheer.

In addition to regular fundraising activities, as organized by team parents, Storm Cheer will be hosting a competition in the 2011-2012 season. The Storm Cheer parents will be expected to assist with competition planning, set up, take down and running the event. The Storm Cheer competition will be our biggest event of the season (that we organize) and therefore

we request parent involvement for this endeavor. A parent meeting will be scheduled in order to discuss roles for the Storm Cheer competition. Potential roles are; set up, take down, canteen, 50/50, registration desk, spectator desk, coach care, master of ceremonies, floor manager, warm up room manager, etc.

Location and Safety

Storm Cheer practices at the Waverly Heights Community Center, 1885 Chancellor Dr. As renters, we must be respectful of the facility. Athletes are to use the GYM ONLY. Under no circumstances should athletes or parents enter other parts of the building.

Parents may enter the gym during the last 5 minutes of their child's practice and wait near the door. Please be PUNCTUAL for your child's pick-up. Parking is limited and caution should be used during drop-off and pick-up times due to the high volume of athletes and parents.

Driving Athletes Home

Due to safety and insurance reasons, the coaches of Storm Cheer are not permitted to drive athletes home. Athletes/parents are encouraged to carpool, however, arrangements must be made by families.

Lost and Found

Athletes are asked to bring minimal possessions to practice and to remember to bring them home after.

Parent Viewing and Update Meetings

The last practice of every month will be designated as "Parent Viewing" class. For these classes, parents are welcomed to attend the entire class. We do ask that you keep your interaction with your child to a minimum. Athletes can often be distracted by spectators and especially parents, therefore, we are limiting parental viewing to these designated practices. We appreciate your adherence to this policy.

Parent meetings will be scheduled periodically in order to keep parents up to date and answer questions. At least 2 weeks notice will be given for these meetings.

Competitions

A schedule of all competitions will be made available in the fall on the website. Athletes MUST attend all scheduled competitions, *no exceptions*. The sport of competitive

cheerleading is unique from other sports in its reliance on the individual athlete within the team. There are no “subs” in the sport and routines can not be executed properly without every athlete in attendance. Other activities should not be scheduled on competition days, as athletes are expected to be available all day. Injuries and sickness are common within the sport yet the individual athlete is still needed, within reason. We understand that in certain circumstances performing is not an option but it should be acknowledged that this will have a significantly negative impact on the team.

Athlete Conduct at Competitions

Athletes are to arrive on time in FULL uniform. Athletes are to remain with their team for the duration of the competition. Sportsmanship is the theme of the day during competitions. All other teams and athletes are to be treated with respect and encouragement. One’s own teammates are to be respected no matter what the performance outcome. Under no circumstance is bad sportsmanship tolerated.

Parent Conduct at Competitions

Parents are strongly encouraged to attend all competitions. Detailed directions and instructions will be given out one week before a competition via email. Once your child is dropped off with the team, however, parents are asked to be spectators only. Most competitions do not allow parents in athlete areas. Coaches are NOT to be approached during competitions unless there is an emergency. In addition, competition organizers and judges are not to be approached under any circumstances at all. Any questions regarding the competition format, scoring or placement is to be addressed outside of the competition environment.

Withdrawing from a Competition

It is program policy that teams perform at all scheduled competitions, however, if the coach feels it would not be safe to do so, then exceptions are made. Parents will be notified immediately. There are no refunds for missed competitions.

Equipment

All equipment is owned by Storm Cheer. Cheerleading floors are very expensive and must be treated with great care, therefore, no food or beverage is to be taken onto the floor, shoes should be clean and dry and care must be taken when rolling the mats in and out for practice.

Our facility is equipped with 2 First Aid kits as well as a defibrillator. Taping of wrists, ankles and knees is something that should be done by the athlete before practice. Storm Cheer will not provide tape for these purposes.

Gym Rules

All cell phones must be turned **OFF** (or to silent) when entering the gym. There is no talking on cell phones allowed during practice time or while in the practice area.

NO FOOD is allowed in the gym. Water in a sealed water bottle is the only permitted liquid allowed. Please provide your child with a reusable water bottle for practice that is clearly labeled with their name. This will help to avoid the spread of germs through sharing.

All outside shoes must be removed upon entering the gym. Only soft soled, white shoes can be worn on the practice surface.

Due to a large number of athletes using the space, we ask that all belongings be kept in a bag and stored neatly outside of the practice area.

Only athletes who are practicing are permitted on the practice surface.

Coaches should not be approached at the beginning of practice. A private appointment can be made with the coach.

Athletes cannot bring friends to view practice unless given permission by the coach in advance.

Outside of Practice Time

At Storm Cheer, safety is our number one priority. All our coaches are trained professionals whose purpose is to ensure the safety of their athletes. **Under NO circumstances are athletes to engage in stunting outside of practice time.** A coach MUST be present and have given specific instructions before these skills are performed. Athletes are NOT insured if they engage in skills outside of these circumstances. For the protection of athletes, coaches and the program, we ask that parents strictly enforce this at home.

Travel

At Storm Cheer, we believe the best competition experiences are those gained outside the province. It is an opportunity for parents and athletes to bond, for athletes to see new teams and skills and for teamwork to be the number one priority.

The Storm Cheer team will travel at least once during the season. Parents are expected to prepare for travel costs in advance and all athletes are required to attend out-of-province competitions. The coaches will select the athlete room list for all competitions and will make all travel arrangements for the Storm Cheer team. Travel costs are mandatory; if special arrangements for an athlete are necessary, please ensure you discuss these arrangements, with the coach(es), well in advance of competition planning. During travel, the coaches and chaperones are responsible for the athletes. Parents are encouraged to attend as supporters and respect the integral athlete-coach relationship that is fostered at out-of-province competitions. Storm Cheer has a comprehensive liability policy for our program. Storm Cheer does not provide individual travel insurance for each athlete; please ensure your athlete is covered in the event of injury while competing in and outside the province (including the USA).

Thank you for being part of Storm Cheer....we wish you a fun and safe 11/12 season!

FEEL THE ENERGY!!!!