

SAFETY: A TEAM EFFORT

Adapted from the UCA Coach's Manual

Cheerleading, although often portrayed to be in the media, is not the “most dangerous sport”. When executed with precision and adequate knowledge, the danger levels lowers greatly. With this in mind, it is vital to take cheer safety seriously and ensure that it is interwoven into all aspects of a cheer program.

Coaches' Role

Constant Supervision:

Eighty percent of all cheer injuries occur at practice (UCA). Coaches must be present and aware at all practices and events ensuring that cheerleaders are taught the proper safety measures and are abiding by them.

Setting Parameters and Establishing Ability Levels:

The American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators, the National Federation of High School Sports and the Arizona Interscholastic Association set broad parameters for cheerleading activities including sideline activity, jumps, tumbling and stunting. Coaches must establish ability levels within these broad parameters as to ensure the safety of their cheerleaders at all times. Ability levels will be set through a qualifying system of “*Perfection before Progression*” where cheerleaders are not permitted to advance to more elite activities without first demonstrating mastery at lower level activities.

Remain Current on Safety Initiatives and Precautions:

Coaches must remain current on all changes related to safety of activities. If questions related to safety and compliance arise, they will be directed to AIA officials or Varsity Regional Representatives through the Universal Cheer Association.

Athlete's Role:

Continuous Safety Education:

Athletes must be diligent in their learning of safety technique and precautions. Safety is an ongoing theme and will be discussed and learned about multiple times in the season. When learning about safety, cheerleaders must be attentive.

Practice Safety Technique with Fidelity:

As to ensure that best safety practices are put into practice, cheerleaders must practice safety with fidelity. Safety measures must be put into place in every activity, every time, as to reduce likelihood of cheerleading related injury.

Parent/Guardian(s) Role:

Safety Support:

Parent(s) and Guardian(s) must support the safety precautions put into place to protect their athlete. Parents' should encourage their daughter/son's continued cheerleading safety education and practice.

NO COACH. NO PRACTICE.

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