



FCA Cheer
2020-2021 Parent and Athlete Handbook
Updated 6/6/20

FCA Cheer is a competitive cheerleading program in the north county, coastal area of San Diego. FCA stands for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes and its purpose, at its absolute core, is to combine people's passion for sports with their passion for Christ, and teach them that these two worlds do not have to be separate. FCA wants to give meaning to the athletic nature with which all of us are born and use it for something that stretches beyond sports.

Reaching the heart of these athletes is the primary goal at FCA Cheer. Integrity, compassion, loyalty, teamwork and service are what we desire to teach them in a loving, Christ-centered environment. In addition to our regular practice, we have weekly ministry messages and each month we have an opportunity to come together for fellowship in a Team Huddle. The FCA Cheer Huddle Program is designed to bring together all of our athletes and provide the opportunity to be encouraged, equipped and empowered to use cheer to impact their world for Christ.

Commitment to our cheer program requires a commitment to FCA's core values of teamwork, excellence, integrity and service. We expect all of our athletes to have a desire to grow in each of these areas. At FCA, we provide the platform our athletes need to become all that God desires for them.

Statement of Faith

Every person involved with FCA Cheer, from our guest speakers to our student demonstrators, have a signed Statement of Faith on file and all of our coaches, directors and team parents are FCA-approved Ministry Leaders.

- We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- We believe there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)
- We believe in the deity of Christ (John 1:1), in His virgin birth (Matthew 1:18, 25), in His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15), in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood (Hebrews 9:15-22), in His bodily resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-8), in His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Acts 1:9-11) and in His personal return in power and glory (Hebrews 9:27-28).
- We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful men (women), regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. (John 3:16; John 5:24; Titus 3:3-7)
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. (John 14:15-26; John 16:5-16; Ephesians 1:13-14)
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. (Matthew 25:31-46; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Philippians 2:1-4)

All coaches, directors, team parents, ministry partners and any person in a leadership role at FCA Cheer are required to apply and be approved as a ministry leader with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Our primary goal is to be a resource for our athletes and families for ministry purposes and to be aligned in our beliefs as stated above.

The Fellowship of Christian Athletes supports and oversees the ministry aspects of our program. For more information, please go to fca.org.

FCA Commitment to Competitive Teams

Competitive cheerleading is a team sport. It is vitally important for every family, especially those families new to the sport of competitive cheer, to realize that our routines are designed and coordinated around EVERY team member's presence. There is no second string in competitive cheer; all team members have a significant role on their team and their teammates rely on them.

A single athlete's absence has a negative impact on the entire team.

ATTENDANCE: All absences must be submitted to their coach two weeks prior and by 2PM the day of a last minute emergency. **You may not participate on any other athletic team during the cheer season without written approval by the head coach.**

First Day of the 2020-2021 season is July 6th, 2020!

First Day of regular practice is July 27, 2020

Last Day of practice is May 21, 2021! (Swag last day is March 6)

Attendance policy begins August 3, 2020

EXCUSED ABSENCES:

Contagious Illness/Fever - School Function that Affects Grade - Family Emergencies- Planned Vacations from June 2- August 2

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES:

Too tired - Too much homework -Too much traffic - Don't have a ride Birthdays - Menstruation - Sickness without fever or vomiting - anything other than the excused absences above

ABSENCES: 3 unexcused absences will result in potential removal from the team. All absences will be documented in the parent portal. If your child is removed from the program for excessive absences, there are no refunds for any fees paid and you will still be responsible for full payment of camps, uniforms, and practice wear. If we feel that your child is not reliable, we will place them in a dispensable position on the team.

TARDIES: When an athlete is late for practice, they miss warm-ups and then have to spend time that they should be working on their routine warming up- then the coach has to stop what they are doing to help catch up the tardy athlete. It puts a lot of pressure on the coach and their teammates who now are unable to move forward with the routine

until the missing athlete has been brought up to speed. Tardies will be recorded in the parent portal.

BLACKOUT PRACTICES: These are the practices scheduled the week prior to each competition and showcase (and the TWO weeks prior to Jamz/US Finals in May.) We usually schedule an extra practice or extend practices during this time. Please do not schedule anything the Friday before a competition, as this is usually the day we schedule extra practices. We understand that kids get sick or there are extenuating circumstances and absences happen. Please contact us immediately and we will do our best to work with you. However, we need to be able to have "whole team" practices before competitions. If your athlete misses a blackout practice, they may be pulled from the routine and the coach will rework the routine without them in it. This will only be for the competition and the coach will work the athlete back into the routine the following week.

COMPETITION DATES: Please do not plan any other activity, travel plans, etc. on the day of competition. Times for warm up and performances are not set until the week prior to the competition. We reserve the right to change any competition date and add/replace any competition with another. If your child will be missing a competition we cannot guarantee that they will still have their position when they return. We reward the athletes that make themselves available for every competition. We will do our best to work your child back into the choreography, however, there is a chance they will have to be placed in a dispensable position.

TEAM PLACEMENTS

Team placements will be announced by 10pm the day after evaluations. Prior to an athlete being placed on a team, we evaluate not only their age and athletic ability, but, **attendance and dedication over the past seasons**. Please note that tumbling skills alone will not get an athlete placed on a higher level team. We also base our decisions on whether it is the right fit for the social and spiritual growth for your child. Please remember, this is a ministry first organization. The success of your athlete is not measured on their abilities, but by the content of their character. We are raising up these kids together in partnership with you. We spend a great amount of time in prayer to make sure that your children are going to get the most out of their experience at FCA Cheer. It is important that all parents trust that we will place the athletes accordingly.

CHOREOGRAPHY

We sometimes bring in outside choreographers and “cleaners” to come in and scrutinize our routines for possible routine violations and deductions. They work with the athletes count by count to sharpen and rearrange the choreography to make the routine look its best. This is often a time of distress for many athletes. Many times athletes are moved to the back of a routine just because of where they were coming from just prior.

Sometimes, athletes are required to switch stunt groups or positions. Please make sure to encourage your child if they are feeling unimportant that this is a TEAM and every single person is important no matter where they are placed on the mat. If they weren't important, we wouldn't stress attendance so much. Another note, our routines change constantly. Whether it's because we have an injured athlete, a missing athlete, or a rules change midseason, the choreography is always in flux.

COMPETITIONS

Sometimes we attend competitions where we don't have any other teams to compete against. In these situations we try and encourage them to “Hit Zero”. Hit Zero is a big deal in the cheer world. It means that the team did not receive any deductions in their performance. It does not mean they had a flawless, perfect performance, it just means they didn't have any tumbling touches or falls, or stunt bobbles or falls. Also, most events provide an award for the highest score in their division. So even if they don't compete against anyone, they are still competing for this prestigious award. When we do compete against other teams, we make sure that our athletes win and lose with grace and humility. All athletes are REQUIRED to attend a final huddle with their head coach before leaving the venue. They are also required to stay and support either the team that competed before or after them. The athletes perform much better when they have their cheer family there to support them. Feel free to make signs, bring noisemakers, and get routy!

AWARDS CEREMONY

Athletes are required to stay for their award ceremony in full uniform. Unless there are extenuating circumstances that require a family to leave prior to awards, all athletes must be present at the awards ceremony or risk their position on the team.

FCA Communication Protocol

Communication between the coaches, staff, and families of FCA is the key to a successful season. Please familiarize your family with the following channels of communication utilized by FCA.

BAND: FCA uses BAND as its primary form of communication. You will need to download the BAND app from the app store or on your computer. You will be invited to two separate BANDS, one for the entire FCA Program and one for your team. When posting on BAND, **please ask yourself who the intended audience is.** Do not post to the entire program that your child will be a little late for cheer, send a private message or text your coach directly. If you have a question SPECIFIC to your team, then ask it on your team BAND page. **Please do not reply with a heart or thumbs up to BAND posts.** We try to keep the disruption of BAND messages very minimal.

CALENDAR: The programs main calendar is located on the Program BAND page only. Check BAND regularly for important information regarding the team schedules. We will not be using any other form of communication! No email or text messages will be used to communicate important FCA Cheer program information. It is the parents responsibility to make sure that they stay up to date with what is going on at the gym.

PHONE/TEXT/EMAIL: Your child's coach will provide their personal contact info to their team members and/or parents to be used for emergency communication only (eg last minute inability to attend practice, for an unexpected tardy, or to communicate an injury to a parent.) The coach will provide further detail directly to their team in this regard at the beginning of the year. It is the parents responsibility to make sure they have the coach's contact information, including phone number and email address.

FCA Conflict Resolution

STEPS TO RESOLVE CONFLICT Occasionally, during the course of the season, misunderstandings or problems may arise between the athletes, a coach and an athlete, coach and parent, parent and the gym, or any one of several possible combinations. This is often the result of a lack of communication between those involved. Also, due to our human nature, we may at times offend each other, resulting in misunderstandings or disagreements. In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus gives His formula for solving person-to-person problems.

“If your brother sins against you go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over, but if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.” - Matthew 18:15-17

1. Again, if you would like to contact a coach, please contact them via text or email. NO coaches will be pulled off the floor during gym hours, unless it is a TRUE emergency. Please email them and they will contact you at their earliest convenience.
2. All questions, problems or complaints should be brought promptly to the involved coach, staff member, or FCA parent directly, via email, before anyone else is contacted.
3. If the situation is not cleared up at this level through direct contact, it should then be brought to the Head Coach of that team or Team Parent, depending on the situation, via email.
4. From there, if it is not resolved, the matter may be taken up with the FCA Cheer Director,
5. Disagreements between athletes are handled with this same protocol. They are instructed to first attempt conflict resolution directly with the other athlete before approaching a parent, team parent, or coach. This is an extremely important life skill we want them to learn.
6. FCA cheer reserves the right to remove any parent/athlete that they feel jeopardizes the integrity of our program. It is our goal to provide a safe, loving environment for all athletes. If the FCA staff removes a parent/athlete from the program for disobeying the program rules, there will be no refunds of any fees already paid.

FCA Protocol for Injuries

Hundreds of athletes sustain acute injuries everyday while participating in sports. An acute sports injury is one in which there is a specific mechanism of injury (hit by something, plant and twist, collision with another athlete, falls) and an immediate onset of symptoms including swelling, pain, bleeding, and possible deformity.

A number of types of injuries can be considered acute including:

- Sprains (injury to ligaments)
- Strains (injury to muscles)
- Contusions (bruise)
- Subluxation (partial dislocation that reduces itself)
- Dislocation
- Fractures

In the event of an injury, the coach shall contact the athletes parent immediately by text and/or phone call and fill out an injury report that will be signed by the athlete and sent home for the parent's review. The coach will provide minor medical care for injuries, including, icing and bandaging if necessary. We will also provide ibuprofen or Tylenol at the parent's directive.

If there are signs or symptoms of a serious injury (deformity, severe swelling and/or pain), emergency first aid will be provided while keeping the athlete calm and still until emergency service personnel arrive on scene. The coach will remain with the athlete until parents are present.

Concussions:

All of our coaches have been trained through the CDC Heads Up Concussion initiative in youth sports and by NFHS. We are trained in preventing, recognizing, and responding to a concussion.

CPR:

All of our coaches are CPR certified.

Should your child sustain a concussion or any injury requiring medical care at any time during the season, they must be cleared by a medical doctor to be able to return to cheer. This clearance must be in writing.

FCA Cheer Huddles

Team Huddles take place on the first practice of each month. Our speaker will focus on a different topic relevant to the athletes. Some examples of topics we cover are: self-esteem/body image, integrity, teamwork, purity, serving others, etc. Our ministry director will make these messages age-appropriate, however, there will be times when we split the athletes into two or three groups to discuss more in-depth information.

Birthdays – We celebrate all of the birthdays that are taking place that month at our huddle. They will receive a goodie bag and get a special Birthday Song from their teammates. You are welcome to bring gluten free goodies to practice if your child's birthday falls on a practice day.

Huddles overlap practice times so your child may be asked to stay later on Huddle days. There may be additional activities offered following the Huddle at the facility throughout the year, like community service preparation, etc.

Prayer Box

We provide a prayer request box for all of our parents and athletes. If you would be interested in becoming a prayer partner, please contact our ministry director.

PCA Bible Study

PCA (Parents of Christian Athletes) Bible Study. We will have two 8-week studies per season. If you are interested in joining the PCA bible study contact our program or ministry director.

Community Service

Community service is a very important part of our program. We participate in many service events during the season. We expect the girls to participate in these events and if requested, community service hours will be awarded.

2020-2021 Program Fees Competitive Cheer

All estimates are based on the 2019-2020 season and are subject to change. We always have fundraising opportunities available.

Full Season (July-May) 11-Months

USASF Registration \$30

Monthly Team Tuition*

1 hour practice/ 2x week: \$125/month

1.5 hour practice/ 2x week: \$150/month

2 hour practice/ 2x week: \$175/month

Tumbling has been moved to team practice this season. If you would like to sign up for an additional tumbling class, if space is available, the cost is an additional \$25 per month

Uniform \$175 (Uniform, Comp Bow) - white competition shoes must be purchased separately

Annual Competition Fees**

Swag: \$219

Halo: \$414

Glow, Rise, Crew, G1 \$509

Shine \$539

Camps

July 6-10: Conditioning camp, 9:30 - 12 pm, Carlsbad Beach (included in July tuition)

July 13-17: Choreography Camp, MANDATORY, 9-4 pm (included in July tuition)

July 20 - 23: Away camp, ages 9+ Hope University **COST \$350**

* Tuition is due on the 25th of each month for the following month, credit cards and bank drafts are accepted. Tuition will be automatically debited from your account on file. Failed payments will incur an additional \$25 fee. Please make sure you keep your credit card updated in the parent portal. Credit card payments will be charged a 3% processing fee.

Please Note: Tuition is NOT a monthly fee- we just split the cost for a season of cheer over 11 months to make it easier for you financially. You are welcome to pay for the entire season up front, or split it up in any way that works for your family. Some months will have more practices than others. There are no discounts for months with breaks.

There are no pro rations for cancelled practices and we will not charge you for extra practices. Tuition is applied to extra choreography fees, summer camp coaching costs, competition day coaches fees, extracurricular costs, and miscellaneous team expenses **not otherwise charged**. **Competition fees do not include travel, accommodations, parking or spectator entrance fees.

REQUIRED FEE SCHEDULE

June 25, 2020

July tuition due (due each month on the 25th for 11 months)

\$350 overnight Camp fee due

Prior to July 31, 2020

\$30 Registration Fee (Please bring birth certificate)

\$175 Uniform Fee: Includes Uniform, Comp Bow (You must purchase white cheer shoes)

Sept 25, 2020

1/4 Comp Fees due with tuition

Nov 25, 2020

1/4 Comp Fees due with tuition

Jan 25, 2020

1/4 Comp Fees due with tuition

Feb 25, 2020

1/4 Comp Fees due with tuition

Refunds

If your child drops from the program for ANY reason, there are NO refunds for any amount already paid! If your family is asked to leave the program for ANY reason, there are NO refunds for any amount already paid! There are NO refunds for cheer gear you purchased, although we will do what we can to buy back your uniform. There are NO refunds for tuition already paid. There are NO refunds for comp fees already paid. There are NO refunds of camp deposits. There are NO refunds for registration fees. If your child drops before the 15th of the month, you will not be billed the following month. This money gets paid out at the beginning of the season and we cannot get it back for you.

FCA Program Rules and Regulations

It is always our intention to teach our athletes how to be loving, respectful and forgiving. We have developed a set of rules to protect our athletes and our coaches from abusive situations. **We, as coaches and directors have full authority to remove any child, at any time we feel our program is being compromised by their behavior, attitude or poor decision making skills.**

NO CELL PHONE ACCESS DURING PRACTICE! If you have an emergency, please contact your child's coach directly.

- NO GOSSIP about any other team. NO GOSSIP about a child on your team or another team. NO GOSSIP about coaches and staff.
- NO BULLYING at any time! Bullying of any athlete, coach or staff member will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- Anyone threatening to quit or to pull their child from a team may be dismissed from the program immediately.
- No taking classes or attending programs at other competitive cheer facilities.
- Athletes must arrive at all practices, competitions or any scheduled event on time. Punctuality is a MUST! On time means hair is up, shoes are on and tied!
- No color other than natural colored hair is allowed at competitions.
- FCA Cheer practice clothing must be worn to every practice. FCA Cheer practice clothing is available for purchase all season. If your child shows up to practice without the required attire, they may be asked to sit out.
- Never post any negative comment about FCA or any other cheerleading program or individual online! Violation of this rule may result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- Any profanity, abusive language or acts of bullying in the gym or found on athlete's social media pages may result in dismissal from the program.
- Any child that has been suspended/ expelled from school will be immediately dismissed from the team.
- Any child that is under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be allowed to participate in any FCA practices or events and may be dismissed from the team.
- There will be no arguing with or questioning the coaching staff about their decisions at practice or competitions by parents or athletes
- FCA cheerleaders and their family members and friends are to show good sportsmanship at all times.
- Persuading team members to leave our program or discussing leaving our program during any FCA event will result in immediate dismissal

- You are required to pick up after yourself...don't leave empty drink/food containers lying around the gym. NO FOOD OR DRINKS IN THE GYM. Bring a labeled water bottle to practice.
- FCA Cheer reserves the right to remove any cheerleader or parent temporarily or permanently from the program if we feel any behavior is unbecoming of an FCA Cheer athlete or parent.
- It is your responsibility to know what is going on with your team. Please check the team Band app regularly.
- Please do not punish your child by forcing them to miss practices or competitions. At that time you are punishing the entire team/program
- Never speak or approach a competition official such as a judge.
- Please respect the decisions of the coaching staff at FCA Cheer. We have years of experience and will make the best decisions for the entire team/program.

FCA Dress Code

Practice Wear: All athletes must wear FCA approved practice wear. Any practice wear purchased from past seasons may be worn. All athletes will be provided with a program T-shirt that can be worn with black or navy shorts and white cheer shoes. We also have FCA practice wear for sale in the proshop.

Under NO circumstances are the girls to wear only a sports bra when entering or leaving the cheer facility, they must wear a shirt or jacket over the sports bra.

Jewelry: No jewelry is allowed except for medical bracelets. No earrings are allowed. Please do not allow fresh piercings during the cheer season. We will not allow earrings to be taped over.

Nails: Nails must not be longer than the tips of the fingers. No artificial nails of any length. Your athlete will be asked to leave practice if they show up with long fingernails and risk being removed from the team.

Hair: Must be worn in a high ponytail to every practice. Your child will be considered tardy if practice starts and hair is not up. Rubber bands will be available for purchase for \$5 each. If hair is dyed an unnatural color, it must be dyed back to original color for competitions.

Deodorant: ALL CHILDREN should wear deodorant. If we have to ask a child to put on deodorant, it will be humiliating for them and hard for us. Don't second guess whether you think your child smells yet, they do... trust us!



RULES AND REGULATIONS CONTRACT

Athlete

I _____ have read, understand, and agree without exceptions to abide by the
Cheerleader's Name

Parent and Athlete Handbook. I understand that consequences shall occur for not following the set forth rules and regulations.

Cheerleader's Signature Parent Signature Date

Parent

By signing below, I/we agree to:

1. Encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all teams, coaches, and officials at each practice and competition.
2. Teach my child that doing one's best is more important than winning.
3. Not ridicule or yell at my cheerleader or other participants and/or staff for making a mistake or blame my child and/or his/her teammates for placement in a competition.
4. Emphasize positive accomplishments and learning from mistakes.
5. Be a positive role model for my athlete.
6. Respect the decisions of the coaches and officials and teach my child to do the same.
7. Ensure my child arrives at least 10 minutes early to all practices, events, and competitions.
8. Teach my child to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility, violence, or bullying.
9. Bring any issues immediately to the attention of the FCA Cheer Director at an

appropriate time and not solicit support from other cheer parents.

10. Not post negative comments on the internet (i.e., Instagram, Facebook, etc)
11. Uphold the FCA Cheer dress code and image at all times while at practice, in public, at events/competitions, especially while in uniform.
12. Not engage in negative commentary at any event where FCA Cheer is participating (this includes inside the parent room, as well as outside of the gym).
13. Understand and agree to absence policy.

I, _____, have read, (print parents/guardians names) understand, and agree without exceptions to abide by the Parent and Athlete Handbook. I understand that if I don't follow the rules set forth in this contract, I may be asked to leave the program and forfeit any payments. If the 11 month commitment is terminated, I understand that there will be a \$200 fine.

Parents/Guardians Signature

Date