



2021



NIAA
Handbook



General season start information:

The 2021 season is about to begin! The 1st practice is July 26th, 2021.

CHECK THE WEBSITE-

www.ntaasports.com and “like” the Facebook page “NTAA Football, Cheerleading & Lacrosse” for up to date news!

-Uniforms will be sized the first 2 weeks of practice. All the required uniform extra pieces will be ordered online and must be completed by the deadline for the order to be in on time for games. All the details will be emailed to you.

-There are 2 cheer coordinators, Amanda Anthony and Ashley Anthony. Please direct questions that your team mom cannot answer to a coordinator. Questions: please e-mail the cheer information email address at

ntacheer@gmail.com

-Online you will be required to purchase the necessary accessories: sneakers, spunks, rain coat, and warm up suit. The hair bow, socks, practice tee and shorts are included in the registration price. The total package price for everything is approx. \$150. Veteran cheerleaders only need to purchase the sneakers, socks, bow, shirt and shorts or any item they no longer fit in. All accessories need to be paid for online in June, cash, credit or check.

Cheerleaders will not be able to start practice until all outstanding balances are paid.

-Please read your handbook it will be strongly enforced. Rules change from year to year so please read each section carefully.

Costs:

This is a season long price guide- be advised these are only estimates and may change at any time.

ESTIMATED REQUIRED COSTS:

All balances must be paid by the first practice to participate

Registration \$100 (price includes socks, bow, shorts and tee)

Stand Deposit \$100 (refunded by working in the snack stand)

Lotto Fundraiser \$100 (refunded by selling tickets)

Required Uniform Accessories approximately \$150

Banquet gifts for coaches, coordinators & team moms \$15 (paid when ordering uniform)

North Tonawanda Athletic Association (NTAA)

Cheerleading Rules and Protocols

Cheer Age/Grade Requirements: Teams may change due to enrollment
Cheerleaders must be of age by Dec. 1st (No cheerleader younger than 6 or older than 14)

Cubs	1 st & 2 nd Graders (average age 6-7)
Wolves	3 rd & 4 th Graders (average age 8-9)
49ers	5 th & 6 th Graders (average age 10-11)
Jacks	6 th -9 th Graders (average age 12-14) *team determined selection

Placement on a Team:

We have 4 *possible* teams, Cubs, Timberwolves, 49er and Jacks. Cheerleaders will be placed on a squad after the football players have been placed. No team placement is guaranteed. **All cheerleaders must have a current physical, birth certificate and signed medical/registration form before they can participate in any NTAA activity.** Teams may be combined due to low enrollment.

Practices:

Our first practice is on a Monday then every Tues & Thurs from 6-8 -for all teams. A parent meeting will be held at 7:30 the 1st night of practice.

Practices are held rain or shine, except during lightening. A practice can only be canceled by the Coordinator, check Facebook for cancelations, emails will be sent. Practice times are usually from 6 until 8. We practice 2-3 days a week. **Practice can be held anytime or day of the week and can change during the season.**

We try to move indoors for October and November. **Parents will not be permitted in the gym or cafeteria for indoor practices.** League approved volunteers only will be able to attend indoor practices. Parents will be invited in the first and last 10 minutes of practice for drop off, pick up and practice viewing.

Our league follows the AACCA Rules for cheerleading safety and we follow these rules at all NTAA events. Please familiarize yourself with the rules at www.aacca.org.

Games:

As soon as we receive the schedules from the league scheduling committee we will pass it on. Each cheerleader is required to attend all games and stay for the full game. No leaving at halftime. If the players stay on the field to play so do the cheerleaders NO EXCEPTIONS. Each cheerleader who does not attend and stay for the whole game, a minimum of 6 of the regular season scheduled games (including play offs/bowl games) will not be allowed to compete at competition.

Cheerleaders are required to arrive 45 minutes before the game to practice the halftime routine. An exception is made for Friday night games cheerleaders must arrive 30 minutes before the scheduled game time. Please meet your coach or team mom by the 20 yard line to sign in. If you are not on time for game practice for any reason excused or not, you will not perform during halftime. This is for safety reasons. You need to be at

the practice location on time not just at the field. Be early, this way there are no problems.

Full uniform is required for all games: vest, skirt, spunks, hair ribbon, socks, sneakers, and bodysuit at all times. Please bring bodysuit even to warm weather games. Keep all items in a duffle bag. This reduces the chance of lost items. Only navy or scarlet red tanks are allowed to be worn under the uniform top. Added option in bad weather include: red or navy winter headbands and/or gloves, a clear rain coat, and ONLY the NTAA issued warmup suit for outer attire. Dress appropriately. If the football players stay for the whole game, so must the cheerleaders. This is part of cheerleading. The only way you should leave a game is if the game is canceled due to weather. **If a cheerleader leaves early it will count as an unexcused absence.**

No food at games, only water at half time. Please eat before or after the game. This includes the coaches. **No eating ever in your uniform.** Cover up with a t-shirt or jacket. This is how food ends up on the uniform and cheerleaders get stomachaches and cramps when returning to cheer. This is recorded as inappropriate behavior.

All cheerleaders are required to cheer for regular season and playoff/bowl games. The only time a team will not attend a regular season or playoff game will be for competition. If competition is the day or evening before or after a game the team is still required to attend, no exceptions.

Competition:

Competition is a privilege. If the girls give 100% during the season we have the opportunity to attend competition. **Cost for competition may be required from parents.** We fundraise and get money from NTAA to attend some competitions additional money is sometimes needed. The Coordinator reserves the right to pull a cheerleader from competition for any reason she feels has a negative impact on the team as whole, including but not limited to; behavior, injury, poor attendance (excused or unexcused). If you do not show up the day of competition without at least one weeks' notice it will be considered quitting and you will not be able to attend any future NTAA functions including the banquet. No refunds will be given.

Practice the week before a competition is mandatory NO EXCEPTIONS. This is a strict safety rule. All cheerleaders must attend these practices no excuses are accepted. If any cheerleader misses more than 30 minutes of practice total for that week (no matter the total amount of practice time in the given week) they will not be able to compete. If a cheerleader is sick they must come and watch. If they are too sick to watch practice, then for the safety of all the girls we must assume they will be too sick to compete in 2-3 days and remove them from the routine.

Refunds:

If after you register, your cheerleader decides to quit, you are eligible for a refund up to the first week of practice. After the first Friday of practice no refunds will be given. The Cheerleading Coordinator must be notified by the 1st Friday if your child is not cheering anymore to be eligible for a refund. Refunds will be issued only after all equipment and any fundraising material has been returned. The NTAA Treasurer will then write any refund checks at the monthly meeting and mail them out. Only registration money will be refunded. Money paid for uniform extras, fundraisers, etc. cannot be refunded.

Injuries:

Cheerleading is a sport and even though all precautions are taken to insure the safety of your child, injuries do occur. In case of an injury during a game or practice the onsite trainer, team mom, NTAA Board member or Cheerleading Coordinator will attend to your child. Parents will be notified immediately. If the parents are not available treatment will be at the discretion of the trainer, Coordinator or board member. At no time should any cheer stunting or gymnastics be attempted outside of practice or at practice without a coach helping the group. The medical waiver online form must be signed at registration.

If a cheerleader is injured and required to sit out of activities she must provide a doctor's note clearly stating the date she is able to continue practicing. A cheerleader that is sitting out injured but plans to return to practice during the season is required to attend all practices and watch.

Banquet:

We end the year with a banquet for all of our players and cheerleaders. It is usually in November or December and is held at a local banquet facility and everyone is invited. N.T.A.A. will pay for players, coaches, and board members but parents and other family members are asked to pay their own way. Your child will receive a trophy and a yearbook. There are also individual awards per team. If a cheerleader quits anytime during the season she cannot attend the banquet and does not get a trophy or yearbook. The \$15 paid in the beginning of the year covers the banquet gift for the coaches, coordinators and team moms.

Uniform:

A uniform is issued to each girl. Each cheerleader is fully responsible for loss or damage. Socks, spangs, hair bows, warmup, raincoats, shorts, and sneakers are an extra cost. By signing the rule book acknowledgement online when you register you agree to the responsibility of keeping the uniform clean and in the condition in which you received it. You agree to pay full price if it is lost, stolen, or damaged in any way. A \$5 cleaning charge will be applied to uniforms returned wet or dirty. The uniform cost; Vest (\$70), Skirt (\$60), Bodysuit (\$55).

To wash: Use the gentle cycle, cold (NO BLEACH) and hang dry. Bow Care- be sure not to crush your bow, use a separate hair band to style hair, then add the bow. Refunds will not be given for broken/crushed bows or broken hair bands.

Chain of Command:

If you have any problems throughout the season please discuss it **first with the Team Mom** then with one of the Cheerleading Coordinators. If the problem is still unresolved the Cheerleading Coordinator will bring it to the board of directors. We feel this way of dealing with a problem works. Do not go to the coaches or other parents this only makes problems worse.

Absences:

Please consider other school sports, religious instruction, dance, and gymnastics obligations before signing up for cheerleading. Absences for these reasons are not an excused absence. Cheerleading is a team sport in which each cheerleader needs to make a commitment and be dedicated to the team. **If you cannot dedicate the time to the squad, please do not sign up.**

If a cheerleader is late or leaves early from practice 10 minutes or more 5 times she will be benched for half a game including half time. If a cheerleader is late to practice or leaves early 10 minutes or more 10 times she will be benched for a second game. Continued absenteeism could result in removal from the squad. Attendance is taken at all practices and games.

If you are unable to attend a game or practice a **parent** must notify a **Team Mom** at least one hour before the practice or game. Excused absences include family vacation, doctor/dentist appointments (with doctors note), school concerts or open house (elementary only). If you go to school you are expected to be at practice. School dances, sporting events, or parties are not an excuse. If you are scheduled for religion or dance class every Tuesday or Thursday, please consider changing the class day or not participating on the cheer team.

The cheerleader will be benched for half a game including half time for missing 3 unexcused practices. The cheerleader must show up at all benched games in uniform. Parents will be notified of excessive absences. If the absences become regularly excessive the cheerleader will be excused from the squad. If you are dismissed there is no refund, trophy, banquet, or competition. Any cheerleader, whose poor attendance is negatively impacting their team maybe be subject to dismissal after review by the cheer coordinator.

Proper Dress:

Please wear comfortable, loose fitting clothing, sneakers and socks to practice. No jeans, thin strap tank/crop tops, school clothes, shoes, or sandals. You will be sitting on the ground and must be ready to practice. Your hair and bangs must be pulled back away from your face in a pony tail for all practices and games. Hair shorter than shoulder length must be pulled ½ way up. No jewelry (piercing in any place), fake nails, phones or toys. DO NOT get new piercings during cheerleading season. You will need to remove them for practices, games, and competition or you will not be able to participate. The coaches and parents will not be responsible for watching your things. If you are unable to practice due to improper dress this will count as an unexcused absence.

Appropriate Behavior:

No gum chewing at any time during games or practices. No smoking, drug use, alcohol use, or fighting at any function sponsored by N.T.A.A. No foul language will be tolerated. This is inappropriate behavior.

Please show respect to all coaches, teammates, other squads, parents, and adults. Respect and discipline are important. Coaches need to respect the girls and visa-versa. Screaming, yelling and foul language are not acceptable. Bullying of any type WILL NOT be allowed.

Inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. See discipline protocol attached. NO EXCEPTIONS. If any person has a problem with a coach or cheerleader, it should be brought directly to the Team Mom or Cheerleading Coordinator's attention.

Volunteers:

Please see the stand coordinator about helping during practices or games. We always need and welcome parent volunteers to help in the snack stand.

We also need 2-3 team moms (or dads) per team. Team moms CAN NOT work the stand during practices or their team's game. We need you with the team. If you would like to be a team mom please put it in writing and give it to the Cheer Coordinator before the first practice. Coaches and team moms will need to sign a waiver for an independent, closed information background check. They will also be required to complete the NYSCA certification course at their own expense before participating in any league activity. Our goal is to keep all our kids safe. Team moms need to be at all games and practices. Their duties include team management, supervision and clerical duties.

Team Placements: (Grades 5-9 Only)

Due to the mass number of girls interested in cheerleading and the competitive nature of the sport conduct team placements for our oldest two age groups. The girls will learn cheerleading fundamentals in a practice setting. Coaches and coordinators will score each girl over several days of practice. Girls who need more experience and are not yet ready for the Jacks will be asked to cheer for the 49ers/Avalanche. The coordinators have the right to change the tryout format at any time. The Jacks squad will perform at games and at several competitions. A cost sheet will be given during the first week of practice with added information.

Coach Code of Conduct

As a coach you are a role model to all the girls and it is important to act appropriately. As a part of NTAA we all need to work as a team. The following rules are important and will be enforced. If the rules are broken, you will be asked to leave the organization. Please read these rules and the NTAA cheerleader handbook rules. You are required to be aware of what is expected of you and your cheerleaders. Please sign the last page of the handbook and return it to a coordinator by the first week of practice. If you are over 18 we will need your Social Security number for a required background check. All coaches will also be required to complete the NYSCA certification course at their own expense before participating in any league activity.

-Proper dress is required just like the cheerleaders, no jeans or revealing clothing. Sneakers always! Be ready to practice.

-Attendance at practice and games is essential, if you cannot make it you need to call the Team Mom. If you commit to be there, please do not cancel at the last minute. Be on time or early to all practices, competitions, and games.

-Discipline is a difficult subject, you are not authorized to scream, swear, or put down the girls. Coaching can be frustrating, but it is important you be patient. Positive reinforcement will be used whenever possible. Running, crunches, jumping jacks and sitting out are all good discipline actions but not to be used in excess. As a coach you are not authorized to make a girl sit out during games or competition.

-Practices are about two days a week and after August we have weekend games. It is important to be dedicated to your team. Do not let them down by quitting. You are never allowed to add or cancel a practice without getting approval from the Coordinator. If you stop showing up to practices and games, you will be asked to leave.

-No boyfriends, cell phones, friends or anything that would distract the practice are allowed. No eating during practices or games.

-Maturity is a huge issue, please act like a responsible adult at all times in front of the girls. You are their coach not their buddy or friend. No goofing around. Always think before you speak. Do not talk about teenage things with young girls. Do not talk about any parent, coach or cheerleader in a negative manner at any time. NO Gossip. Disrespect will not be tolerated. If you want to be respected you need to show respect to cheerleaders, their parents, all adults and coaches.

-Favoritism is an issue every year please be fair and equal with everyone. Do not invite select girls to join you for special events outside cheerleading events. If you would like to do a special party or event everyone must be invited, and you need to discuss it with a coordinator before notifying the girls/parents. Never drive a cheerleader in your car.

-The 45 minutes before the game is to be used to get your halftime routine set. You should not be pulling the girls off the side-lines right before half-time to practice.... Once the game starts you use what you already have! There is no Stunting on the side-lines!! EVER! -If a girl arrives late they cannot do the halftime routine NO EXCEPTIONS.

- The girls need to be cheering, this is what they are there to do! This means they should not be standing around doing nothing for longer than a minute or two at games or practices. Dead time equals problems like talking and fooling around.

-The coordinators are the ones to give coaches directives. If another adult approaches you and you are unsure BE POLITE, then find one of the coordinators.

NTAA PARENT / SPECTATOR CODE OF CONDUCT

Parents/spectators are vital to the development of young athletes. Whether sitting in the stands or helping out as a volunteer, parents and spectators must set a good example. All adults involved in youth sports, should be models of good sportsmanship and lead by example on and off the playing field. Inappropriate behavior is cause for immediate discipline action. By signing this acknowledgement, you agree to abide by the “NTAA Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct”.

As a parent/spectator I agree to:

- Give constructive criticism during a private moment, never in front of other parents, players, officials, spectators, etc. Refrain from profanity at all times. Remember that children participate for fun and the game is for youth not adults.
- Support the coaches and refrain from “sideline coaching” or negatively talking on the bleachers. Help teach the value of commitment to a team.
- Be a positive role model for all children and encourage good sportsmanship, ethical conduct and fair play by showing respect and courtesy for coaches, players, officials and spectators at every game and practice.
- Respect officials and their decisions on the field as being fair and being called to the best of their ability. Stay off the field during all games and practices.
- Abide by doctor’s decisions in all matters of players health, injuries and abilities to play.
- Teach children to play by the rules and to resolve conflicts without resorting to hostility and violence. Encourage the theory that doing one’s best is more important than winning. A child should never feel defeated by the outcome of a game or by his or her performance.

By signing the handbook agreement online, I agree to follow the “NTAA Parent/Spectator Code of Conduct” at all home and away NTAA events. If I fail to abide by the above guidelines I will be subject to disciplinary action that could include but is not limited to the following:

Documented verbal warning by coach, official or NTAA board member, Written warning approved by the NTAA Board of Directors, Game or practice suspension(s), Suspension from **all** future games and NTAA sponsored/attended activities on our home field or at away fields, Discipline action by the NEYSA Board

Cheerleader Discipline Protocol

1st Incident: The Team Mom will discuss the behavior with the cheerleader and the Cheer Coordinator. The Team Mom or Coordinator will call parent. The incident will be noted on a behavior log by the Team Mom.

2nd Incident: The Team Mom will discuss the behavior with the cheerleader and the Cheer Coordinator. The Team Mom or Coordinator will call parent. The incident will be noted on a behavior card by the Team Mom. Depending on the incident the child may be benched for part or all of a game or a competition. The behavior log must be signed by the parent before the cheerleader may return to practice.

3rd Incident: Coordinator will immediately contact a parent to pick up their child. The cheerleader will be benched from upcoming games/competitions or removed from the team roster. If removed from the team roster the child will no longer be able to attend any NTAA function and will lose their veteran status. No refund is given.

NTAA Policy Acknowledgment

I(we) the parents or legal custodial guardian(s) of the above-mentioned candidate for a position on a team of the North Tonawanda Athletic Association (NTAA), hereby give my(our) approval to his/her participation in any and all NTAA activities during the coming season. I(we) do hereby waive, release, absolve, indemnify, and agree to hold harmless the NTAA, the Parents Association, sponsors, supervisors, participates and parents transporting my(our) child. I(we) further agree to return upon request the uniform and any other equipment issued to my(our) son/daughter in a condition as good as when received, expect for normal wear and tear.

I(we) understand there will be no refund of any registration money after the session has begun.

The consent form to be signed online is for the protection of your child should he/she become ill or injured as a result in participation in any NTAA activity. No treatment, other than First Aid, will be initiated without first attempting to contact the child's parent or guardian. This form will only be invoked to authorize any licensed or staff physicians or emergency or emergency treatment only if the parent or guardian is not immediately available. I(we) hereby authorize any licensed or staff physicians or emergency medical technicians of the state or province in which she/he practiced, or a member of the hospital staff or any approved hospital, to administer any anesthetic or perform treatment, test, or surgical procedure they deem necessary upon:

IMPORTANT: PLEASE NOTE ONLINE ANY ALLERGIES, SENSITIVITY TO DRUGS OR MEDICATIONS. Ex. BEE STINGS, ASTHMA, PENICILLIN, ETC...

When registering online you are asked to acknowledge that you have reviewed and understand the NTAA Cheerleading Handbook including the medical waiver, coach and parent codes of conduct and all of the rules contained in this handbook and will follow the rules and guidelines within.