



Mater Dei Catholic Elementary



San Diego & Imperial Valley
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

GUIDELINES FOR SAFE STUNTING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL-BASED CHEER PROGRAMS

Student participation in extracurricular activities is important for the development of the whole child and the exploration of students interests and passions. The Office for Schools encourages schools to offer a variety of extracurricular activities to their students.

Cheer is an exciting and meaningful extracurricular activity that can be offered in schools. To ensure student safety, the following guidelines have been developed for elementary school-based cheer programs that are considering offering stunting as part of their program.

These guidelines align with and defer to USA Cheer, the United States Governing Body for Sport Cheering recognized by the International Cheer Union.

Key Safety Measures:

1. **Mandatory Certified Supervision:** Stunting will only be permitted under the supervision of coaches who have completed the [USA Cheer Safety & Risk Management Course](#). This course, is widely recognized as the standard of care for cheerleading, and ensures coaches are thoroughly trained to:
 - **Safely Teach Stunting and Tumbling:** Coaches learn to introduce stunting in a structured, step-by-step manner, ensuring all skills are age-appropriate and suited to the cheerleaders' abilities.
 - **Properly Spot and Assist Athletes:** Coaches are trained to closely monitor stunts, ready to step in and assist if necessary. This proactive approach reduces the risk of injury.
 - **Manage and Mediate Injuries:** The course also prepares coaches to handle potential injuries from stunting or tumbling, ensuring that any incidents are addressed promptly and effectively.
- A certificate of completion should be provided to the principal of the school.
 - Principals will submit all names and certificates to OFS to be added to the approved list of elementary schools with cheerleading programs.
- Assistant and substitute coaches or volunteers must be certified as well.
- In addition, all coaches must be cleared to volunteer at the school. The full requirements for this are linked here: [Employee & Volunteer Clearance Requirements](#)

- Employees must complete a DOJ/FBI Livescan
- Complete the Safe Environment training
- Complete the Non-Supervisor Sexual Harassment Training
- Any drivers must complete the Safe Drivers training
 1. This includes for field trips, games or outings off campus
 2. Also must provide copy of driver's license & insurance with \$100,000/\$300,000 coverage

2. **Strict Safety Compliance:**

- **Approved Surfaces for Stunting:** Adhering to [USA Cheer Youth Rec Sideline Rules](#), stunting will only be allowed on the following safe surfaces:
 - **Artificial Grass:** Provides a soft, even area that reduces impact.
 - **Rubberized Track Fields:** Offer shock absorption to minimize injury risk.
 - **Indoor Basketball Courts:** Hardwood floors provide a stable, smooth surface for stunting.
 - **Matted Floors:** Provide the highest level of impact absorption, ideal for advanced stunting.
- **Prohibited Surfaces:** Stunting will not be permitted on concrete, asphalt, or cement surfaces, as they do not offer the necessary cushioning.
- **Dress Code for Safety:**
 - **Uniforms:** Cheerleaders must wear uniforms that are secure and cover the midriff when standing at attention.
 - **Footwear:** Cheerleaders must wear snug-fitting athletic shoes with non-slip soles to ensure secure footing during stunts, reducing the risk of ankle injuries.
 - **Hair and Accessories:** Hair must be pulled back securely, with only soft, non-metal hair ties. No large clips or pins are allowed.
 - **Nail and Jewelry Guidelines:** Fingernails must be kept short, and all jewelry, including earrings, necklaces, and bracelets, is strictly prohibited to prevent injuries.
 - **Supportive Gear:** Any braces or supports must be unaltered from their original design or padded appropriately if altered, to ensure participant safety during stunts.

3. **Age-Appropriate Skill Levels:** Stunts will be strictly limited by grade level, aligned with the [USA Cheer Youth Rec Sideline Rules](#) to ensure that all activities are suitable. The USA Cheer Youth Rec Sideline Rules levels are shown below.

- Level 1 allowed for 3rd grade and under
- Level 2 allowed for 8th grade and under
- Level 3 not allowed for elementary schools

USA CHEER

USA Cheer is a sport organization that is recognized by the US Olympic and Paralympic committees. USA Cheer provides multiple trainings that are compliant with these organizations and cover a variety of topics, ages, and rules for elementary and middle school levels.

For more information on the USA Cheer Sideline Guidelines please visit their website:
<https://usacheer.org/safety/cheerleading-rules>

USA Cheer Safety & Risk Management Course

- Cost: \$90 per adult
- Length of Certification: 4 years
- Certifications can be verified on the USA Cheer website. This is an extra layer of safety and ensures compliance of participants.
- For more information regarding the USA Cheer Safety & Risk Management Course, please visit their website:
<https://usacheer.org/safety/usa-cheer-safety-risk-management>

Continue to next page for USA cheer youth rec sideline rules.

USA CHEER YOUTH REC SIDELINE RULES

Skills not specifically allowed in the rules grid are prohibited. Skills from any lower level are allowed at the higher level.

Category	Level 1 (10 and under*)	Level 2 (14 and under*)	Level 3 (18 and under*)
Jumps	All jumps and jump combinations allowed.	All jumps and connections to tumbling allowed.	All jumps and connections to tumbling allowed.
Tumbling	Forward and backward rolls Forward and backward walkovers Roundoffs Cartwheels (series cartwheels allowed)	Non-twisting standing handsprings and standing back tucks allowed. No series or connected airborne tumbling and no twisting airborne skills.	Series tumbling allowed. No twisting airborne skills.
Stunts	No inversions (the head can never be below the hips).	No inversions (the head can never be below the hips).	No inversions (the head can never be below the hips).
	No release stunt transitions other than a reload from a cradle position.	No release stunt transitions other than a reload from a cradle position.	No release stunt transitions other than a reload from a cradle position.
	A spotter is required for all stunts.	A spotter is required for all stunts.	A spotter is required for all prep-level and above stunts.
	No spinning/twisting.	Half twist loading allowed. Full twist to a loading position allowed.	Full twist from a loading position to double base prep and double base extension allowed.
	Allow all skills prep level and below. A standing stunt at prep level must be double based and standing on both feet.	Double base extensions allowed. Liberties and liberty hitches at prep level allowed.	Extended Liberty/Hitch allowed. Single base extensions allowed.
Dismounts	No spinning/twisting No released dismounts (bump down, regrab hands, use a post and pop down, etc.)	Non-twisting cradles and pop downs allowed.	Full-twisting cradles and non-twisting pop downs allowed.
Pyramids	Follow stunt rules.	Follow stunt rules.	Follow stunt rules. If two connected stunts are extended, the connection must be hand to hand/arm. Twisting while connected is not allowed.
Baskets	Not allowed.	Not allowed.	Pencil/Timer and Toe Touch only. No twists.

* USA Cheer recognizes that there are different age brackets for each organization based on what works best for their teams. The age recommendations provided for Levels 1, 2, and 3 are recommendations and can be modified to best fit an organization. All athletes on a team are subject to the rules for that level, regardless of age. For example, a 10-year-old on a "14 and under" team may perform back handsprings. Regardless of the upper age in the group, coaches should always be mindful of the ability, maturity, and preparedness level of each individual and what skills they are performing.