

# APPENDIX H

## A PARENT'S GUIDE TO HIGH SCHOOL CHEERLEADING SAFETY

### 1. AACCA Safety Certified

Is our coach AACCA certified through American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators safety course and has our school conducted the appropriate background checks?

The American Association of Cheerleading Coaches and Administrators is the largest not-for-profit educational organization for cheerleading coaches. AACCA operates as an independent organization since its founding by Varsity Spirit Corporation. AACCA certification features safety awareness training with a safety test administered at the end of the training session. For more information, visit [www.aacca.org](http://www.aacca.org).

### 2. Adherence to Safety Standards

Does our coach adhere to AACCA practice and performance guidelines? AACCA practice guidelines require direct supervision by a coach with practices held in a location suitable for the activities of cheerleaders (i.e., use of appropriate mats, away from excessive noise and distractions, etc.)

### 3. Proper Spotting & Skill Progressions

Does our coach ensure that performance skills are taught in the proper sequence using skills progression training, with an emphasis on training all squad members in proper spotting methods? Skills progression training ensures that cheerleaders build upon mastered tech-

nique when learning more difficult and advanced stunts or tumbling, i.e. cartwheel to round-off to back-hand spring. Spotters are responsible for assisting or catching the top person in a stunt with a priority to protect the head, neck, and shoulders of the top person coming off of a stunt.

### 4. Balanced Priorities

Does my child's coach properly balance practice time between athletic training and spirit leadership instruction? Cheerleading is an activity that builds self confidence, leadership and communication skills and involves more than stunts and tumbling. Safety begins with leadership. Instilling these qualities in cheerleaders helps prevent accidents when all squad members hold safety as a priority. The stunts and tumbling involved in cheerleading should aid the cheerleader in generating excitement and participation by the fans. Performing difficult stunts only for the sake of athleticism should be avoided at games and reserved for competition venues with professional spotters and mats.

### 5. Emergency Medical Plan

Does our squad have an emergency plan in place? A comprehensive emergency plan is necessary to provide a quick and effective response to an emergency situation with specific duties assigned to all responders. Sample emergency plans can be found at [www.varsity.com/safety](http://www.varsity.com/safety).