

ATB ATHLETICS ALL-STARS

"Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success."

- Henry Ford -

ATB ATHLETICS MISSION STATEMENT:

- ★ To build self-confidence through fitness and fun and to raise the child's level of self-esteem.
- ★ To teach the sport of cheerleading in a safe, nurturing environment.
- ★ To redefine the typical definition of winning in our competitive culture. This means placing value on effort, personal performance, self-improvement, and skill mastery, all of which are within the control of each individual.
- ★ To teach the principles of TEAM (Together Everyone Achieves More).
- ★ To teach a high standard of morals and values in the gym and to carry those standards into life lessons as well. (*"We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future."* – Franklin Delano Roosevelt)

Dear Athlete and Parent,

Welcome! Thank you very much for your interest in ATB ATHLETICS. We are extremely excited and looking forward to another awesome year.

Please be assured that the ATB ATHLETICS staff has been dedicated to building a strong program based on a solid foundation. We believe strongly in faith and family and the moral fabric of our society. Our personal character and integrity will automatically permeate the ATB ATHLETICS program. We will encourage our athletes to pray and be thankful for their individual gifts and to pray for their team as a whole and uplift their teammates.

Our goals at ATB ATHLETICS are manifold, but our main focus is to positively impact young people physically, mentally/emotionally, and spiritually. Some of the physical attributes that you will find developing in the athlete will be: strength, flexibility, kinesthetic awareness, muscular control, muscular endurance, coordination, timing, explosive power, agility, and grace. Some of the mental/emotional attributes that we hope to develop are: positive self-image, self-motivation, tenacity, patience, goal setting, courage, and commitment. Some of the spiritual attributes that we hope to develop are: humility, forgiveness, sacrifice, compassion, and caring.

We want your continuing impressions with ATB ATHLETICS to be even better than your first impression, so we promise to always strive to improve ourselves as individuals and the ATB ATHLETICS program as a whole. We will be honest about and learn from our mistakes, fair in our dealings, humble in our spirit, proud in our accomplishments, consistent in our purpose, and maintain our character of integrity at all times.

Thank You and God Bless You
Calvin Parker, Director

"Success is a journey, not a destination." – Ralph Arbitelle –

COMMUNICATION

Communication is key to any organized, successful program. ATB ATHLETICS will do its very best to keep you informed in a timely manner about all matters relating to your child and the program. **Information that is important will be communicated primarily through e-mail so please check your e-mail on a daily basis.** Other forms of communication may be through the front desk, through a team parent on "GroupMe," on the ATB ATHLETICS website (www.abovethebargym.com), or through parent meetings at the gym. It is your responsibility to keep up with all pertinent information.

UNIFORMS AND PRACTICE WEAR

UNIFORMS

The ATB ATHLETICS uniform was carefully selected to represent best the ATB ATHLETICS program. Modesty, simplicity, sharpness, and uniqueness were all considered when choosing the right uniform. Both the ATB ATHLETICS style and colors are unique to the Houston area. We purposely chose uniforms that were different from any other local team. *"It's not the glitz of the uniform that matters, but the spirit that shines within." – Anonymous Cheerleader*

The ATB ATHLETICS uniform will consist of a top, bloomers, hairbow, cheer shoes, warm-up suit, and bag. Full payment is due for each on the designated dates. This money must be collected before the ATB ATHLETICS orders can be turned in. All uniform costs and any additional items purchased are non-refundable.

Parents are required to attend the uniform fitting and sign a confirmation of your child's order. Since the competition season does not begin until November or December, please make allowances for any anticipated growth of your child. ATB ATHLETICS will not be responsible for uniforms that do not fit upon arrival.

Lost or damaged items throughout the cheer season are the financial responsibility of the athlete and must be immediately replaced.

Hairstyle and appropriate make-up will be addressed prior to the beginning of the competition season. Only make-up designated by ATB ATHLETICS should be worn and applied according to the standards set by ATB ATHLETICS. The make-up can be purchased through the gym.

PRACTICE WEAR

ATB ATHLETICS requires two practice shirts and two practice shorts/capris to be worn at each and every practice. Biker shorts must be worn under the shorts if deemed not an appropriate length. Payment in full must be collected prior to the ordering of these outfits in May. If any part of the practice uniform is lost, a replacement must be purchased immediately. No jewelry may be worn at any practice (including earrings and belly rings). Please keep fingernails at a short length for safety reasons.

RULES AND POLICIES

PRACTICE ATTENDANCE

Cheerleading is a team sport; therefore, practices are greatly hindered when athletes are absent. Practices are essential to the development of the cheerleader and to the team as a whole, so every practice is considered important. It is your obligation to attend all practices. It is the responsibility of each cheerleader to learn any new material or gain information given out when missing any practice. There are no make-ups for missed practices. All absences must have a written excuse. Please use the formal excuse form available on the ATB ATHLETICS website. (*"There are only two options regarding commitment. You're either in or out. There's no such thing as in-between."* – Pat Riley)

Unexcused absences are exactly that: unexcused! During the months of September through March, **no more than 1** unexcused absence is acceptable. You may be suspended or asked to leave the team altogether if you have excessive absences. This absence policy will be strictly enforced:

EXCUSED	UNEXCUSED
Family Event: Birth, Wedding, Death	Family Celebrations
Contagious Illness	Non-contagious illness or injury (you can still watch)
School cheerleading functions	School activities/dances
Mandatory grade related activities	Homework/studying for tests (plan appropriately)
Pre-approved absences (request form)	Other activities/birthday parties

Tardiness is a sign of disrespect to your teammates, coaches and the ATB ATHLETICS program. Please make every effort to ensure that you will be to practice on time. If you are going to be late, you must call the front office at 281-672-7198 and let the coaching staff know. Leaving practice early can also be very disruptive to the team practice. Please arrange your schedules to arrive and leave on time. Excessive tardiness may also result in suspension or removal from the team.

There may be, at the discretion of the coaches, extra practices called before a competition. These are to be treated as any other practice and are **absolutely mandatory**. ATB ATHLETICS may add or cancel practices at any time at the coaches' discretion. Some teams may practice more than others due to injuries or choreography changes. There will be no extra charges for extra practices.

PRACTICE CONDUCT

- ★ Maintain an aggressive, competitive, and positive attitude and give your best effort at every practice. (*"Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't – you're right."* – Henry Ford)
- ★ Treat yourself and other cheerleaders with respect and dignity, displaying positive sportsmanship at all times.
- ★ Every member of the team is vital to its success, and no one member is more important than another. Egos do not and cannot play any part in practices. (*"Strength lies in differences, not in similarities"* – Stephen Covey)
- ★ All coaching is to be done by coaching staff. Please refrain from coaching other teammates unless specifically asked to do so.
- ★ We want the gym to be a happy, motivating, and uplifting place to be. There is no place in our gym for rude or belittling comments, display of anger or disgust, and talking back to coaches or other adults (including eye rolling).

- ★ There is no room for crying and giving up because you have given in to your frustrations and fears. (*"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." – Thomas Edison*)
- ★ Absolutely no profanity allowed, including inappropriate gestures.
- ★ No talking during practice. Athletes are here to work and when you are talking, goals are being impeded. Time is precious.
- ★ Concentrate and focus on what you are trying to accomplish during practice. "Fooling around" is an accident waiting to happen. You will be dismissed from practice for playing around.
- ★ Show respect for your safety and to the wishes of your coaches by staying off the equipment without specific permission and supervision of a coach.
- ★ Be honest. Cheating in practice is the ugliest form of disrespect. It shows disrespect to your coaches, to your parents, and most importantly, to yourself. If you cannot or will not complete an assignment, be honest about it.
- ★ Tell your coach when your body is telling you to stop or slow down. This shows respect for yourself and for the coach and protects your body from injury.
- ★ You should not attempt cheerleading skills if you are on any medication that causes drowsiness, imbalance, weakness, lightheadedness, etc. It is potentially dangerous to perform under these conditions. Inform your coach of your situation.
- ★ ATB ATHLETICS prides itself on being a tobacco, alcohol, and drug-free program. Any team member coming to practice under the influence will be immediately dismissed from the program.
- ★ No food or drink is allowed in the gym. No soda may be consumed during practice. Gum is also not allowed during practice.
- ★ If an athlete is going to be late or absent, she must call the gym before the beginning of practice.
- ★ Cell phones will not be permitted in the gym. You may only make or receive a phone call in the case of an emergency.
- ★ Ask permission to leave the gym. This applies to leaving practice early, going to the restroom, or calling home. Your coach should always know where you are at all times.
- ★ Always wait inside the facility for your ride home. Athletes are not to wait outside for pick-up following practice.

PARENT VIEWING OF PRACTICES

- ★ Parent viewing of practices is a privilege. Please do not distract the athletes in any way. Parents are not permitted to yell at their child through the windows. Please leave all instruction to the coaching staff. The staff reserves the right to close practices at any time.
- ★ Please keep noise in the lobby and upper viewing area to a minimum. All siblings of athletes in practice are to be supervised by their parents at all times.
- ★ There is a NO TOLERANCE policy for gossip in the lobby/upper viewing area.

COMPETITION ATTENDANCE

Attendance at all ATB ATHLETICS competitions is **mandatory**. A tentative competition schedule will be available in June and will be finalized in August. It is your responsibility to make arrangements with your schedule to attend every competition.

It is the parents' responsibility to get their cheerleader to and from competitions. Please show up on time ready to go (fully dressed, no jewelry, no fingernail polish, make-up and hair done). Be sure to go to the designated meeting area the day of the competition. Not showing up on time places unnecessary stress on your child, your child's squad, and their coaches.

No one is allowed to leave the competition early unless there are unusual pre-approved circumstances. All the teams will stay and support each other. This shows unity with our teammates.

All cheerleaders must stay until awards are presented (in full uniform), therefore, please be prepared to stay for the entire day.

COMPETITION CONDUCT

- ★ Any display of insubordination to the coaching staff will not be tolerated. Be respectful to yourself, your teammates, and your coaches.
- ★ Inappropriate behavior, profanity, or lewd conduct is unacceptable.
- ★ Placing blame of a bad performance or missed stunt on any teammate or stunt group will not be tolerated. The team as a whole succeeds together and fails together. (*“Success is never final. Failure is never fatal. Courage is what counts.” – Sir Winston Churchill*)
- ★ Unsportsmanlike behavior or disrespect to another team is inappropriate.
- ★ Tobacco, alcohol, or illegal substance is strictly forbidden at all competitions and will result in dismissal from the ATB ATHLETICS program.
- ★ An 11:00 p.m. curfew must be enforced at out-of-town competitions so that every athlete is well rested for competition the next day.
- ★ Remember at all times you are representing ATB ATHLETICS and we will hold our athletes to a higher standard. (*“Reputation is what people think you are. Character is who you really are. Take care of your character and your reputation will take of itself.” – Unknown*)

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND CODE OF CONDUCT

ATB ATHLETICS is aware that parents play a valuable role in this program. Your interest, encouragement, cooperation, involvement, and support are vital to its success. Parents also play a huge role in the development of successful cheerleaders. Your role is every bit as important as that of the athlete or of the coaches. It is also every bit as difficult. That is why we welcome your presence at every practice, at every team function, at booster club meetings, and at every competition. We want your support because we want your child to succeed. Here is what you can do to help your child achieve her dreams.

On the physical side, it is your job to ensure that your young athlete gets enough rest, gets enough of the healthy kinds of food and drink, gets to and from the gym on time, and has the proper clothing and equipment.

The emotional side is just as important. It is your role to provide unconditional love, support, and encouragement. Your love is not based on whether she makes her back handspring in practice. Your support is not dependent on an outstanding score in competition. Your encouragement is not conditioned on her somehow making you look good by being the best on the team, in the state, in the region, or in the nation.

It is through the physical and emotional support described above that you show your respect for your cheerleader and the effort she is putting into her sport. Any more or any less does a disservice to your child and will limit her opportunity for success.

The responsibilities and code of conduct as a competitive cheerleading parent are as follows:

- ★ Support your child and her coaches throughout the season.
- ★ Uphold a positive attitude regarding your child, her teammates, the coaches, and the program. There is a no tolerance policy for gossip at any time – the athlete will be dismissed immediately. If you have questions or concerns, please direct them to the coaches, not other parents. (*“To respond is positive; to react is negative.” – Zig Ziglar*)
- ★ You are to contact the coaches regarding **your child** only. Please do not come to us about any other child other than your own.

- ★ Parent viewing of practices is a privilege. Do not interrupt practices to speak to your child or the coach or distract other athletes in any way. Coaches are available before or after practice – not during practice.
- ★ Please leave all instruction to the coaching staff.
- ★ Please keep noise in the lobby to a minimum. All siblings of athletes in practice are to be supervised by their parents at all times.
- ★ Call in absences due to unforeseen illness or family emergency, and understand that all practices are mandatory and the only accepted absences are due to illness, family emergency, or school cheerleading commitment.
- ★ Be responsible for transportation to get your child to and from practices, competitions, and special events.
- ★ Please do not use cheerleading as a disciplinary tool against your child. While this may seem to be a fair method to punish your child, it will only serve to punish the entire team in which your child participates.
- ★ Understand that skill selection, training techniques, competitive level, and all other similar matters are the responsibility of the coach, not the parent. Please do not interfere with the coaching staff.
- ★ You have the responsibility to accept the decisions of the coach regarding routines, competitions, practices, camps, apparel, etc.
- ★ Understand that additional practices may need to be called, sometimes with only 24-hours notice (in time for performance). Effort to provide as much advanced notice as possible will be made.
- ★ You give permission to ATB ATHLETICS to use your child's picture for promotional and advertising purposes (please let us know if otherwise).
- ★ You give permission to ATB ATHLETICS to provide your address, phone numbers, and e-mail contact information to other team members within the program.
- ★ You have the responsibility to represent ATB ATHLETICS at competitions and events with good sportsmanship.
- ★ No parent is allowed in the warm-up area or on the competition floor at any time unless they have been given a designated parent pass.
- ★ Do not approach competition judges or officials at any events. Understand that competition judging is subjective and that you may not agree with the outcome of the judging scores.
- ★ Understand that tuition must be kept current in order to participate in the program. An athlete is subject to removal from the program if tuition is more than one month late (Please make an appointment with the Director if you are having financial difficulty.)
- ★ Understand that tuition cannot be prorated for missed practices.
- ★ Understand that all competition fees are due according to the established schedules (no exceptions please). An athlete is subject to removal from the program if fees are more than one month late.
- ★ Understand that uniforms must be paid in full prior to ordering.
- ★ Understand that being on team is a privilege not a right.
- ★ Make sure that you have the time, finances, and commitment necessary for an entire season to be a member of the ATB ATHLETICS program.
- ★ Please realize that cheerleading is a team sport. If you allow your child to quit before the season ends, it affects the entire team and is a disservice to your child and his/her teammates and coaches.
- ★ Sign, enforce, and abide by all forms, releases, and regulations.

FINANCIAL COMMITMENT

Competitive cheerleading is one of the most rewarding sports. That is why ATB ATHLETICS makes every effort to ensure that you as a parent understand this financial commitment you are making.

Please see the Financial Commitment sheets for pricing for All-Star, Prep, and Show Teams.

Other expenses that will incur during competition season are travel costs, including but not limited to gas, meals, hotel accommodations, parking fees, and spectator fees. It may be necessary to travel outside of the greater Houston area and/or state for regional and national competitions. This may result in a possible Friday arrival and/or Monday departure. Hotel accommodations will be the sole responsibility of the parent. ATB ATHLETICS will coordinate blocks of hotel rooms for any out-of-town competitions but will not reserve them. It is the parents' responsibility to reserve the rooms. It is required that all cheerleaders stay in the determined hotel unless unusual circumstances prohibit otherwise. It is logistically much easier to coordinate and communicate with everyone when we all stay in the same hotel. Please inform the Director if you have an unusual exception to this rule.

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES

We are fully aware of the high cost of competitive cheerleading. We will always be as fair as possible in our tuition and fees without jeopardizing the quality of the program. Even so, some families may still struggle with the financial commitment of a cheerleading program.

To offset these expenses, all cheerleaders and their parents can participate in fundraising projects throughout the year if they wish to benefit from them. The money raised will be used to fund competition expenses during the year and will be credited directly to each individual's account.

Since we are very careful to protect the ATB ATHLETICS name, all fundraising must be approved by ATB ATHLETICS. This includes sponsorships of individual cheerleaders. We have official sponsorship forms available for those purposes. All fundraising accounting must be maintained by ATB ATHLETICS. We are very proud of our organization and we do not want anything detrimental to ruin our reputation. We will do everything possible to help any fundraising activity, but we ask that you honor the guidelines.

PRIVATE INSTRUCTION

We value every minute of workout time just as you do and strive to make the most of each practice. Sometimes, however, an athlete may be in need of individual attention. Cheerleaders may request private class instruction with any of our coaches. Please note that our instructors are contracted directly by you, the customer, for private classes. You may schedule a private lesson through ATB Athletics.

Private instruction fees are \$60 per hour, except with Coach Calvin who charges \$70 per hour. Students with accounts past due will not be permitted to take private lessons until all accounts are up to date. Please arrive 15 minutes early to your scheduled private class to stretch, warm up, and condition on your own, as we want to minimize injury. Otherwise you will lose precious private instruction on the above.

CAMPS

There will be a mandatory summer choreography training camp the second week in August (3rd through the 11th) in which your attendance is required. Please do not book any vacations during this time. Each squad's routine and choreography will be taught at camp.