

Avon Indiana Sports | Avon Youth Sports (AYS) **CHEER IS CHANGING THE ATMOSPHERE!**



There is something to be said when we have someone in our corner, cheering for us, and knowing we are supported. The Avon Youth Sports Cheer program brings true team spirit to the game and the atmosphere instantly changes.

The 2023 AYS All-Star Cheer team cheered for a few of the Jr. Orioles football games last season. Sarah Osmundsen, AYS Rec. Cheer Commissioner and AYS Jr. Orioles Travel Cheer Commissioner, Reva Mackey recalled that the “cheerleaders really added to the game-day experience last year.” Mackey shared that this was “just what the football team needed in closing the gap.” Reva was previously the 2023 All-Star Cheer Coach. The All-Star program will be transitioning into a new travel cheer offering, of which she will be the 2024 Commissioner of.

It became apparent following the Fall 2023 All-Star season that there was a need for a more advanced cheer offering.

AYS leadership also recognized this need, and we will be offering Jr. Orioles Cheer this Fall for 4th – 8th graders. Cheerleaders will have an opportunity to cheer for the Jr. Orioles Travel Football team in various locations, as travel is required. Registration to try-out will be available through May 7th at avonindiana.gov/sports. There will be a workshop on May 8th and cheer try-outs will be on May 10th. Anyone who doesn't make the Jr. Orioles Cheer Team is invited to participate in Fall AYS Rec. Cheer to continue developing their skills.

One of the goals of AYS Cheer leadership is to have “vertical alignment” starting with the youth program all the way up to High School Cheer. AYS Cheer Commissioner, Sarah Osmundsen's goal is to have a cohesive cheer program like “interlocking chains.” She is excited to work on the first building block, which is Rec. Cheer, as these programs “prepare them for Middle School or High School Cheer.”



One of the ways she plans to do this is by offering AYS cheerleaders more training through a Universal Cheerleaders Association (UCA) Youth Day Camp.

Participants will learn stunting, sideline cheers and chants, jumping technique, and other game day material from USA Cheer certified instructors who are recommended from the nation's top college programs! Camp registration is also open to cheer coaches, which will help equip them to be the best coach they can be. Camp will be offered to Avon and surrounding communities and is scheduled for June 27th and 28th. This is currently the only youth cheer camp of its kind scheduled to take place in Hendricks County this year.

Another goal of AYS Cheer is to help fill in the gaps. While our cheer opportunities for the older age groups have some overlap, they are not in competition with school cheer. It offers cheerleaders who don't make the school team an opportunity to still cheer and be involved.

When Reva Mackey, Jr. Orioles Cheer Commissioner, was asked what she hopes her cheerleaders walk away from the program with, she said "character development, strong fundamentals, and the ability to be coachable and receive feedback." Her goal as a coach is to build her cheerleaders up. Mackey said that cheerleading "gave her confidence and the ability to speak up, even in the classroom."

Sarah Osmundsen, AYS Rec. Cheer Commissioner, added that cheer is a "good way to meet people they might not otherwise meet." It gives them an opportunity to step out and become a leader.



Writer/Amanda Maxwell
Photographer/Jake Rytlewski

Their goal is to build the cheerleaders' confidence and give them reinforcement and remind them that they've got this!

When asked what they would say to someone who has never cheered before, but is considering signing up, Mackey said, "You don't know what you like until you try it." Osmundsen added, "Don't let the costs prohibit you from participating if the interest is there. We are currently looking at ways to fundraise to help offset costs." Additionally, AYS offers a scholarship program for qualifying participants that helps with program registration costs. More information about the Athletic Scholarships for Kids (ASK) program can be found by visiting avonindiana.gov/sports and clicking on "Scholarships."

Currently, registration is available for Fall Cheer for grades Kindergarten through 8th grade (grade level is based on the 2024-2025 school year). We are also accepting volunteer coach applications for the Fall Rec. Cheer program. You can register by logging into your AYS account, and then clicking on the "Volunteer" tab. The new Jr. Orioles Cheer Travel Team tryout registration is also available for 4th – 8th grade students (grade level is based on the 2024-2025 school year), and don't forget about the UCA Youth Cheer Day Camp coming up in June!

What's next on the horizon for the AYS Cheer program? Even more opportunities! We are currently working on a new Winter Basketball Cheer program and anticipate offering it to 4th- 8th graders with registration opening in early Fall!

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