

STONEY CREEK JUNIOR COUGARS FOOTBALL, CHEER & LACROSSE



2026 HANDBOOK

Email: stoneycougars@gmail.com
www.stoneycougars.com

NOTICE: INFORMATION SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Although we strive to provide the best and most up-to-date information in this handbook, the information contained herein is subject to change without notice.



Our Mission

Our mission is to develop youth through the sports of football, cheerleading, and lacrosse by promoting physical fitness, mental growth, and strong moral character. We strive to instill the values of teamwork, fair play, and good sportsmanship while providing a safe, positive, and supportive environment. The welfare and safety of our athletes will always remain our highest priority.

A SUCCESSFUL SEASON

A successful SCJC season is one in which our athletes have fun, improve their skills and look forward to returning to play again next year, or graduate ready and confident to take on the next level.



Introduction

Welcome to the Stoney Creek Junior Cougars family, also known as SCJC. This organization was formed in 2016 by local youth football and cheer enthusiasts. Our primary focus is to develop a competitive spirit to succeed with fun for all participants, while never compromising the welfare and safety of our children. We have been serving the youth of our community for over 10 years and are a not-for-profit organization. We hope your family finds being a part of the SCJC family is enjoyable, rewarding, and exciting.

As with any organization, there are rules and policies that must be adhered to in order to maintain a safe environment for all participants and ensure efficient functioning of our activities. This handbook provides information about our mission, requirements, rules, and policies that govern participation as part of the SCJC family. Please read this handbook carefully and feel free to contact any Board member (see Appendix 'A') or your athlete's team Head Coach or Team Moms with any questions. Throughout this handbook, the word "athlete" is used to represent a football, cheerleading or lacrosse participant. Remember that we are a youth sports organization, we put kids first.

Organization Structure

The Stoney Creek Junior Cougars (SCJC) are certified by the Michigan Corporation and Securities Commission as a Not-for-Profit Corporation, governed by our Bylaws, and managed by the volunteer SCJC Executive Board Members that oversee the operations of the organization. This dedicated group of volunteers helps ensure the success of the organization and a great experience for our families. Please see **Appendix 'A'** for a listing of Board positions and contact information.

Volunteer Driven

We are a completely volunteer-driven organization made up of dedicated individuals who work hard to ensure every participant has a fun and fulfilling experience. Many of our volunteers work full-time and have numerous commitments, yet they recognize the importance of helping SCJC continue to support and develop our youth athletes.

Your involvement helps your child build a sense of community, learn good sportsmanship, and experience the satisfaction of achieving goals as part of a team. When your child participates in the SCJC organization, the entire family becomes part of our community.

Family involvement is essential and greatly enhances each child's experience. Volunteering is a requirement and is one of the key reasons our organization continues to be strong and successful..

Communications

TeamSnap emails and chats are our primary methods of communication with families. Important information such as practice schedules, game times, weather delays, and other updates will be shared through TeamSnap.

Please make sure the email address entered in TeamSnap is accurate and checked regularly. Additional family members can be invited by the primary contact through TeamSnap so everyone stays informed and receives all important updates.

Our website and Facebook page are also great sources for the latest news and information regarding our organization.



PLAYER ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

SCJC teams for young athletes K-8th grade. Football roster teams for 3rd-6th grade (2nd grade with SCJC Approval.) Cheer roster teams for K-6th grade. Lacrosse roster teams for 1st-8th grade.

REGISTRATION, FEES & OTHER COSTS

SCJC has a formal registration process for both returning players as well as for new athletes desiring to join our organization.

Registration Fee

SCJC has a simplified registration fee structure (see chart below). The registration fee covers equipment, field rental, stadium costs, referee costs, and other miscellaneous operating expenses (each football and lacrosse jersey is customized with the player's last name). All fees must be paid before any equipment is issued or before a player can participate in any SCJC activities.

JV & Freshman Football	JV & Freshman Cheer	Mascot Cheer	3rd-8th Lacrosse	1st & 2nd Lacrosse
\$550	\$425	\$385	\$375	\$300



Returning Player Registration (Football & Cheer Only)

Registration for returning families will open the first weekend of February at 9am. Online registration for returning players will remain open for 1 week prior to open registration for new families. All registration forms and payment will be made ONLINE.

Open/New Player Registration

New player registration will open the third weekend of February at 9am. All registration forms and payment will be made ONLINE. Open registration spots are on a first come first serve basis. Once teams are filled, a waitlist registration will open and we encourage families to add their athlete's name and information to our waitlist. Additional teams could be formed or spots could be opened for athletes on the waitlist.

Refund Policy

- Cancellations made **before May 1** will receive a full refund minus a **\$25 processing fee**.
- Cancellations made **before June 1** will receive a full refund minus a **\$125 fee**.
- Cancellations made **on or after June 1** are **non-refundable**.
- **Third-party insurance is non-refundable under all circumstances.**

Incidental Costs

During the course of the season, there are other additional incidental costs (some optional) to participants for various items. The following are estimated costs with an approximate date when the cost could be incurred.

- Team picture - \$15 to \$50 (August/September)
- Cheer Warmup (jacket/pants. Cost TBD)
- Bow (If you have not purchased previously)- \$15
- Spirit Wear- team t-shirts, yard signs - At your discretion
- Mini Cheer - \$5 to \$10 per ticket (September/October)
- Playoff and Super Bowl Tickets - \$3 to \$5 per ticket (October/November)
- Mega Cheer - \$5 to \$10 per ticket (November)



Football & Cheer EQUIPMENT

SCJC will issue each player their basic equipment (see Figure 4). Players must wear the SCJC equipment at each practice and or game. Each SCJC family will be notified prior to the start of the practice season of where and when to pick-up their equipment. Each player is responsible for the care and return of all SCJC equipment issued to them. At the end of the season each player will be notified as to when and where to return their equipment.

Equipment Usage Expectations and Deposit

Every parent or guardian is required to submit a **deposit check** before equipment or uniforms will be issued:

- **\$250 deposit** for football equipment
- **\$125 deposit** for cheer uniforms/equipment

This deposit helps protect the **Stoney Creek Junior Cougars (SCJC)** program from unnecessary expenses related to **unreturned or damaged equipment**. Please note that **normal wear and tear will not be considered damage**.

Once the deposit check is submitted, your child will receive their equipment or uniform. The check will be **securely stored and held on file** throughout the season.

At the end of the season, when all equipment or uniforms are returned in satisfactory condition, **your deposit check will be shredded**, unless you request it to be returned to you.

Please be assured that all deposit checks will be **handled with the highest level of care and security** and **will never be deposited without prior notification**.

Important:

Equipment or uniforms **will NOT be issued without the required deposit check — NO EXCEPTIONS.**

SCJC will only deposit checks if:

- Equipment or uniforms are **not returned**, or
- Equipment or uniforms are **returned in unsatisfactory condition**.

**Equipment Loss/Damage Replacement Fee**

It is the responsibility of each player to return the SCJC equipment that has been issued to them, in good condition except normal wear and tear. For any equipment that is not returned, is returned in poor condition, or is lost, the player will be assessed an Equipment Loss/Damage/Altered Replacement Fee according to the fee schedule below.

Item	Equipment Replacement Fee (Loss/Damage/Altered)
Football Player Equipment	
Helmet	\$375
Chin Strap	\$25
Shoulder Pads	\$100
Practice Pants	\$45
Practice Jersey	\$30
Game Pants	\$45
Game Jersey	Player Keeps
Game Socks	Player Keeps
Cheerleader Equipment	
Skirt/Vest Set	\$180

Unauthorized alterations of any kind to any SCJC provided equipment is strictly prohibited and may result in the player not being able to participate or a \$150 fee assessed to the family.

Care of Uniforms

It is important that all players take good care of their equipment. Football game uniforms **MUST** be clean for each game. **DO NOT USE BLEACH!** All possible care should be taken to prevent the colors from bleeding. We suggest soaking for a period before washing in lukewarm water with mild detergent, NOT a strong detergent. Helmet, chin strap, ear pads, shoulder pads and pants should all be wiped down with a mild cleaner. Pads should never be submerged in water. Helmets should contain no stickers or permanent markings. Cheerleader uniforms are to be washed in cold water and hung-up to dry. At the end of the season, all equipment provided to the players must be cleaned and returned in good condition.

Player Provided Items

There are a few personal items (see lists below) that are the responsibility of each player to provide for themselves. These items are not included in the registration fee and are the responsibility of each player's family to purchase.

Football Player Provided Items List

The following is the list of personal items that are the responsibility of each football player to provide for themselves:

- Football cleats. Metal spikes are prohibited.
- Game socks (included in your registration fee. Extra pairs can be purchased by the family)
- Athletic supporter and cup
- Mouthguards



- If your player wears glasses or special orthodontic devices, special facemasks to provide additional protection can be purchased. SCJC recommends the Nike and or Oakley facemasks for our SpeedFlex helmets. Tinted facemasks are not allowed by the NYFL.

Cheerleading Provided Items List

The following is a list personal items that are the responsibility of each cheerleader to provide for themselves:

- Clean white leather cheer shoes and laces (no logos)
- Headband (Navy)
- Clear rain poncho or raincoat
- Duffel bag to carry equipment
- Water bottle with the players name on it (for both practices and games)
- White socks, navy briefs, navy gloves, navy wind suit, turtleneck bodysuit, and hair ties (your team coach will provide more information to maintain uniformity for the team).

PRACTICES & SCHEDULE

It is important to realize there is a big difference between backyard football/flag football and playing in a competitive tackle football league. In order to assure that your child will be in a position to safely participate, it is imperative that they do not miss more than 1 practice a week IF participating in an additional competitive sport program. Families are required to communicate the day that their athlete will not be at SCJC practice due to any additional competitive sport practices.

Additionally, when planning your vacations, please be aware of practice start dates as it is very difficult for the player to make-up what they miss during the practices.

Absenteeism - Football

It is very important in any team sports for players to be at all practices for their team to be successful and play safely. Players or parents must advise their team head coach, prior to practice, of any absences due to illness or other personal activity. If a player misses two or more practices in one week, they will be ineligible to play in that week's game. Playing status will always be at coach's discretion whether based on attendance, effort during the week's practice and/or player safety.



Cheer Playing Time and Attendance Policy

Attendance is crucial to the success of our cheer teams. When one girl misses, her entire stunt group is unable to practice. The Stoney Creek Junior Cougars Cheer team is a Competitive Cheer Organization; similar to how our football players practice to compete in games our cheerleaders practice to compete at two cheer competitions held by our league. It is highly recommended to evaluate if your athlete and family are able to commit to the policy below.

- The attendance policy goes into effect the week after camp.
- Missing three practices will result in sitting out the first half of the following football game (still must be present and dressed for the full game to support cheer teammates)
- Missing six practices will result in sitting out for the entire following football game (still must be present and dressed for the full game to support cheer teammates)
- Exceptions will be made for athletes who provide a doctor's note if exceeding three absences. Please note, if an injury has occurred and competition is still a possibility, your athlete will be asked to sit and watch practices to observe and learn the material.
- Practices during the month of August will be 4 days a week until the start of school.
- Once school begins practices will be Monday and Wednesdays
- There will be a dress rehearsal prior to every competition
- Missing a football game counts as an absence.

Every player will cheer in the games and competition as seen fit by league rules (all cheerleaders participate in all games and rounds of competition). All players are expected to be at every practice and game.

Mascots are only required to cheer at home games. They are more than welcome to attend away games too if desired! However, they will be participating at their own discretion with the Freshman squad. Mascot coaches will not be present at away games.

*Playing another sport or participating in other activities during the current season is not an excused absence

Early Summer Skill-Camps

SCJC Cheer and Football holds a Summer Camp as part of our registration costs. Attendance at Summer Camp is not mandatory, but it is very important as it provides an excellent opportunity for new players to begin to learn some of the fundamentals and returning players to enhance existing skills and learn new skills. It is **ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR NEW PLAYERS!** It also allows players to meet their teammates and become acclimated with our practices. Summer Camp practices are 2 hours each evening scheduled and begin at 6pm on the nights scheduled. Further details about Summer Camp dates, locations, and times will be provided by TeamSnap.

Regular Season Practice Schedule

Regular season practices at the beginning of the NYFL League Year. Times and locations will be communicated to all our families on Cheer and Football by TeamSnap. Please plan for 2 hours each practice day for the entirety of the season. Daylight savings will alter our length of practices; time changes will be communicated by TeamSnap by your Head Coach.

There are no practices or games on Labor Day weekend (Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday).

Practice Location

Our summer practices and regular season practice are typically held on the practice fields at Hart or Stoney Creek High School; exact locations will be communicated by TeamSnap.



If there is a change to the practice schedule, you will be notified by your team's Head Coach via TeamSnap. We will do our best to provide as much advance notice of any schedule change.

In the event of bad weather, parents must promptly pick-up their player(s). In case of lightning, please pick-up your player(s) immediately.

PLEASE ALWAYS BE ON-TIME TO PICK UP YOUR PLAYER FROM PRACTICE.

Walking/Riding Waiver

No player will be allowed to walk/bike ride to and from our practices. If a player lives within walking/bike riding distance from our practice location and desires to walk/bike ride to and from practice, their parent or legal guardian must sign a walking/riding waiver form and return it to the SCJC Board.

GAMES

Games begin in late August, continuing through the first week of November and are played on either Saturday or Sunday afternoons. A complete schedule will be posted on TeamSnap when the NYFL league provides the schedule. This occurs approximately around the first or second week of August.

Play Time

Our football teams are the equivalent of other traveling sport teams in that while there is a minimum play requirement, playing time is earned based on performance. The object is to ensure every player has an opportunity to play and field a winning football team.

Banned Items at Games

There will be NO tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or use of any controlled substances (illegal drugs) permitted anywhere on the game premises. There will be NO weapons allowed on the game premises, with the exception of properly licensed uniformed officers or uniformed security guards. NO coolers, large bags, backpacks, cups (of any kind), wagons, etc are allowed in any school district stadium, with the exception of wagons or bags used by coaches, board members, or other team volunteers to transport items necessary for their teams.



Volunteer Requirements and Deposit Information

In order to make practices and games happen successfully, we rely heavily on the volunteer activities of our parents. Our volunteer requirements are set up on a per family basis and require a minimum of (4) four sessions per season. A session is defined as an entire game (freshman or JV) or cheer event. The board will be monitoring and asking for help throughout the year. In order to make this program run efficiently we need volunteers. SCJC will publish a list of volunteer opportunities as the season nears.

Note: These volunteer sessions may be completed by **any family member 16 years of age or older**.

- Please be prepared at equipment/uniform handout to leave your volunteer deposit of \$500.00. Your deposit check will be securely filed.
- If you are unable to complete the volunteer hours, you have the option to pay the \$500.00 at equipment handout.
- If you have not completed ALL volunteer sessions (four) by the last season game, your volunteer check will be deposited, but not without prior contact from a board member.
- If you complete all your volunteer hours then your check will be shredded unless otherwise requested.
- Director of Volunteers will keep track of all volunteer hours this season

Fundraisers

The registration costs that are charged for each child cover only a portion of the total cost to make the program run. These costs include but are not limited to: facility and field rentals, organizational insurance, league fees, competition fees, uniforms, equipment, gear for athletes (camp outfits/hoodies). Therefore, each family will have a fundraising obligation to raise. This is per family NOT per athlete.

We will be using the "Get Moving Fundraising" online platform this year with incentives at individual, team and sport levels. This is currently used by our local elementary schools with great success. Our fundraising date window will be from the first day of summer camp through the pep rally for incentives, with additional time through October to reach your family's fundraising requirement.

PEP RALLY & TEAM BANQUET

Each start of the season, prior to the first scrimmage game, SCJC holds a Pep Rally event outside to pump us all up and help families get to know each other.

A formal banquet is held at the conclusion of the season, typically prior to the Thanksgiving weekend, to celebrate the achievements of each team and the players. This is also our way of celebrating a great season with our families and our athletes. Tickets are generally in the \$40 to \$50 range with a cash bar.



SEVERE WEATHER SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS

Severe weather can and does strike at a moment's notice. Tornadoes, high winds, electrical storms, and other dangerous weather conditions are fast moving, can be wide-ranging and possibly life threatening. Severe weather conditions must be taken seriously and SCJC takes these conditions extremely seriously.

Lightning

Whenever lightning is sighted, ALL SCJC outdoor activities must be suspended immediately. All athletes will be rounded up and placed into Hart Middle School/Stoney High School until the weather clears or practice is canceled, and parents arrive for pickup.

Activities will only resume when lightning has left the area. If lightning has not ceased within fifteen (15) minutes, all games/activities will be called off. On the occasion that poor weather is in the forecast we ask that a family member or authorized caregiver be available for a prompt pickup if practices are canceled.



2026 SCJC Cougar Commitment

SCJC Parent Code of Conduct

As the parent or guardian of an SCJC athlete, I agree to support a positive and respectful sports environment by adhering to the following expectations:

1. Focus on Teamwork and Development

I will emphasize teamwork, effort, and skill development rather than solely focusing on winning. I understand that children participate in sports to have fun, compete, and learn valuable life skills.

2. Positive Role Modeling

I, along with my guests, will serve as positive role models by demonstrating good sportsmanship, respect, and courtesy toward all players, coaches, officials, and spectators at every game and practice.

3. Sportsmanlike Behavior

I and my guests will not engage in unsportsmanlike conduct toward any official, coach, or player. This includes, but is not limited to, booing, taunting, refusing to shake hands, using profane language, or making inappropriate gestures.

4. Respect for All Participants

I will ensure that my child treats all players, coaches, officials, and spectators with respect regardless of race, creed, color, sex, or ability.

5. Drug, Tobacco, and Alcohol-Free Environment

I will support and maintain a sporting environment that is free from drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, including refraining from smoking within sight of the playing field.

6. Respect for Officials and Coaches

I will respect the authority of officials and coaches during games. I will not question, discuss, or confront coaches or officials at the game field.

7. Compliance with Venue Authority

I understand that referees, NYFL officials (Football and Cheer), GLLC officials (Lacrosse), SCJC officials, or officials from opposing franchises have the authority to request the dismissal of my family **and my athlete from a game venue for obscene or inappropriate behavior by anyone in my party.** If safety becomes a concern, law enforcement may be contacted.



SCJC Athlete Code of Conduct

All SCJC athletes are expected to demonstrate respect, responsibility, and strong character at all times. These expectations apply **on the field, in the classroom, and at home**.

Athletes agree to the following standards:

1. **Respect and Character**

Athletes will show respect to teammates, coaches, officials, opponents, spectators, and all others. Athletes will be held to the highest standards of moral conduct and character both on and off the field. These expectations extend to behavior in school and at home.

2. **Zero Tolerance for Bullying**

Bullying will not be tolerated at practices, games, school, or team-related activities.

3. **Prohibited Conduct**

Athletes will not engage in any form of inappropriate or unsportsmanlike behavior. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, or fighting
- Bullying or harassment
- Use of profanity or obscene gestures
- Taunting, "trash talk," baiting, or cheating
- Throwing, damaging, or abusing equipment
- Committing flagrant or violent fouls
- Initiating physical aggression toward any official, board member, coach, player, cheerleader, spectator, or other individual

4. **Respect for Decisions**

Athletes will not harass, challenge, or show disrespect toward an official's or coach's decision.

5. **Compliance with Rules**

Athletes will follow all rules, regulations, and guidelines of SCJC and the governing leagues. Attempts to ignore, disobey, or circumvent these rules will not be tolerated.



SCJC Board Members and Coaches Code of Conduct

All SCJC Board Members and Coaches are expected to serve as role models and leaders within the organization. They are held to the highest standards of conduct and professionalism both on and off the field.

Board Members and Coaches agree to the following:

1. Respect and Character

Board Members and Coaches will treat all participants with respect and will conduct themselves in a manner that positively represents the SCJC organization. Any behavior that is detrimental to their team, or the organization is unacceptable.

2. Prohibition of Physical Aggression

Board Members and Coaches will not engage in any form of physical aggression, including pushing, shoving, punching, kicking, fighting, or any physical contact initiated as an aggressor toward any official, player, cheerleader, coach, spectator, or other individual.

3. Professional Communication

Board Members and Coaches will not verbally abuse, threaten, or intimidate any official, coach, player, cheerleader, spectator, or other individual.

4. Respectful Conduct

Harassment, baiting, or any form of disrespectful or inappropriate behavior toward officials, players, coaches, cheerleaders, spectators, or others will not be tolerated.

5. Substance-Free Environment

Board Members and Coaches will not use tobacco, alcohol, or illegal narcotics in the presence of players or cheerleaders during practices, games, or team activities. Additionally, no Board Member or Coach may attend or participate in practices, games, or team events while under the influence of alcohol or illegal narcotics.

6. Reporting Violations

Board Members and Coaches are responsible for reporting any violations of SCJC rules or conduct standards by Board Members, coaches, players, cheerleaders, managers, spectators, or others. Board Members must document any observed violations, including the date and time of the incident, and report them to the SCJC Board of Directors.



Appendix A

2026 SCJC Board Members

Name	Role	Email	Vacancy Year
Jessica Zombo	President	jfkoliba@gmail.com	2029
Todd Herman	VP/ AD of LAX	clawculturesports@gmail.com	2029
Jenna Angell	Treasurer	Jenna@jkrdesignmi.com	2027
Angie Kelosky	Secretary	akelosky@stratusclean.com	2027
Frank Zombo	Director of Football	zombo1fw@gmail.com	2029
Aaron Beck	AD of Football	abeck1@hotmail.com	2029
Melissa Trella	Director of Cheer	english.melissamarie@gmail.com	2027
Natalie James	AD of Cheer	nataliejames7612@gmail.com	2029
Dave White	Director of LAX	wa2dsw@gmail.com	2028
Karen King	Director of Communication	karenmarie197937@gmail.com	2029
Lauren Strzempek	Director of Spirit Wear	Laurenmwillette@gmail.com	2027
Danielle Benvenuti	Co-Director of Team Moms & Cougar Care	Benvenutidanielle@gmail.com	2029
Nikki Benedict	Co-Director of Team Moms & Cougar Care	nbenedict@midweststeel.com	2029
Erin Kennedy	Director of Volunteers	ekennedy@oakland.edu	2029

SCJC Official Website

SCJC has a team website that is updated on a regular basis. This site is a great communication tool and source of information. Examples of areas on the site include practice schedules, game schedules, NYFL updates, board updates and other key information. Our team website address is:

www.stoneycougars.com

NYFL Official Website

The Northern Youth Football League (NYFL) has a very informative website that can be referenced for league rules, league teams, league results, league calendar and other information. The NYFL website address is:

www.nyfl.net