360 Progression

As an Upward Cheerleading Coach, you play a major role in building your participants into total athletes through the exclusive 360 Progression – a uniquely designed sports experience that develops cheerleaders mentally, athletically, spiritually and socially as they participate on your squad. This unique approach is based on Luke 2:52 – “And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.”

Mentally – Making Wise Decisions

Through sport, you will teach valuable life lessons that will promote making wise decisions on and off the court. A 360 Coach knows how to teach the sport in a way that young athletes can understand.

Athletically – Improving Physical Ability

One of the main reasons parents register their young athlete to play is to improve their physical ability. A 360 Coach will help young athletes reach their full potential by focusing on long-term development, not short-term gain.

Spiritually – Embracing Life’s Purpose

The mission of Upward Sports is promoting the discovery of Jesus through sports. As a 360 Coach, you will be vital in this mission’s success. Throughout the season you will introduce life’s true purpose through intentional character lessons while leading an introduction to the Gospel message.

Socially – Fostering Healthy Relationships

An important part of growing as an athlete is connecting with teammates. As they enjoy time with others, they are building healthy relationships. As a 360 Coach, you should be a catalyst in helping young athletes form meaningful and lasting relationships.
360 Coaching Keys

To be a 360 Coach, there are some practical keys to coaching that are necessary for success:

1. **Teach the basic fundamentals of cheerleading with a progression plan in place** – The ability to execute proper drills enhances skill level and improves athletic foundations. Using practice plans create a path for progression of what to teach your young athletes and when to teach it.

2. **Teach how to effectively lead the spectators** – Cheerleaders should show confidence in their performance and in their crowd-leading cheers. This will help the fans to get engaged while building self-esteem in your cheerleaders.

3. **Communicate effectively** – In order to teach the fundamentals and explain drills, you have to be an effective communicator. Likewise, good communication and organization are crucial in keeping parents informed throughout the season. This includes keeping them up to date on practice and game times and having a plan in place each and every practice.

How to interact with your cheerleaders

Being an effective coach means being an effective communicator. Here are a few tips on communicating with your cheerleaders:

- Create a positive environment by greeting each cheerleader as they arrive at practice each week.
- Always speak in a way that a child can understand.
- When teaching cheerleading fundamentals, focus on a few skills at a time.
- Give specific reasons why each cheerleader earned a particular star as you distribute them on game days.
Get to know your squad’s parents
Start the season off right by getting to know the parents and family members of your cheerleaders. Include parents in your first post-practice huddle. Here are some things to cover in that meeting:

› Introduce yourself and share your excitement about the season.
› Give them a copy of the team roster.
› Ask a parent to put together a schedule for families to rotate bringing snacks to games.
› Encourage all parents to ask their cheerleaders to demonstrate the skills learned at practice each week at home.

Note: After you receive your roster, it is very important to contact the parents of your cheerleaders as soon as possible. Families have been eagerly waiting to hear from their coach since orientations, so calling them to introduce yourself and give first practice information is crucial.

Practices

Practice Breakdown

1. Welcome and games (5 minutes): Start your practice with a fun game to welcome all cheerleaders and get them excited.

2. Warm up and stretch (10 minutes): Warm up and stretch muscles by using the unique warm-up chart found in the coach cheerbook and Coach Sidelines.

3. Fundamentals (10 minutes): Review learned skills and teach new ones each week.

4. Mid-practice huddle - Devotions (8 minutes): Share the practice-specific devotion for each week.

5. New material (20 minutes): Introduce new cheers, chants, pom routines or halftime routines.

Coach Cheerbook - with sticker stars (*if included with your Squad Box):
You will receive a Squad Box from your cheerleading commissioner. Inside it will be a coach box, which contains your coach items, including your cheerbook. Your coach cheerbook outlines cheerleading skills and practice concepts and contains a complete set of practice devotions and sticker stars to be distributed to cheerleaders.

Online Resources (MyUpward.org):
Additional coach resources are available online at MyUpward.org and include:

› The Coach’s Sideline (see below)  
› How to communicate to Upward Cheerleaders  
› Cheers, chants and pom routines  
› Halftime routines  
› Weekly practice devotions  
› Formations page  
› Motions page

Here’s how to access these online resources:

1. You will receive an email from the league director containing a link to MyUpward.org.
2. Click on the link and create a password (your username will already exist as your email address).
3. You will then be able to access the resources on MyUpward.org.

*If you have not already received this email, please see your league director.
The Coach’s Sideline

After successfully logging into MyUpward.org, be sure to download The Coach’s Sideline. The Coach’s Sideline is a complete practice guide customized to the age group that you coach. While the coach cheerbook offers general practice plan initiatives, the Coach’s Sideline details each practice individually according to age group. In each one you will find:

› Welcome and games
› Warm-up and stretches
› Fundamentals
› New material
› Mid-practice huddle (devotions)
› Post-practice huddle

Most Coach Sidelines have videos that corresponds with the cheers and chants that are being taught in the practice plan.

Using these guides will take away the stress of having to create your own practice plan.
Upward Cheerleading Coach App

As a coach, it’s important to stay organized and prepared for both practices and games. Upward Sports now has a way to make coaching easy through the Upward Cheerleading Coach App. With this app, you will be able to manage your squad in a simple, paperless way throughout the season. Here you will able to:

- Manage cheerleader/guardian information
- View practice plans
- View this season’s cheers and chants
- Assign and track star distribution on game day

The Upward Cheer Coach App is only $.99 and is available on iPhone (iPad compatible) and Android phones. To utilize the app, you will use the same username (email address) and password you use to access resources on MyUpward.org.

Some of the many benefits of the coach app include:

- No data entry for your cheerleaders! The coach app automatically imports all of your cheerleaders’ and contact information into the app.
- The app will automatically import the practice plans (Coach’s Sidelines) for the age group you are assigned to coach. Also, once practice plans are downloaded to the app the first time, no internet connection is needed to access them from that point forward.
- You will be able to send a group email to all parents straight from the app.

The First Practice

Show enthusiasm as you meet each of your cheerleaders at the first practice. Making a great first impression will go a long way in the eyes of your cheerleaders and their parents.

It is also important to evaluate your cheerleaders’ skill level at the first practice. Observe each cheerleader’s performance to verify their skill level and determine what areas you need to focus on at practice. For example, if you have a squad of ten cheerleaders who have never cheered before, you will need to spend more time on motions. If the majority of your cheerleaders have cheer experience, you may need to review motions but the focus of your practice should be on new skills.
Distributing Squad Items
Your cheerleading commissioner will provide you with a Squad Box, which contains boxes for each cheerleader that contain their own cheer top, skort, and hair ribbon/bow. There is also a Coach Box that contains your own coach shirt.

The Mid-Practice Huddle
At the midpoint of every practice, the head coach will lead a five-to seven-minute devotion that provides an introduction to life’s purposes. These intentional character lessons are centered on Christlike virtues. This season will focus on three virtues, each of which will be taught for three practices and highlighted by one Bible verse. The chart below shows the virtues and their corresponding verses for this season:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Number</th>
<th>Virtue</th>
<th>Verse</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1</td>
<td>None (&quot;Get to Know You&quot; time)</td>
<td>None (Scripture learning begins at Practice 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2-4</td>
<td>Honor</td>
<td>Love one another deeply. Honor others more than yourselves. Romans 12:10 (NIrV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5-7</td>
<td>Endurance</td>
<td>Blessed is the person who keeps on going when times are hard. James 1:12a (NIrV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8-10</td>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Faith is being sure of what we hope for. It is being certain of what we do not see. Hebrews 11:1 (NIrV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last practice of the season</td>
<td>Gospel Presentation</td>
<td>For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16 (NIV)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Devotion guides are included in the coach cheerbook and on MyUpward.org. Prepare for each week’s devotion prior to practice.
The first practice devotion is on page 17. This is the same devotion found in your coach cheerbook and has been placed in this coach training guide in case you do not receive your cheerbook in time for the first practice.

“The Second Chance” DVD (*if included with the Squad Box):

Inside your coach box you will find a DVD for each of your cheerleaders called “The Second Chance.” This DVD presents the gospel in an engaging way by illustrating what Jesus did for us.

It is important to distribute this DVD to your cheerleaders at your next to last practice. At this practice, you should encourage your cheerleaders to watch it before your next practice, which should be the last practice of the season. The reason for this is because the last practice devotion is centered on the story in the DVD. The story should generate continued discussion about the gospel, and also give you a chance to further present the gospel at that time.

Because the last practice devotion discusses the DVD, it is imperative that you watch it prior to your last practice as well. You can watch it by going to MyUpward.org and clicking on the “The Second Chance” link.

Practice Cards (*if included with the Squad Box):

At the end of Practices Two, Five, Eight and the last practice, you will distribute practice cards to each of your cheerleaders. Each card contains a Scripture verse that will be the focus of the next two practices. Through these practice cards, cheerleaders will be able to learn the Scripture verses away from practices and will be familiar with them when they return to the next practice.
**Green Practice Stars  (*if included with the Squad Box)*

Green sticker stars known as practice stars are found in the back of your coach cheerbook. These stars should be given to each cheerleader who participates in Scripture learning during each practice. Cheerleaders are not required to memorize the verse individually to receive a star. Upward Sports’ desire is to place more emphasis on learning Scripture than memorizing it. Cheerleaders should display their stars on their megaphone along with their game-day stars.

*Note: The green practice stars should not be confused with the multi-colored game day stars, which are awarded to cheerleaders at the end of each game. For more on game day stars, see page 14.*

**Game Day for Upward Cheerleaders**

Game day is an exciting time for Upward Cheerleaders! They have learned and practiced their fundamentals and are now ready to cheer in front of all the fans, players and coaches. As a coach, you should be ready as well. Here are a few key points to remember on game day:

› Cheerleaders should be instructed to arrive at the gym prior to the scheduled game time to warm up and stretch before cheering.

› Include your squad in the pre-game prayer huddle with players, coaches and referees.

› Incorporate your cheerleaders into halftime. Most games consist of two eighteen-minute halves with an eight-minute halftime period. The clock stops briefly at the end of each six-minute segment. This can be a great time for cheerleaders to do a quick chant, cheer or jump. Your cheerleading commissioner or league director will inform you of when to perform a halftime cheer or routine.

› Encourage cheerleaders to watch the game so they can cheer for each team when baskets are scored. Lead fun cheers that include spectator involvement every time a team scores.
› Cheerleaders need to be alert to the action on the court to protect themselves from an out-of-bounds ball or player.

› If cheerleaders will be standing on the sidelines during games, instruct them to place their poms on the floor as a marker for their position in the lineup. It is very important for cheerleaders to stay in their lines throughout the game. This will help make your squad look unified and game ready.

› If you have only one cheerleading squad per hour when two games are being played, have cheerleaders switch courts at halftime. This allows your cheerleaders to cheer for all teams on the court.

› Be prepared each game with a list of all known cheers and chants. You can also make a poster with all the cheers, chants, timeout routines and your halftime routine as a visual reminder to all cheerleaders.

**Upward Cheerleading Format**

› All cheers performed will be used to encourage both teams on the court. No negative cheers are permitted. Refrain from using such terms such as beat, kill, fight or defeat.

› No squad will have a specific team it cheers for each week.

› All cheerleading squads will wear identical uniforms.

› Upward Sports recommends you avoid tumbling and stunting as part of your cheerleading program.

› Squad divisions are determined by age. In most cases, like age groups will be cheering together.
**Game-Day Recognition (if included in your Squad Box)**

In order to build confidence and self-esteem, each cheerleader will receive one of five different sticker stars after every game. These stars are to be displayed on the cheerleaders’ megaphones. The five star colors represent the following:

- **Blue star – Effort**
  (Works hard by participating in all cheers and chants.)

- **Gold star – Spirit**
  (Demonstrates voice inflection and excitement throughout the game.)

- **Gray star – Cheers**
  (Displays strong knowledge of all cheers, chants and pom routines.)

- **Red star – Leadership**
  (Helps squad stay focused, encourages other cheerleaders and calls cheers.)

- **White star – Christlikeness** (reflects Christ through their actions)

*Note: Upward Basketball stars have similar colors, but different representations.*

**Distributing Game-Day Stars**

Star presentation is a special time for every cheerleader. When distributing these stars, make it fun by:

- Inviting parents and other spectators to meet at a specific area off the court after the game
- Giving specific reasons why each cheerleader received their star
- Applauding each child as they receive their star
- Reminding cheerleaders to have their megaphones available so they can display their stars
Use the star distribution form found in back portion of the coach cheerbook to track which stars each cheerleader has received. Make an attempt to award each cheerleader all five star colors throughout the season. These sticker stars are located in the back of the coach cheerbook.

*Note: The green practice star is for Scripture learning and should be awarded at practice to every cheerleader who participates in learning the Scripture verse for the week. For more on the green practice stars, see page 12.*

**Ready... Set... Practice!**

Being prepared for your first practice by knowing what to teach and how to teach it is imperative. You may find it helpful to prepare for your first practice along with other coaches so that you can encourage one another and answer any questions that may arise.

Be sure to check out the Coaches Sidelines practice plans at the cheer coach page of MyUpward.org. You can also access these practice plans with the Upward Cheer Coach App.

**Welcome Game: (8 minutes)**

*Name game: Get to know your cheerleaders*

Divide your squad in two groups. Hold up a blanket in between the two groups. One cheerleader from each group will face each other with the blanket hanging in between to prevent them from seeing each other. Drop the blanket and the cheerleader who can first call the person’s name standing in front of her wins. The other cheerleader switches groups. The game is won when there is only one cheerleader left on one side of the blanket.

**Team Warm Up: (5 minutes)**

Warming up and stretching is one of the most important parts of practice.

› Run for one minute around the room. If you have limited space, run in place.

› Jumping jacks: 20 to 30

› Trunk twists: Twist back and forth 10 to 20 times to loosen up your cheerleaders’ backs
› Shoulder circles: With arms by your side, lift your shoulders and take them back down, creating a circular motion. Repeat 10 to 20 times.

› Arm circles: Hold arms out in a T-motion and circle them 10 to 20 times.

**For advanced warm-up ideas, check out MyUpward.org.**

**Stretching (5 minutes): Hold each stretch for eight counts.**

After your cheerleaders are warmed up, it is time to stretch their muscles.

› Straddle stretch: Sit on the floor with legs spread. Bend forward at the hips, keeping the head up, and reach toward the right foot, then the left foot and, finally, toward the middle.

› Pike stretch: Sit on the floor with legs together straight out in front. Reach for your feet but keep your knees locked.

› Butterfly stretch: Sit on the floor with the soles of your feet touching and your knees out to the side. Keep your back straight and bend forward with your arms and torso, reaching for your feet.

› Bridge: Lie on your back with the palms of your hands and feet flat on the floor while knees and elbows are raised in the air. Using your hands and feet, push up to form a bridge.

› Triceps: To stretch your triceps, bring one arm up beside your head, bending it at the elbow while reaching across with the other arm and hold the position. Repeat this stretch with the other arm.

**For advance stretching ideas, check out MyUpward.org.**

**Motions (10 minutes)**

On the next page you will find motions and a motion drill that every age group should be able to learn at the first practice. Become familiar with the motions listed below. Additional motions can be found at [MyUpward.org](http://MyUpward.org), but the ones shown below should be taught and reviewed at your first practice.
Mid-Practice Huddle
Devotion 1 (8 minutes)

INSTRUCTIONS:

› Gather the cheerleaders together and get them to sit in a circle.

› Toss a pom to a cheerleader and have her share her name and the place she would go if she could go anywhere in the world for a week.

Be sure each cheerleader gets a turn to share.

Once everyone has shared their name and where they would like to go, instruct players with the following:

We all have our favorite places to go. But I wonder what you think about a few other places you’d like to go for a week. I want you to give each a “thumbs up” if you like it, or a “thumbs down” if you don’t. Ready?...

› The jungles of Brazil
› The trash dump
› The Swiss Alps
› The Chocolate Factory
› The Moon
› The South Pole
› The Caves of New Zealand

That was fun! Getting to know each other better is something that we’ll do a lot of this season. As a squad, we’ll work hard to encourage one another to do our best at practices and games!

At the end of each game this season, we will focus on 5 important attributes. You will be recognized by one of these attributes through your actions, attitudes, and words during the game.
› The first attribute is **EFFORT:** What does it mean to show effort? It means working hard to try your best at all times.

› Next is **SPIRIT:** What does it mean to show spirit? It means doing all your cheers with excitement, eagerness and good voice inflection. You show others on your squad respect and treat them the way you want to be treated.

› The third attribute is **CHEERS:** How do you cheer well? You work together well with the rest of the squad while doing the motions and jumps and saying the correct words along with the others.

› There’s also **LEADERSHIP:** What does a leader do? A good leader helps the squad stay focused and calls cheers well before the rest of the squad does them.

› And finally, one of the most important attribute is **CHRISTLIKENESS:** What does it mean to be Christlike? Being Christlike means to do your best to imitate Jesus in every way - through words, attitude and actions. It means loving others and following God’s Word in the Bible; choosing God over the temptations in the world around you.

At each practice, we will stop to have a Mid-Practice Huddle. We will learn about God and learn virtues and Scripture verses together throughout the season. Our team is going to have a great season! Let’s pray and then get back to practice. *(Lead squad in short prayer as you thank God for all the cheerleaders and a great season ahead.)*
Motion Drills (10 minutes)
Below are two eight-count drills that include a series of motions from page 18-19. The purpose of this motion drill is to help cheerleaders put their knowledge of motions to counts and rhythms. Often cheerleaders who know every motion forget the placement and sharpness when performing a cheer, chant, jump or pom routine. Start slow so that each motion is correctly performed with each count:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motion Drill 1</th>
<th>Motion Drill 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Touchdown</td>
<td>1. Right Diagonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Low Touchdown</td>
<td>2. Left Diagonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. High V</td>
<td>3. Broken T</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Low V</td>
<td>4. Candlesticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. T Motion</td>
<td>5. Dagger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Right L</td>
<td>6. Right Punch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Left L</td>
<td>7. Left Punch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Clasp</td>
<td>8. Clap</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For a video demonstration of these motion drills, visit the coach resources at MyUpward.org.
Chant (10 minutes)
A chant should be performed three or more times. On the next page is a chant you should learn for your first practice that is designed to be used for all age divisions. When teaching or learning a cheer or chant:

1. Learn the words first.
2. Repeat the cheer or chant until everyone is familiar with the words.
3. Learn the motions.
4. Review slowly.
5. Once everyone has the overall knowledge of the cheer or chant, practice it at a full speed.

Look for correct motion placement and sharpness, while emphasizing team synchronization. Do not move on to a new cheer or a chant without perfecting technique.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motion</th>
<th>Visual Demonstration</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right foot forward, arms swing back</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left foot forward, arms swing back</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>we go!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clasp</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>(Pause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clasp</td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>(Pause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right High V</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Blue and</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued on next page)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motion</th>
<th>Visual Demonstration</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Left High V</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clasp</td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>(Pause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clasp</td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>(Pause)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low V</td>
<td><img src="image4.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td>Let’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(continued on next page)
### HERE WE GO (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motion</th>
<th>Visual Demonstration</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clasp</td>
<td>![Clasp Image]</td>
<td>Go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High V</td>
<td>![High V Image]</td>
<td>Upward</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For advanced cheers and chants, check out the coach resources at MyUpward.org.

**Post-Practice Huddle – Include cheerleaders and parents (5 minutes)**

Take a few minutes at the end of your practice to gather your cheerleaders together with their parents. Talk about all the skills learned at the first practice. Let the parents know how excited you are to be coaching their children this season. This is a great time to exchange email addresses and phone numbers with the parents of your cheerleaders. You may also want to provide a welcome letter to them, such as the sample welcome letter found at MyUpward.org. Be sure to inform parents of the upcoming practice or game time and location.

### You Make the Difference

Upward Sports wants to help you be the best cheerleading coach you can be by equipping you with this training guide, coach cheerbook and all the online resources designed especially for you at MyUpward.org.

Because you have decided to serve as a coach, your squad will have an opportunity to learn cheerleading skills and biblical values for life. Your leadership will make the difference this season not only in the lives of your cheerleaders, but also in the lives of their family members. Thanks, Coach, for making an impact!
COACHING THE 360 PROGRESSION™

Mentally
Greet each cheerleader by name when they arrive.

Athletically
Teach skills through cheers, chants, and pom routines.

Spiritually
In all of your interactions, put the gospel on display.

Socially
Promote healthy relationships through positive interactions.

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