



Top 5 Misconceptions About Cheerleading

All Star cheerleading remains a relatively new sport in New Zealand, a country traditionally dominated by rugby and netball which have been the sports of choice for kiwi kids. Being in its relative infancy, kiwi parents presented All Star Cheerleading as a sporting pursuit for their child often have little knowledge or experience with the activity as it was not an available option when themselves were a child. Misconceptions therefore often arise about the participation requirements of the sport and what exactly it entails.

We tackle the top 5 misconceptions head on:

1. "You need to have done gymnastics to do cheerleading" or "you need to already have skills to become a cheerleader"

No gymnastics experience whatsoever is required to participate in All Star cheerleading. New Zealand Cheerleading Association (NZCA) registered gyms are staffed with qualified coaches who are competent to teach all levels of skills to their athletes. Our experienced coaches provide tuition in all aspects of tumbling, from absolute beginner to Worlds level 5, ages 3 to 21+.

2. "You need to be really flexible to do cheerleading"

Beginner athletes do not require any natural flexibility to participate in cheerleading. Flexibility just like jumps, tumbling and stunting is a skill that is taught progressively over time. Aggressive passive stretching is rarely seen and not encouraged; this being a technique that is generally regarded as outdated.

3. "You have to be skinny to be a cheerleader"

All shapes and sizes are welcome in the sport of All Star cheerleading. There are different "positions" in cheerleading which suit different heights and body builds ensuring that there is a place for every one, and every team member is valued. If you are naturally tall you will be a fantastic back spot, if you are strong you'll make an amazing base, if you are small you'll be a great flyer.

4. "You can't go anywhere with cheerleading"

New Zealand cheer athletes are highly competitive at an international/worlds level. Athletes can work their way up the levels to compete for their gym at the IASF Cheerleading Worlds or even earn a spot on Team New Zealand - three time world champions in Elite level 5 at the ICU World Cheerleading Championships! At the lower levels, there are many opportunities for athletes to represent their gym along with their country at major championships in Australasia and America against some of the best teams in the sport. These overseas experiences provide fantastic growth opportunities for our athletes and are a great contributor to building confidence and self esteem.

5. "Cheerleading...oh where you dance and yell things...give me a C..give me an..."

Leading a cheer, and or dancing on a sideline are not at all representative of All Star cheerleading. All Star cheerleading routines primarily consist of acrobatic stunts, pyramids, tosses and tumbling passes combined in a visually appealing 2min 30 routine. "Dancing" is typically limited to three to five 8 counts of motions. Routines are prepared and performed on sprung floor surfaces at competitions, against other All Star cheerleading teams from around the country. Professional Judges evaluate the routines and score the Teams against a scoring rubric on the execution of their skills and the way they are performed.

If your child never sits still, loves to perform, roll and bounce, then we encourage you to consider All Star cheerleading as a sport. There are many levels of programmes offered around New Zealand catering for boys and girls aged 3 to 18 years (and older!) And our coaches are just waiting to introduce more wonderful kiwi kids to a sport that is determined to become common to every household.

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