

Junior Bulldogs JFL Parent / Player Handbook

Table of Contents

General Information	3-5
Code of Conduct	6-7
Flag Program	8
Cheer Program	9-11
Tackle Program	12-16

General Information

The Touchdown Club (TDC) was founded in 2000 as a non-profit organization. Our goal is to promote youth football, committed to develop and encourage teamwork, good sportsmanship, community spirit, high standards in regular and competitive play, good fellowship and loyalty and respect in the children among all participants. The goal for the kids is simple: to be the best on the field and in life.

As an organization, we have experienced great success since our formation. We owe much of our success to the dedication of our families that support the ongoing mission of the Jaguars.

The TDC sponsors the Junior Bulldogs JFL Football Program, which includes boys and girls from Staunton, Livingston, Mt. Olive, Bunker Hill and surrounding communities in grades second through eighth for flag football, tackle football and flag and tackle cheerleading.

The TDC is managed and operated by an all-volunteer staff of adults from around the community who have chosen to make a difference. The amount of time a volunteer can give varies each season, none of which are more significant than the other. By becoming actively involved in the organization's functions, you help to guarantee the success of the program. This organization is YOUR organization. We not only WANT you to be involved; we want you to have PRIDE in being a member of this organization. We would like to provide and encourage you to get involved and contribute to our success.

The TDC has adopted by-laws that contain the rules and regulations used to govern the organization by the Board of Directors. The Board is elected and makes decisions regarding the TDC. A copy of the by-laws for the organization is available on upon request thru the Secretary.

Parents are invited to contact any Board member at any time regarding organizational or program questions (see attached handout for current Board Members)

We are a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. Members elect officers each year at an annual meeting conducted in November. Members are allowed to provide any feedback during the annual meeting regarding the past season or the future direction of the program. This annual meeting is the parents' chance to formally be involved in the governance of the organization. We strongly encourage all parents who are able to attend the annual meeting to do so. A notice regarding the date, time and location of the annual meeting will be announced on our Facebook Page.

The TDC continues its commitment to ensure that kids from all walks of life have the opportunity to participate in football and cheerleading. We strive to have a program with one of the lowest registration fees in the area however both football and cheerleading are expensive activities. There are many expenses that the TDC incurs each season, including: officiating fees, insurance fees, concession stand items, trophies, scholarships, uniforms, ambulance attendance, and equipment.

Recognizing the time and effort involved, and that many families are drained because of fund-raising efforts in multiple activities for multiple children, we attempt to keep our

fund-raising events to a minimum. However, this is a non-profit organization that totally depends for funding upon registration fees and fund-raising. The funds pay for players to have proper equipment, uniform, facility rentals, trophies, etc. Without fund-raising, the TDC would eventually have to raise registration fees. Therefore, even though fund-raising might seem burdensome at times, please remember that we are doing this to keep costs down for everyone and to ensure that the TDC has enough money to keep participants outfitted in safe equipment, attractive uniforms, and playing at well-maintained facilities and fields.

We currently expect a large Fundraiser towards the end of the year (Cash Bash) and a few smaller ones throughout the year to offset the cost. More details will be provided when available.

The primary objective of this organization is to give interested boys and girls an organized and safely controlled football and cheerleading program. Our goal will be to teach the fundamentals of fair play, teamwork and to aid in the development of good character.

The head coaches for the TDC teams are recommended and approved by Board members. The selection of a maximum of three (3) assistant coaches is left by and large to the discretion of the head coaches and the board.

The coaches' objective and that of the organization is to teach your child not only the game of football and the art of cheerleading, but to teach them a little about life through football and cheerleading.

The coaches are not here to satisfy their own egos or relive a second childhood. They are here for the betterment of your child.

Encourage your child to do their best. Emphasize their talents and encourage them to work on their weaknesses. Please do not coach them from the sidelines. Coaching is the coaches' jobs, but we are willing to listen to your suggestions at the appropriate time.

If you have a comment and/or suggestion, please present it in a calm and rational manner. You will be amazed at the reaction and cooperation you will receive when you look at things in a calm and rational light.

Be sure that your child eats and sleeps properly. Make sure they eat plenty of vegetables and get plenty of liquids. Tired kids are more likely to get injured. Well-fed kids will feel better, think better, perform better and heal faster.

Remember that some children are more athletic than others, and develop at different rates. Remember that ALL children have some talent and the squads will be adjusted accordingly. Both cheerleading and football are team sports; we will locate a position for your child that will benefit the team.

Your child is a player/cheerleader and will be expected to participate fully.

Children are going to make mistakes. It is part of learning the game and we fully expect it and in some cases encourage it. Coaches and parents will make mistakes too. We are only human and are not afraid to admit it. Let us adults be big enough to realize our mistakes and admit to them.

Finally, we look at our squad (coaches, players, cheerleaders, parents, family and friends) as a **T-E-A-M**, because **Together Everyone Achieves More**. If we all work together our accomplishments are absolutely endless.

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CODE OF CONDUCT

The TDC strives to maintain our exceptional reputation in the South Central League by setting the standard of behavior by our coaches, parents and players. The following guidelines regarding the conduct of parents, players and coaches will be strictly enforced. Infractions will be reported to the League President and expulsion of the coach, player and/or parents may occur to ensure we are setting the right example in our program.

COACHES EXPECTATIONS

- Coaches will always be fair, firm and consistent.
- Coaches will promote a positive attitude and lead by example.
- Coaches will follow the rules of the sport.
- Coaches teach the basic fundamentals of football at a level and pace that ensures the best possible environment for learning.
- Coaches will not argue with parents or officials and will always demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Coaches will listen to their players' concerns and provide appropriate feedback.
- Coaches will do the best they can to ensure each player is both physically and mentally prepared to participate.
- Coaches will stress teamwork and respect for each and every player.

PLAYERS / CHEERLEADERS EXPECTATIONS

- I will attend all practices, games, meetings and any other team functions on time.
- I will show respect towards all coaches, players, cheerleaders, referees, and parent volunteers at all times
- I will demonstrate good sportsmanship on and off the field.
- I will not fight, use foul language or argue with coaches or teammates.
- I will stay within the established area of the sidelines during games.
- I understand that I risk being ejected and/or suspended from a game or further League participation if I incur unsportsmanlike behavior penalties.
- I will be ready to learn and have fun.
- I will be a team player and always put the team first.
- I will obey the coaches and rules of the TDC.
- I will, to the best of my ability, put my education first and do my best at school.

PARENTS EXPECTATIONS

- Parents should support the efforts of all the TDC coaches, Board members and volunteers.
- The use of profanity, drugs, alcohol or tobacco during any TDC event is prohibited.
- Set the right example for your child by always showing good sportsmanship.
- Never argue with a coach or official during practices or games. Any complaint or concern can be directed to the Board President, where it will be promptly investigated.

- Understand that your child will be given every opportunity to participate; however, the safety of the athletes is the number one concern.
- Any parent who enters the playing field during a game (with the exception of injury) risks their child being disqualified from further participation.
- Remember to praise your child's efforts and always offer your support.
- Please allow your child to play as a child and have fun.
- Never voice any complaints or concerns towards coaches, referees or League officials in front of the children.

TARDINESS/ABSENCES

It is up to the discretion of the Head Coach regarding his/her attendance policy. All players and cheerleaders are required to notify coaches of any type of absence prior to the scheduled practice or game. Missing more than two practices a week will affect playing or participation time. A pattern of attendance problems will be addressed with a possibility of suspension from games. Please see your child's head coach regarding notification and how attendance issues are handled.

DISCIPLINE

Giving 100 percent is not an option—it is expected. Along with teaching the fundamental skills of football, we are attempting to instill the importance of effort and hard work. If a child shows a constant lack of effort and enthusiasm, you will be notified as soon as possible to clear up this issue.

There are no comparisons in youth sports that can be made to coaching or playing football. Each player must be able to execute the proper skills in order to play the game in a safe sport. If a player or groups of players are not listening or paying attention to instructions, they risk being injured during practices or games. This type of behavior also takes valuable time away from the rest of the team. You will see the use of physical exercise as a discipline tool to ensure we have each participant's full attention. Coaches are also much more vocal when giving instruction because of the safety factor. Please remember both of these factors when watching our practices and games.

The goal is to give praise ten times for every time a player is disciplined for any reason.

PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CHAIN OF COMMAND FOR QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

Issue	1 st	2 nd
Football Coaching / Skills / Playing Time	Head Coach	President
Cheerleading Coaching / Skills	Cheer Sponsor	President
Registration and Paperwork	Registration Chair	President
Finance	Treasurer	President
Equipment / Uniforms	Head Coach	President
Fundraising	Secretary	President
Concession	Concession Chair	President

Flag Program

Exact dates, time, and location for all practices / games will be given at the beginning of the season and will be based on the quantity of participants.

All athletes are expected to be in their practice / game area 5 minutes early. Excessive tardiness can add up to unexcused absences, which will affect the athlete's participation time, but also the chemistry and growth of the team.

Note that Football is played even if it is raining and will only be cancelled or delayed due to thunder and/or lightning or excess downpours. This is the Coaches and Boards decision and we ask that Parents / Guardians be ready to pick up your Child quickly in these situations.

Players should always consume liquids (preferably water not Gatorade) at least an hour before practice begins in order to reduce the risk of dehydration. They should also eat a light snack prior to practice. The TDC will supply water during practice but a **personal water bottle is required.**

Players need to remember to wear appropriate clothing and football cleats to practices and games. If a player doesn't, the player may be required to sit out. A Game Jersey / Shirt will be provided for the Player before the first Game.

The Flag Coach will provide any additional information as needed.

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CHEER PROGRAM

The cost of purchasing safe equipment for your child continues to rise each year. Equipment is purchased for use collectively by participants with funds remaining after organizational expenses have been paid. It is our hope that we can grow our equipment inventory each year to ensure that your child has the best equipment possible.

A major issue that the TDC faces each year is that some irresponsible parents or guardians are not returning the gear that was issued to them at the beginning of the season. When this happens, the League must replace the missing gear.

We hope that parents understand that by not returning the gear, you are only hurting children in the future who want to participate in the program and can't because of equipment inventory issues.

Equipment and uniforms are made available to each participant for the duration of the season only. At the conclusion of the season (or at any such time as required by the Board) all such equipment and uniforms shall be returned to the Board. The parent/guardian of the participant to whom they were issued will purchase the equipment and uniforms that have been misused, damaged, destroyed, or lost at their full replacement value.

The TDC will provide a cheerleading uniform consisting of a skirt and shell to each cheerleader along with socks, shoes, briefs, two bows, pom-poms, a carry-all bag, a megaphone, and a cowbell, at no cost to the cheerleader.

Upon completion of the season, the following items are to be returned to the coach: cheerleading skirt, shell, shoes, pom-poms, and bag. The cheerleader may keep their socks, briefs, bows, megaphone, and cowbell. Please keep the megaphone and cowbell in a safe place to reuse year to year if you are a returning cheerleader, as these are only provided upon your first year of cheerleading.

A personalized cheerleading jacket will be offered to purchase at an additional cost, and fundraising may occur to help offset the total price per cheerleader. The jacket is not a requirement, but something the girls can keep, and also wear with their uniform on game days if the weather is cooler.

Cheerleading shoes are not to be worn anywhere except the track. It will be important to have a pair of slides or sandals handy to switch shoes. Please arrive at the field with sandals or slides on, and change into your cheerleading shoes once you have set down your things and are ready to cheer.

Cheerleaders are encouraged to wear their Uniform Top to school the Friday prior to Saturday game day. Cheer Shoes are NOT to be worn to school.

CARE FOR UNIFORM

- Wash uniform with regular washing detergent. If your child gets a stain on the uniform, use the stain remover BEFORE washing the uniform.
- Line dry.

The equipment provided is the property of the TDC. Parents expected to return the equipment at the designated time at the end of the season (or at the time the child leaves the program). The TDC reserves the right to pursue legal courses to obtain its property.

It is your responsibility to ensure that all equipment is returned on the date and time appointed.

PRACTICES

Cheerleaders will be expected to be at practice, which will be approximately 1-2 times per week. Exact dates, time, and location for all practices will be given at the beginning of the season.

Attendance to practice is crucial, as is it difficult to form formations and practice stunts without everyone present.

Practice attire should be tight fitting clothing, including shorts and a top. Loose clothing can get snagged while doing jumps and stunts, causing a risk to the cheerleader's safety.

Only practice attire may be worn to practice. Game uniforms (cheerleading skirts, tops) cannot be worn to practice.

Your Cheerleader is expected to arrive at practice at least 15 minutes early. This will give us ample time to change shoes, stretch properly, and get prepared for the beginning of the event.

Hair must always be worn up and out of your face. No chewing gum or jewelry will be prohibited. Please have nails trimmed, as a safety measure for your teammates when spotting and stunting.

GAME DAY

A Game Schedules will be provided the first week of practice. Please check Facebook or with your Coach of any changes.

All Tackle games are scheduled for Saturdays. Fifth grade and Sixth grade games begin at 10 a.m. Seventh grade games at 11:30 a.m. and Eighth grade games at 1:30 p.m.

There may be the occasion when games are either running ahead or behind schedule. It is always a good idea to allot that time accordingly.

Cheerleaders will perform at all home football games, and are encouraged to attend all away football games. Depending on the number of total cheerleaders, it's possible the girls will split up and cheer for two different age groups in one day, to allow cheerleaders to be present at more football games.

Cheerleaders will need their own transportation to and from games. For Safety Concerns, Parents must check in with their Coach when picking up after the Game.

Cheerleaders are expected to:

- Arrive at least 30 minutes early to allow ample time to change shoes, stretch properly, and get prepared for the beginning of the event.
- Arrive with their entire uniform with them
- Have Hair worn up and out of your face
- Have No Chewing Gum or Jewelry
- Arrive with a **personal** Water Bottle
- Be Responsible for all their Belongings and Trash after the Game

Parents **are not allowed** on the playing field for any reason excluding on-field volunteers.

Violators will be asked to proceed back to the spectators section. If violation continues, the individual will be escorted out of the facility.

In the event of an injury or other situation that warrants parent support, the coach will signal a parent to the field. Note that the TDC has requested that the Staunton Ambulance Service be in attendance at all home games.

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TACKLE PROGRAM

The cost of purchasing safe football equipment for your child continues to rise each year. Equipment is purchased for use collectively by participants with funds remaining after organizational expenses have been paid. It is our hope that we can grow our equipment inventory each year to ensure that your child has the best equipment possible.

A major issue that the TDC faces each year is that some irresponsible parents or guardians are not returning the gear that was issued to them at the beginning of the season. When this happens, the League must replace the missing gear. To provide a little insight on what type of funds we are talking about, the following is a summary of Football equipment prices of each piece of equipment issued to players:

Helmet	\$150.00
Shoulder Pads	\$50.00
Practice Pants and Jersey	\$60.00
Game Day Pants and Jersey	\$150.00
Total	\$410.00

We hope that parents understand that by not returning the gear, you are only hurting children in the future who want to participate in the program and can't because of equipment inventory issues.

Equipment and uniforms are made available to each participant for the duration of the season only. At the conclusion of the season (or at any such time as required by the Board) all such equipment and uniforms shall be returned to the Board. The parent/guardian of the participant to whom they were issued will purchase the equipment and uniforms that have been misused, damaged, destroyed, or lost at their full replacement value.

Tackle Players are expected to supply appropriate football shoes, Red socks, practice shirts and specialized mouth pieces (if required). Other types of equipment can be purchased if they desire (gloves, arm, neck and rib pads, neck rolls, etc.)

Players are encouraged to wear their appropriate color Game Jersey to school the Friday prior to Saturday game day. Jerseys are to be worn with Khaki Shorts or Pants and must be tucked in.

The equipment provided is the property of the TDC. Parents are expected to return the equipment at the designated time at the end of the season (or at the time the child leaves the program). The TDC reserves the right to pursue legal courses to obtain its property.

It is your responsibility to ensure that all equipment is returned on the date and time appointed.
CARE FOR EQUIPMENT / UNIFORM

FOOTBALL UNIFORMS

- Wash uniform in **COLD WATER**
- **Do not use Bleach.**
- Use spot remover on stains.
- Line dry jersey. **Do not put in dryer**
- Tumble dry pants on low heat if necessary; otherwise, line dry.

HELMETS / SHOULDER PADS

- Wash in cold water.
- **Do not use Bleach.**
- Don't sit on or throw your helmet.
- Never use gasoline/kerosene to clean your helmet. Use of these products will destroy the surface.
- Use dishwashing detergent to clean dirty areas.
- Buff dry with a soft cloth or air dry.
- Never use steel wool or sandpaper. Use of these materials will damage the helmet shell.
- To lubricate the snaps on the helmet and chinstrap, apply petroleum jelly. If the forehead pad is stiff or hard, carefully rub a little petroleum jelly on it as well. This will keep the forehead pad soft and prevent cracking.
- Clean shoulder pads with a washcloth using mild detergent and water.
- Be sure to clean inside and outside of the pads.
- To deodorize the pads, spray with Febreze or household deodorizer.

TACKLE PRACTICES

Before beginning contact drills, each participant must have four "no person-to-person contact" conditioning practices where players do not hit one another. No contact is allowed for that player until the conditioning requirement is fulfilled. The first week of practices the players will go through stretching and footwork drills. They should wear long socks, loose fitting shorts and a t-shirt. No helmets, pads or gear is needed until further advised.

Tackle Practices are typically conducted at either the Staunton Little League Ballfields Monday – Thursday (6 p.m. to 8 p.m.). Once School begins practice will reduce to Tuesday - Thursday (6 p.m. to 8 p.m). Head coaches may call an extra Practice or change Days / Times as they deem necessary. Your Head Coach will relay location and times to the **Players** accordingly.

All athletes are expected to be in their practice area 10 minutes early. Excessive tardiness can add up to unexcused absences, which will affect the athlete's participation time, but also the chemistry and growth of the team.

Parents are invited to attend every practice. However, parents should remain off the field so that the coaches can run an effective and safe practice. Parents are encouraged to bring issues, ideas, and thoughts to the attention of the Head Coach. Feel free to stay on the perimeter of the

playing area to observe practice, or to listen to coaches' end-of-the-practice group talk. **As always, please be respectful and pick up your trash from the field after each practice.**

In case of injury, the Head coach as well as Board members will supply the care needed once assessed. The Board will determine whether further action, such as a call to a parent is necessary. In case of complaint of neck/back injury, or serious enough injury to warrant immediate medical service, it is the organization's policy to immediately call the Staunton Area Ambulance Service.

PRACTICE TIPS FOR PLAYERS

Players should always consume liquids (preferably water or Gatorade) at least an hour before practice begins in order to reduce the risk of dehydration. They should also eat a light snack prior to practice. The TDC will supply water during practice but a personal water bottle is required.

Players need to remember to bring all required equipment (including mouthpieces, cleats, appropriate clothing) to practice daily. If a player doesn't bring and wear the appropriate equipment, the player may be required to sit out during practice.

Only practice uniforms may be worn to practice. Game uniforms (jerseys, pants) cannot be worn to practice.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Note that Football is played even if it is raining and will only be cancelled or delayed due to thunder and/or lightning or excess downpours. This is the Coaches and Boards decision and we ask that Parents / Guardians be ready to pick up your Child quickly in these situations.

PLAYING TIME / POSITIONS

Some of the most difficult and sensitive decisions coaches have to make involve which positions players will play and how much playing time each player will receive. Coaches consider an assortment of factors (safety, effort, attitude, play and technique execution, courage, fitness, leadership, size, strength, speed, agility, tackling, passing, catching, blocking, etc.) when assigning a child to a position.

Remember that football is a TEAM sport, and each player must play where the TEAM needs him/her the most. The coach determines where the player will play. Sometimes it doesn't seem fair who gets to play where but a coach's main motivation is safety, fun, and success, placing the kids where they fit best and can make a contribution to the team.

A child's attitude plays a large role too. Please believe the coaches do their very best in order to make decisions that are best for the team and for each individual player. Players often play less than they would otherwise like because of issues involving fatigue or endurance, which also affect a player's safety. A player's ability or willingness to remember plays and techniques also impact the assigned position and the amount of playing time. As players improve during the season in certain areas, it is not uncommon for players to be assigned to another position.

The League also has rules that affect playing time. Every player will play a certain number of plays. Please be assured that, whether or not you agree with a decision, the coaches have the best interest of the team and player in mind when making decisions about positions and playing time.

If you have an issue or concern involving positions or playing time for your child, please feel free to contact the Head coach. Alternatively, if you feel more comfortable, please feel free to contact the President.

GAME DAY

A Game Schedules will be provided the first week of practice. Please check Facebook or with your Head Coach of any changes.

All Tackle games are scheduled for Saturdays. Fifth grade and Sixth grade games begin at 10 a.m. Seventh grade games at 11:30 a.m. and Eighth grade games at 1:30 p.m.

There may be the occasion when games are either running ahead or behind schedule. It is always a good idea to allot that time accordingly.

Players will need their own transportation to and from games. For Safety Concerns, Parents must check in with their Coaches when picking up after the Game.

Tackle Players are expected to:

- Arrive at least one hour prior to start time. Failure of a player not present for Weigh-In could result in the player forfeiting his eligibility to participate in that game.
- Arrive with a personal Water Bottle
- Arrive with their entire uniform with them: Helmet, Shoulder Pads, Jersey (Both Colors) **Long Red Socks except in October (Pink Socks will be allowed)**, Black Pants, Mouthpiece, Coaches Wristband and Cleats.
- Be Responsible for all their Belongings and Trash after the Game

Parents are not allowed on the playing field for any reason excluding on-field volunteers such as chain gang operation.

Violators will be asked to proceed back to the spectators section. If violation continues, the individual will be escorted out of the facility.

In the event of an injury or other situation that warrants parent support, the coach will signal a parent to the field. Note that the TDC has requested that the Staunton Ambulance Service be in attendance at all home games.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation is extremely important in order to ensure our football program's success and sustain viability. The TDC is an all-volunteer organization—no one is compensated financially for any time devoted to the program. Please remember that those who do volunteer work also have jobs, children, and homes to care for in addition to the TDC-related responsibilities.

Parent volunteer opportunities include:

- Chain Crew: Hold measurement chains and assist referees in managing sideline markers during each home game. Three per game are needed.
- Press Box Spotter: Get the best seat in the house, by announcing the action on the field during the home games. Receive help from a partner “spotter” to validate plays, penalties and players’ results. Two per game is recommended.
- Game day cook: Responsible for preparing the grill and preparing meat to be ready for game times. Minimum of four per game day.
- Media contact. This person is responsible for getting the scores and important facts about each game to the Secretary so that the information can be posted on the Facebook Page. One person per game.
- Team Photographer: Get next to the action on the sidelines at game and behind the scenes for the players and cheerleaders. One parent per team.

Your Coach will be setting up sign ups prior to the season starting

Responsibilities of Board Members:

- Gate Attendant
- Concession Stand
- Merchandise Stand
- Game Day Setup and Teardown
- Scoreboard Attendant

Without the efforts of dedicated parents and Board members, there would be no JFL Football.

Thank you for your support!

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