

#### IV. Devising Programs

11. How will schools be able to identify enough participants to field a viable team without taking away from its traditional cheerleading squad?

**Athletics is not a zero-sum environment in which the participation of students in STUNT comes at the expense of the loss of participation of students in traditional cheerleading. Opening STUNT to women should not be viewed as a loss of participation in traditional cheer, but a broadening of opportunities for women to compete that will only serve to expand the participation and growth of women in sports.**

**Furthermore, there are more than enough women and girls interested in cheerleading and STUNT to field squads for both. For example, at the youth level, there currently are over 450,000 girls participating in the competition only discipline of cheer—All Star—and yet there are still over 600,000 high school girls participating in traditional cheer. At the college level, currently women have few opportunities to participate, as those 800,000+ girls are funneled into less than 40,000 opportunities to participate in traditional cheer—some of which are held by men. By offering STUNT teams, colleges and universities will open a whole new range of participation opportunities that were otherwise closed for these young women and girls to continue participating in their sport at the collegiate level.**

**One of the founding principles of STUNT is that it is designed to provide women with new opportunities-not take those away from existing sports, such as cheerleading. STUNT will allow those women who wish to focus exclusively on competition a place to compete while at the same time preserving the opportunity for other women to participate in the traditional, multi-dimensional role of cheerleading including: school spirit, student leadership, performance, and some competitions.**

12. Aren't injury rates, particularly for catastrophic injuries much higher for cheerleaders?

**No. This is a common misconception that has been based on inaccurate media reporting. According to studies, ten other high school sports have a higher rate of injury, including two female sports: female hockey and female gymnastics.**

**In addition, an ongoing study for the National Federation of State High School Associations<sup>1</sup> shows that the overall injury rate for cheerleading was 17<sup>th</sup> out of 20 high school sports. The rate of concussion was 12<sup>th</sup> out of 20 high school sports, behind girls' soccer, lacrosse, basketball, field hockey, and softball. There have been no catastrophic injuries associated with cheerleading in this study.**

**Finally, with two seasons of data available, STUNT has shown itself to have no more risk of injury than other sports.**

| <b>Total Exposures</b> | <b>Attn by ATC</b> | <b>Reportable Injuries per AE</b> |          |             |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| <b>2010-11</b>         | <b>1032</b>        | <b>5</b>                          | <b>0</b> | <b>0</b>    |
| <b>2011-12</b>         | <b>1834</b>        | <b>6</b>                          | <b>2</b> | <b>1.09</b> |

1) <http://injuryresearch.net/resources/1/rio/2010-11HighSchoolRIOCONVENIENCESummaryReport.pdf>

Note: In the High School RIO study, "Performance" is the notation for cheerleading competition. "Competition" is the term used for cheerleading injury rates during athletic contests where the cheerleader is in a support role on the sidelines.

## How this compares to other female sports:

|                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| College STUNT:              | 1.1               |
| College Women's Lacrosse:   | 8.8 <sup>2</sup>  |
| College Women's Soccer:     | 16.4 <sup>3</sup> |
| College Women's Basketball: | 7.9 <sup>4</sup>  |
| College Women's Gymnastics: | 15.2 <sup>5</sup> |

13. What type of training is required for coaches and administrators to provide STUNT teams? What resources are available to assist with this process?

The NCAA, NAIA and USA Cheer all recognize the benefits of the AACCA Safety Course, a risk management program that teaches risk minimization for cheerleading skills. As the skills in STUNT derive from cheerleading skills, the AACCA risk management course is an important resource for STUNT coaches. The course addresses the medical and legal responsibilities of a program as well as proper skill progression and performer readiness.

In addition, USA Cheer has developed an online training program required for all STUNT coaches. This course provides training on the rules of the game as well as commonly employed strategies for practice and game settings.

As a derivative of cheerleading, there are many state and national coaching clinics where STUNT coaches gather with their peers and stay up to date on skill and safety techniques. These venues will also provide opportunity to recruit and promote their STUNT program.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://ajs.sagepub.com/content/32/3/608.abstra>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1941298>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1941290>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1941290>