American Youth Foundation

Miniwanca

Challenge Area Course Manual

My own self, At my very best, All the time

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Introduction

A brief history

A challenge course is a combination of low and high activities, presented in a prescribed sequence. Constructed in trees, telephone poles or gymnasiums using ropes, cables, lumber and hardware, a course should be designed to blend into an area and cause minimal environmental impact. Challenge courses have been around and utilized as an effective means of experiential education since 1971. The world of Adventure Programming has grown tremendously over these years. From a few early school-based programs there are now literally hundreds of thousands of challenge courses and their related education counterparts.

Today, challenge courses and adventure programming have become an accepted methodology in education, leadership training, counseling and "at-risk" populations, as well as in other human services fields. The goal is to place people in challenging situations so they step beyond their personal boundaries, which can potentially lead to interpersonal and intrapersonal growth.

All challenges are meant to create metaphors that can be applied to one's life far beyond the activities themselves. The activities serve as a means to greater learning and/or self/group discovery and are not simply an experience for the sake of experience.

A definition

The Miniwanca Team Challenge Course (Low Course) consists of elements designed to offer groups of participants challenges as a team. It also serves as a catalyst and living metaphor for group dynamics. In general, the Team Challenge Course elements are constructed between 0 and 10 feet off of the ground. They do not require independent belay systems because of the nature of the elements, their close proximity to ground level, and the safety precautions (such as spotting) undertaken on each element. The Miniwanca High Challenge Course consists of elements designed to offer groups and individuals learning experiences that challenge them both physically and mentally. A high challenge course is characterized by elements constructed off of the ground at a terminal distance of between 25-35 feet. Independent rope belay systems are required for the safe completion of these elements.

This manual is meant as a clarification of high and team challenge course procedure, as well as a reference for those being trained as course facilitators. There is absolutely NO substitute for hands-on training and instruction. Thus, this manual is a resource and gives general procedures and guidelines. The following is a brief (and by no means exhaustive) list of the goals around which this AYF challenge course is based:

- To enhance self-esteem
- To increase self-confidence
- To improve group cohesion and communication
- To develop higher levels of interpersonal trust
- To foster a willingness to take calculated risks
- To increase awareness of one's body
- To enhance/clarify personal problem solving and decision-making skills
- To open the eyes of individuals to the benefit of Experiential Education[1]

The most important thing to keep in mind when facilitating a challenge-based experience is that you should carefully determine the goals and objectives for your group and conduct the experience accordingly. While any of the stated goals can be incorporated into the selected elements as the group progresses, it is key that the facilitator of the group remains sensitive to the areas of growth most applicable to the learners.

Philosophy

[1] These mentioned goals were adapted from "A Safety Manual for the Mankato State University Adventure Education Program." Jakubowski, et al. (date unknown).

There are two basic attributes of Miniwanca's Challenge Course philosophy. Although there are various ways to approach a challenge course, we believe that "Challenge by Choice" and safety are paramount to a successful program.

Challenge by Choice

Challenge by Choice is all about creating a community that is emotionally safe for all participants. Taken literally, participants are presented with challenges that they choose to or not to accept. A couple of steps should occur during the early stages of a program in order to ensure that this philosophy is what defines the culture. Through personal goal setting, positive encouragement, and the elimination of imposed completion standards, Challenge by Choice can be implemented.

Personal goal setting allows participants the opportunity to verbalize what they consider a successful attempt to be, rather than a participant being held to a pre-determined standard. Participants should not feel judged by how much they do or how far they go, compared to others, but should compare themselves to the goal they set. As facilitators, creating a sense of positive encouragement will also help create this community. Facilitators should also encourage participants to share in positive affirmations and be very firm about the use of negative reinforcement or hazing. Finally, facilitators should be very careful as to how they frame a challenge course experience. Limitations and completion standards could be interpreted as externally imposed success/failure if worded incorrectly. One example of an incorrect statement would be: "Your entire group must complete this challenge to the rules I have stated in order to be successful."

Above all, Challenge by Choice is placing ownership and accountability for a group's successes and failures on the group. Remember that as a facilitator you are there simply to guide a group to a general conclusion safely. What participants learn and how they internalize that learning is what makes this process experiential.

Safety

In order for the learning process to occur, a sense of physical and emotional safety must first be established. If participants feel unsafe, they will not be able to fully focus on their experiences or what they are learning from those experiences. By establishing group expectations for a program or element (such as a recipe for success), remaining steadfast to our planning and implementation, keeping up with regular Miniwanca ropes course trainings, and through the initiation of facilitator levels, we can work to reduce risks related to safety. Facilitators should strive to identify and eliminate or process through real and perceived risks to safety. Regular inspections of staff skills as well as hardware also help Miniwanca manage the safety of its challenge courses. Above all, only physically and emotionally safe environments should be utilized by facilitators for the learning process.

Ideology of Managed Risk and Challenge Course Safety

A description

It would be hard to find any activity in the outdoors that is completely devoid of risk. The same is true for challenge courses. Although the inherent risks can never be eliminated, they can be acknowledged and managed. This is why standardized methods for construction and facilitation are necessary. All participants, prior to beginning a challenge course activity, are made well aware of the inherent risk in that activity. Participants are also made aware of both their role and our role in managing these risks. The policies employed by the AYF have been developed from the review and application of safety standards developed by such organizations as Project Adventure, Inc., Outward Bound, ABEE, and the Boy Scouts of America. Each and every facilitator on the course is trained according to the standards set by the AYF, in consultation with other Challenge Course Practitioners (all must be ACCT certified) and the Risk Management Committee of the AYF Board of Directors. Above all, Miniwanca's facilitators are trained professionals, and it is their judgment and the application of the practices within this manual that allows for the effective mitigation of risk.

When managing risk, it is the principles of safety that should guide our assessments and lead us to making safe judgments. The following list of these principles is general in nature and serves as the advising undercurrent to all of the procedures set forth in this manual:

- ***Redundancy***— All systems for personnel and equipment are set in redundant systems to significantly decrease the potential risk of failure. Examples include, but are not limited to: back-up belayers, needing two facilitators, inspecting gear before and after its use, etc.
- ***Head Over Feet***— Maintaining a principle of head over feet for all elements decreases the risk of the head or upper body of a participant falling to the ground before his or her feet.

- ***Common Sense***— Certain situations, either due to emergency or variable conditions, call for judgments to be made. Sometimes these judgments are outside of the realm of subjects covered within this manual. In these rare situations, common sense and prudent actions should be the rule.
- ***Adequate Fall Arresting***— Although this is further defined for each area of our challenge courses, it is the job of the facilitator and other participants to the best of their abilities, to prudently ensure that a person does not hit the ground with force that could lead to an injury. On the team course this is often accomplished through spotting. On the high course and tower this is often accomplished by keeping a brake hand on the rope at all times.

Instructor Levels

There are four different levels of instructor involvement on the high course. The four levels are distinguished by training in and demonstrated competency in the bulleted areas listed below:

Belayer Level Certification

- Demonstrates understanding of emergency policies.
- Demonstrates knowledge of equipment usage procedures.
- Demonstrates knowledge of the usage for each element on the course.
- Demonstrates appropriate framing for each element on the course.
- Demonstrates proper belay technique (i.e., brake hand, locking off, requesting back up, understands terminology).
- Demonstrates proper spotting technique, if applicable to the element. (e.g. the incline log on the outdoor course).
- Establishes proper communication contract with spotters, climbers and belayers.
- Attaches a climber and belayer to the system correctly.
- Ensures that a back-up belayer is in place and uses proper technique.
- Demonstrates proper technique in lowering climber.

Facilitator Level Certification

- Demonstrates all skills needed for Belayer Level Certification.
- Demonstrates knowledge of the usage for each element they will be belaying.
- Demonstrates appropriate framing for each element they will belay.
- Understands the paperwork and recording procedures.
- Visually inspect all elements prior to usage.
- Demonstrates the ability to tie a Bowline-on-a-Bight at the proper rope location.
- Hangs rope appropriate to element.
- Demonstrates ability to set up belay device.
- Demonstrates understanding of AYF/Miniwanca philosophy relating to the challenge course.
- Demonstrates appropriate (or ensures appropriate) spotting technique.

Course Manager Level Certification

- Demonstrates all skills needed for Belayer Level Certification and Facilitator Level Certification.
- Uses appropriate lobster claw technique.
- Demonstrates rescue technique that is consistent with good judgment.
- Sets belay system on cable correctly (locking carabiners/quick links and redundancy are demonstrated).
- Utilizes rescue gear in a manner congruent with presented emergency.
- Sets ropes systems during rescue in accordance with proper management of the situation.
- Utilizes the rescue gear in a manner congruent with presented emergency.
- Maintains proper proximal distance to the managed site.
- Has a clear understanding of proper use and safety procedures as they pertain to the mechanical lift (if certified for the indoor course).

Course Trainer Level Certification

- Demonstrates all skills needed for Belayer Level Certification, Facilitator Level Certification, and Course Manager Level Certification.
- Documents vast experience with Miniwanca Challenge Courses and/or other comparable challenge courses.

Commented [MS1]: Compare wording to MV.

- Completes a Miniwanca ropes course training.

Overall Parameters for High Challenge Course Facilitation

Description of Tasks

The following list of parameters is meant to encompass all parameters which are not specific to just one event. This list works in conjunction with the individual lists for each event.

The Outdoor High Challenge Course consists of roughly 13 different elements with the lowest starting on the ground, and most others operating at a height of 25-35 feet. Each element is done with no more than two participants. For a complete list of the Outdoor High Challenge Course elements, see the Table of Contents at the beginning of this manual.

The Indoor High Challenge Course (in the Activity Center) consists of 12 different elements, with the lowest starting from the ground and ascending to heights of up to 45 feet. There are two partnered elements, with the rest of the elements supporting only single belay systems. When facilitating this course, the course manager should manage the risk of how the high elements and low elements interface; i.e., setting up elements or facilitating elements that do not physically interfere with each other's space.

Objective(s) and Expectation(s) of the Event

There are several overall objectives of the High Challenge Course. First, when working in conjunction with a Low Challenge Course program, the High Challenge Course is normally utilized as a culmination of the team's effort. Since the High Challenge Course focuses mainly on the experience of the individual (rather than the experience of the team, as with the Low Challenge Course), the objectives also tend to be more personalized. For a list of overall high challenge course objectives, see "Introduction" at the beginning of this manual.

Activity Preparation and Closure

Facilitator Prerequisites

- Every facilitator must be certified by any designated AYF certified trainer before he or she may facilitate any event on the high course. He or she must also be trained on each element that he or she is going to facilitate.
- There will be at least one manager and one facilitator at the challenge course before it can be utilized in a program. As is stated in our EAP/SERP, a Site Leader shall be on call. The normal ratio of participants: facilitators is 12:1. Belay: participants shall not exceed 1:5 while climbing. (I.e., a climbing team should be one belayer to 3-5 participants.)
- An adult will supervise each belaying/climbing group. Course managers can use their discretion to make the final decisions around the number of climbing groups ascending based on factors including age, focus and time available. A conservative approach is suggested.
- The course set-up will include at least one facilitator.
- A minimum of one facilitator for a Challenge Course program will be certified in First Aid and CPR.

Prior to the group's arrival at the course

- A visual inspection will be completed before opening the course. Refer to Appendix for a maintenance/inspection checklist.
- All ropes, harnesses, helmets, and hardware will be inspected prior to and following each use of the course, and shall be replaced as needed.
- All belay systems and other necessary logistics will be in place prior to the group's arrival.

Once the group arrives

- (and before the first climb) Notify the Site Leader that climbers will be going up via radio or phone.
- (and after the final climb) Notify the Site Leader that all climbers are down.

Risk Management Issues for the Facilitator

Prior to a group's arrival at the course

- A first aid kit will be at the challenge area at all times during any high challenge course program facilitation.
- An emergency rescue bag will be placed in close proximity to the event(s) that is/are open. Rescue Bag should include items listed in Site Specific Checklists in the Appendix.
- An emergency vehicle should be available on-site during course operation.
- Some means of electronic, emergency communication (such as a cell phone or Miniwanca Radio) will be present during any high challenge course program facilitation on the course.
- All staff and participants should only use AYF-purchased gear on AYF high courses. No exceptions.

In the event of a rescue

Most rescues on the High Challenge Course involve perceived emotional risk. Assuming that procedures within this manual and those for which a facilitator has been trained are being employed, actual physical risk is minimized. Thus, prevention through attention to detail and following procedures is the foremost means of "rescue." If all things are set according to procedure, and an incident still occurs, it is the physical safety of the participants (both participatory and non-participatory) and the facilitators on the course that is of utmost importance.

Once actual physical risk has been managed, emotional safety and perceived physical risk can be attended to. An "emotional rescue" typically involves calming the participant and facilitating a discussion with this person to understand the situation they perceive they are facing. It may even be necessary to ascend the course under self-belay or through the use of the mechanical lift for closer contact with the participant; however, generally getting the participant down to work out emotional problem is easier than doing so in mid-air.

In the event that a physical rescue needs to be performed, the course manager should adhere to the following:

- The responder to the rescue must be trained in high challenge course rescue (course manager level or higher).
- All gear in the emergency rescue bag will be checked before each program for proper working conditions. Rescue Bag should include items listed in Site Specific Checklists in the Appendix.
- The basic principles of safe belay will be followed while performing a rescue. These include setting redundant safety systems for belay ropes, controlling the ground area around the belay site, and maintaining verbal contracts between everyone integral to the completion of a safe rescue belay.
- It is advisable to maintain control over the rest of the program area during a rescue. Steps to accomplish this might include removing other participants from elements or the program area, halting extraneous conversation around the rescue site, and/or designating a site/ground manager to establish rescue communication channels.
- Decisions around what type of system to set for a rescue should be based on all or some of the following factors:
    - Level of actual physical danger present, such as a compromised airway or circulatory issue or the level of consciousness of the victim.
    - Perceived/Apparent emotional risk versus perceived/apparent physical risk.
    - Training that the rescuer has received from Miniwanca High Challenge Course Training.
- The Site Emergency Response Plan (SERP) should be enacted in the event of a rescue. Attention should be paid to communication with additional responders as needed.

A Note on Belaying

- In a mechanical belay scenario, a belayer is effectively equipped when he or she has a harness, helmet, one locking carabiner, and a belay device. For every climber in the air, there is one belayer and one back up belayer as part of the climbing team. Additional roles may be needed for the climbing team such as rope-stackers, spotters, ladder holders, and goal setters.
- Ropes on the high course are utilized as safety lines. Participants are discouraged from using them as a means of support, especially when they are placing a lot of downward pressure on the rope attached to them. Doing so produces a drastic amount of slack in the system, which can result in falling a significant distance. Allowing participants to use the rope for balance is considered safe and is left up to the discretion of the facilitator.
- When setting up the outdoor course, a facilitator will use the lobster claw self-belay system. In order to allow for free hand movement, a facilitator should complete a pole-wrap self-arrest while setting hardware onto the course.

When setting up the indoor course, a facilitator will either be on rope belay or use the mechanical lift. During the busy programming season, P-cord can be strung through existing pulleys left on the appropriate belay cable.

- All belay systems are set onto belay cables only. Belay cables are designated by a backup cable at both terminal ends of the cable.
- Two belay systems are the maximum number of belay systems that can run off of any belay cable, although one system per cable is preferred.
- When hanging belay ropes, a facilitator will take into account:
    - How a climber is accessing the element for which the rope will be utilized,
    - And the most effective location from which a belay can be enacted.
- For every event the belay system (which includes a steel pulley if the belay is mobile, two steel locking carabiners/quick links or a Shear Reduction Device (indoor course), and a rope) will be attached to a belay cable directly above the entire event.
- For shear reduction, carabiners/quick links will be attached and locked to the outermost attachment points on the steel pulley, which is placed with the free-moving wheel on the belay cable.
- In general, locking carabiners/quick links will be positioned so that while locking them the nuts rotate downwardly and away from the belly of the belayer or climber.
- Attention will be given to the belay device so that it is properly set for a right or left-handed belayer, as appropriate. If the belay device has more than one terminal, the terminal used should be the one farther from the belayer's belly to avoid pinching of clothing (paired with clothing that is not too loose).
- For every climber in the air, there will be a belayer and a backup belayer on the ground.
- Minimum thresholds to determine eligibility to belay include: demonstrated competency, demonstrated maturity, and successful completion of a belay orientation. Factors determining whether group members may be oriented to belay would include (but are not limited to): group focus, number of qualified adults present and the discretion of the Course Manager or other qualified Program Staff.
- An ACCT approved mechanical device must be used in all belay systems. Any full-time AYF Program Team member qualified to manage the course can use discretion in decision-making of appropriate belay devices for each group.
- Upon completion of the program or program day, remove all hardware from belay cable for the outdoor course. During the busy season, P-cord can be strung through the appropriate pulleys on the belay cables. For the indoor course, all ropes will be restrung with runner cord and the ropes stored in their assigned rope bags.
- All ropes, harnesses, helmets, and hardware will be inspected upon completion of a program.
- Belay ropes will be replaced after three years of use or 1500 uses, whichever comes first.
- All gear will be locked in a secure location away from the course and any opportunities for unauthorized access should be removed as best as possible.

Commented [MS2]: Do we adjust?

Commented [MC3]: (This is Carrie Huffman.) According to Rob S.'s most recent ACCT conference the ropes can be in use for 5 years before retirement. The previous number was three.

Commented [MS4]: Compare to MV.

Once the activities end for the day

- All near misses, accidents, or injuries will be documented on the Accident/Incident Report Form, which can be accessed digitally via the *updated link. *(*Course Managers and Facilitators should check with Site Leader at the beginning of the season to get the updated link.)*
- A written log shall be maintained regarding rope usage. Refer to Appendix for an example of the rope log sheet.

Parameters for Participants

Prerequisites

- All participants of the high challenge course must have an assumption of risk form signed. Each participant must also fill out a health history form with a medical release signed. If any participant is designated as a minor, his or her parent or legal guardian must sign as well.
- All participants on the high challenge course should meet the facilitator's standards of participation. Among factors to consider are the participants' ages, maturity levels, physical/emotional development, and personal investment in the experience.
- All participants should wear comfortable clothing loose enough to permit free movement, but not so baggy that entanglement in the rigging results. Clothing should also be weather appropriate. Clothing should also be long

enough to avoid direct contact with the harness (I.e., shirts long enough to cover the belly and shorts long enough to cover the thighs.)

- Securable closed-toed shoes are mandatory on the course. A facilitator should also suggest that jewelry (especially ear and neck) be removed or placed out of the way prior to participation. Jewelry can become damaged due to the nature of the activities or can exacerbate other injuries while on the course.
- No loose items in pockets.

Once arriving at the course

- Generally speaking, the safety zones around the tower and outdoor high course designated by railroad ties are areas targeted as fall zones during outdoor challenge course or tower operation. When there is exposure of anyone's head to falling objects, a helmet should be worn.
- Generally speaking, when any high elements are set and ready for use on the indoor course, a helmet should be worn. As needed, retired ropes should be set on the floor in the indoor Activity Center to designate the safety zones and bring awareness to other staff and participants that may enter the space who, otherwise, are not a part of the group utilizing the course.
- All climbers shall have a harness and helmet in order to be considered ready to climb.
- On the indoor course, participants should be made aware of the level of physical ability needed to ascend some of the rope ladders. The facilitator should discuss with participants effective strategies for ascending. Participants should be made aware that other participants holding the ladder firmly to the ground could assist them in the climb.
- All participants will be spotted until they are a safe distance from the ground when ascending any high course element.
- All participants must use AYF purchased gear on AYF high courses. No exceptions.
- A final check of participants' equipment (ex: harnesses and helmets) will be completed after instruction and prior to climbing. Refer to Appendix for methods.

Once the activities begin

- Prior to beginning any event, a verbal contract consisting of at least two exchanges will be completed between the climber and the belayer. This is done to ensure that both the climber and belayer are in direct communication with regards to each other's safety while on any event. An example is below:

  <u>Climber</u>
  "On belay?"
  "Climbing."
  <u>Belayer</u>
  "Belay on."
  "Climb on."
- Participants engaging in any event are belayed from the time they leave the ground.
- The location of non-active participants will be controlled to areas so that their own physical vulnerability and/or interference with any other safety systems is not an issue.
- Once reaching the end of any event, the participant will sit back in his or her harness and be lowered to the ground or they may climb down from the course, if a safe path can be established.

Miscellaneous

- Annual Inspection by outside vendor. Equipment is checked on a regular basis for safety, repair and maintenance. Inspections shall be documented. Refer to Appendix for an inspection checklist.
- It is the discretion of the course manager as to whether to close/end the high challenge course program for reasons relating to weather, first aid emergency, or potentially faulty hardware or structure. A consultation with the Site Leader (SL) may be warranted. If a decision is made to close the course without consultation of the SL, the SL will be notified of this decision as soon as possible.
- If vandalism is discovered prior to or during the use of any of the AYF Challenge Course, the SL will be notified immediately.

A Note on Emergency Action Steps

As is common throughout the camping and emergency management industries, common sense should be the first rule to follow when responding to an emergency situation (i.e., get out of bad weather, away from a fire, and administer first aid when it is necessary). Due to the size of the American Youth Foundation and Miniwanca coupled with the wide variety of programmatic offerings, a procedure manual has been established for the agency as a whole. Please refer to the Emergency Action Plan for Miniwanca for any procedural questions regarding a response to a particular emergency. Any specific emergency response requirements relating to this course will be discussed during training as deemed necessary.

Specific Parameters for the Outdoor High Elements

Boson's Chairs

Description of Task

The Boson's Chairs consists of 6 swings dangling from a cable, approximately 3-4 feet apart. The object is for each participant to travel from one side of the event to the other. THIS IS A ONE-PERSON EVENT ONLY.

Activity Preparation and Closure

Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- The belay rope gets easily twisted around each swing's attachment cable. Be sure to notify participants of this each time they proceed to move on the event.
- A fall from the swings could result in the participant getting twisted in the swings. Be sure to belay accordingly.

Parameters for Participants

- Wrapping a hand, arm, leg or any body part around a cable for support or leverage is not an option.

Variations

- Have a participant complete this task blindfolded.

Cat Walk

Description of Task

The Cat Walk consists of a single telephone pole suspended between two upright telephone poles. The object is for the participant to cross from one side to the other. THIS IS A ONE-PERSON EVENT ONLY.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- Be sure to inspect the pole for slipperiness while setting up the belay.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- A fall from the Cat Walk could result in the participant coming in contact with the pole. Be sure to belay accordingly. One potential belay technique would be to keep a fairly tight belay on the participant.

Parameters for Participants

- If participants are being lowered to the ground as a means for exiting this element, they should keep at least one foot in contact with the pole until such time as their head clears the event so as to avoid head/neck injury.

Variations

- Have a participant complete push-ups, dancing, etc.

Partner's Crossing at 40 Feet

Description of Task

The Partner's Crossing at 40 Feet consists of utilizing the foot cables from the Multi-use Cable Traverse and the Multi Vine Traverse as a Partner's Crossing (as on the low challenge course). The object, working as a pair, is to move from the narrow end (where the wires form a "V") as far out on the "V" as is possible.

Note, as of July of 2022, this element/function of the course is not utilized as we do not currently have chest harnesses in inventory. The cables for this exist on the course and could be brought back into programming if proper chest harnesses are purchased. Doing so should be considered with thought to the learning goals of groups that come through the Miniwanca Ropes Course.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix in regard to the daily inspection list.
- A chest harness is needed for this event. For a complete description on how to put on the chest harness, as well as how to hook it to the belay system, refer to the Appendix section entitled "Harness Hook Up."
- Due to the proximity of participants and their associated belay personnel during this event, facilitators should consider the most effective way of hanging belay ropes for this element. It is suggested that belayers position themselves to the outside of the "V" for this event.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Because participants are leaning during this event, belayers should make sure adequate slack is in the rope so that participants are supporting each other and not hanging from their belay rope while on the event.
- Be sure to keep an eye on the hand placement of the participants. For this element, belayers should take into account that interdigitation could result in hand and finger injuries. Facilitators should assess a group's age and maturity when deciding whether or not to allow this practice.
- When participants fall, they will swing toward their own foot cable. Adjust rope slack accordingly. A brief belaying strategy session may be warranted between facilitators prior to beginning this element with a group.

Parameters for Participants

- Participants should not ascend the pole for this event simultaneously.
- Be sure to explain proper and appropriate hand placement prior to beginning this event.

Variations

- Have participants complete this task muted.

Criss-Cross Logs

Description of Task

The Criss-Cross Logs consist of two logs suspended from two upright poles at opposing angles. The object is to travel from one side of the event to the other.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix regarding the daily inspection list.
- Be sure to inspect the pole for slipperiness while setting up the belay by checking the inclined log.
- Be sure to hang belay ropes so that one end hangs toward the inside of the course, and the other follows the staples up the telephone pole (this will require stringing the rope between the two suspended logs.)

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Keep the belay semi-tight for the participant on this event. Be aware of which way their body position is going to allow them to fall.
- Be sure slack is continually taken if they are proceeding upwards on the logs and continually given if they are descending. This helps the participants to maintain better balance.

Parameters for Participant

- While being lowered, the participants should take extra caution since they will have to be lowered between the two suspended logs.

Variations

- Have a participant complete this task blindfolded or losing a limb (either one hand or one foot).
- Additional challenges could include hopping or completing push-ups.

Floating Islands

Description of Task

The Floating Islands consists of 6 wooden platforms between one to two feet apart suspended on either side by foot cables. The object, either working in a pair or as an individual, is to move from one end of the platforms to the other using only good balance or a partner if one is available.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix regarding the daily inspection list.
- Be sure to check the platforms for slipperiness while hanging the belays.
- Be sure to hang the belay rope so that each end hangs down from a separate side of the platforms. This will help reduce rope to element friction while lowering participants.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Pay close attention when facilitating this event with two participants especially when they begin to approach one another.
- Belayers should communicate beforehand as to the route they will take to follow their climbers. This will help the belayers avoid belay rope entanglement.
- Try to avoid as much friction as possible between the rope and the cable/platforms when lowering a participant to the ground.

Parameters for Participants

- Wrapping a hand, arm, leg or any body part around a cable for support or leverage is not an option.
- When lowering a participant to the ground, have them leave at least one foot on the platform until their head has cleared the event so as to prevent head/neck injury.

Variations

- Have participant hop or take a backwards step.

Dangling Duo

Description of Task

The Dangling Duo consists of five rungs between 4.5-5.5 feet apart. The object, either working in a pair or as an individual, is to get to the top of the ladder without using the side cables for any assistance.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- Attach the bottom rung of the ladder to the hanging looped cable ends.
- The belay system should include a set of two locking carabiners/quick links and one rope per climber secured on the belay cable immediately above the event.
- The locking carabiners/quick links should be placed on the belay cable so that their gates, when tightened, rotate downwardly.
- The belay rope is strung through these two locking carabiners/quick links.
- Participants enter this event from the ground by climbing onto the first rung.
- Upon completion of the event, remove the bottom rung of the ladder.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Be sure to note the potential danger of wood or cable splinters.
- A fall from the first rung could result in ground contact. Keep the belay tight. Spotters are also recommended at the bottom rung as necessary.
- Ground participants, belayers, and facilitators should maintain a safe distance from the bottom rung of the ladder while climbers are in the air, due to its exaggerated swing. The facilitator should stop an overly exaggerated swing of the ladder.

Parameters for Participants

- Using any of the cables as a handhold is not recommended, due to potential splinters in the cables.
- Use of the belay rope by the participant as a means of hauling or climbing results in additional slack and downward pressure in the rope system, which is not always manageable by all belayers. Facilitators should pay close attention to this and end this practice should safety warrant.
- Once reaching the top and while being lowered, the participant should minimally have a hand in front of his or her face for safety. Additionally, pulling the ladder away from the descent path of the participant can further aid in avoiding potential injury.

Variations

- Have participants complete this task blindfolded or muted.

Inclined Log

Description of Task

The Inclined Log consists of a telephone pole suspended at a 45-degree angle from an upright telephone pole to the ground. The object is for the participant to proceed from the ground to the end of the pole using good balance. This event is a potential for entering the high course events as well.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix regarding the daily inspection list.
- Be sure to inspect the log for slipperiness before opening the event.
- A chest harness only is needed for this event if the participant is using it as a means to get to the starting position of the Partners Crossing at 40 Feet.
- Participants are to be belayed from the time they leave the ground. This is not a solely spotted event.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Be sure to maintain a tight belay on each participant, since a fall from 5 feet or less could result in ground contact. The participants should likewise be spotted until they reach a safe height.

Parameters for Participants

- A spotter's responsibility is the safety of the climber and those around them. They are present to lessen the degree of the fall for the participant. Physically supporting a participant should be secondary to the participant's safety.

Variations

- Have a participant complete this task blindfolded or losing a limb (either one hand or one foot).

Multi-use Cable Traverse

Description of Task

The Multi-use Cable Traverse consists of a foot cable and two ropes that can be fastened to 3 sets of eyebolts in various ways. The object working in a pair or as an individual is to move from one end of the foot cable to the other using only the rope(s) according to how they are set up. In all instances, the ropes are secured using screw links between the rope and the eyebolts. The three options for the set-up of the ropes are the Hourglass, the Postman's Walk, and the Tension Traverse. Each of these setups is discussed below:

The Hourglass

The Hourglass is set up using both ropes attached to the upper and lower eyebolts on the two opposing poles (upper on one end to lower on the other end, and vice versa). The object, working as an individual, is to move from one end of the ropes to the other. Each participant can stand only on the rope(s) (not the foot cable on this event) and must keep two points of contact on each rope the entire time. Partnering on this event is not suggested, due to the excessive leaning and number of ropes and the imbalance associated with this event.

The Postman's Walk

The Postman's Walk is set up using one rope attached to the middle eyebolt on the two opposing poles (middle on one end to middle on the other end). The object is to move from one end of the foot cable to the other using only the rope for balance. The rope is secured at one end by being drawn through the screw link and tied back onto itself using a prussic knot. This allows the facilitator to adjust the tension of the support rope based on the group's goals or ability.

The Tension Traverse

The Tension Traverse is set up using both ropes; each is attached only to the upper eyebolt on the two opposing poles (upper on one end and dangling on the other end for both). The object, either working in a pair or as an individual, is to move from one end of the foot cable to the other using only the ropes or your partner for balance. This is very similar to the Tension Traverse incorporated in the low elements. The ropes can be secured with a loose knot during set up to the middle of the foot cable to aid the participants in getting across.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- It is advised to hang the ends of the ropes on opposite sides of this element because of the number of ropes associated with this element and the potential for injury as such.
- Start each climber on opposite ends of the cable or on the same end.
- Upon completion of event, the activity ropes may stay attached to the eyebolts.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Pay close attention when facilitating this event with two participants especially when they begin to approach one another.
- Be aware of sudden, twisting falls.
- Make sure that the prussic knot is very secure (use a self-weight test) when utilizing this event.

Parameters for Participants
- Wrapping a hand, arm, leg or any body part around a rope for support or leverage is not an option.
- Participants should be reminded of their body position as it relates to the position of their belay ropes.
- If partnering on this event, be sure that each participant remains aware of his or her partner's position.

Variations
- Have participants complete this task without the use of a limb (such as an arm or leg), or blindfolded.

Multi-Vine Traverse

Description of Task

The Multi-Vine Traverse consists of a foot cable, which is crossed using the aid of 6 ropes dangling from a cable. The object, either working in a pair or as an individual, is to move from one end of the foot cable to the other using only the dangling ropes.

Activity Preparation and Closure
- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- Start each climber on opposite ends of the foot cable or on the same end.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator
- Pay close attention when facilitating this event with two participants especially when they begin to approach one another.
- Be aware of sudden, twisting falls.

Parameters for Participants
- Wrapping a hand, arm, leg or any body part around a cable for support or leverage is not an option.

Variations
- Have participants complete this task blindfolded, muted, or without the use of a limb (such as an arm or leg).

Hourglass

Description of Task

This event consists of 3 ropes that stretch between two poles. The two outer ropes start high on one pole and are attached low on the other pole. The middle rope is attached low on the pole and attached high on the other pole. The object is for a participant to travel from one side of the event to the other. This is a one-person event only.

Activity preparation and closure
- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- Belay rope should be set up with both ends on the same side of the event.

Safety concerns for facilitator
- Participants are most likely to fall during the middle transition area when moving from one rope to the other.
- Be aware of sudden, twisting falls.

Parameters for participants

- Wrapping hand, arm, leg, or any body part around rope for support or leverage is not an option.

Variations

- Have participants complete event blindfolded.

Big Buckets

Description of Task

This event consists of 11 rope steps that are strung from two cables about 2-4 feet apart. The object for the participant is to travel from one side of the element to the other. This is a one-person event only.

Activity preparation and closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- Belay rope should be set up at the ladder end of the event with the belay end going over the accessory cables and the climbers end going through the accessory cables.

Safety concerns for facilitator

- A fall from this element means participant must come off to allow the element to be reset using the weight system.

Parameters for participants

- Wrapping hand, arm, leg, or any body part around rope for support or leverage is not an option.
- A fall from this element means participant must come off to reset the belay system.

Variations

- Have participants complete event blindfolded.

Commented [MS5]: Remove and create write up for Charlie Chaplin

Commented [MC6R5]: (Carrie Huffman speaking). I agree that "Big Buckets" as a name has no meaning to this element. Charlie Chaplin makes more sense, but only to people who know who he is. Futhermore, I want to say that "Charlie Chaplin" may be a part of the '20's "cancel culture." Research is needed before we name this element after him.

Heebie Jeebie (a.k.a. Jeebie Lunge)

Description of Task

This event consists of a foot cable that stretches between two poles. At the start there is a hand rope that starts high and going down and attaching to the foot cable ¾ the way across. From the accessory cable there is a rope loop that hangs down to the event where the hand rope attaches to the foot cable. The object is for the participant to use the hand rope until they can make the switch to the dangling rope loop to cross the event. This is a one-person event only.

Activity preparation and closure:

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- Belay rope should be set up with ends on opposite sides of the element.

Safety concerns for facilitator

- Participants are more likely to fall when the hand rope gets closer to the foot cable and when making the transition to the rope loop.
- The belayer may need to give participant some slack when the hand rope gets closer to the foot cable.

Parameters for participants

- Wrapping hand, arm, leg, or any body part around rope for support or leverage is not an option.
- When lowering off event keep feet on the foot cable until head is below cable on the opposite side of the belayer.

Variations

- Have participants complete event blindfolded.

Specific Parameters for the Indoor High Elements

The Dangle Trio

Description of Task

The Dangling trio consists of six 4'X6' beams hung on vertical cables resembling a giant ladder. The object is for the participants to ascend the element without the use of the cabling on the sides. This event may be done solo, with one partner or with two partners.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Be sure to check the area surrounding the element for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Be sure to check the condition of each rung for structural integrity, slivers, etc.
- Lower the ladder from the haul pulley and remove the haul rope from the element.
- String belay ropes comparable to the number of people using the element.
- There are two additional rungs that may be hung in order to lower the starting point of the element. At a minimum, one of the rungs will be hung. It is up to the discretion of the course manager as to whether or not to hang the lower rung. Factors to include in this decision-making process are: participant age, participant physical ability and the overall goals and objectives for using this element in the program.
- At the conclusion of this activity, remove all belay ropes and detachable rungs and secure the element using the haul pulley system.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- As the climber(s) begin the element, make sure there are adequate numbers of spotters for each progressing climber. At least one spotter per climber is preferred.
- The facilitator should address communication issues between climbers and belayers prior to beginning the element. With potentially three belay teams in such close proximity, it may be difficult for adequate communication between belayer and climber. The use of names between climber and belayer is strongly recommended.
- The facilitator will maintain a steady awareness as to the swinging of the element as the participants ascend, and arrest the swinging as necessary for safety.

Parameters for Participants

- Climbers are discouraged from using the vertical cables and the utility rope as a means of support or leverage.
- Remind climbers of the principle of safety concerning "head-over-feet," as there is a tendency on this element to hang in opposition to this principle.
- Climbers will be made aware of the safety concerns relating to climbing each other, or stacking, during this element. Areas to take note of include the collarbone area, fingers, kneecaps and the head/neck area.

Variations

- Have the climbers complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or with less climbers to assist them.

The Vertical Playpen

Description of Task

The Vertical Playpen consists of a variety of boards, ropes, ladders and beams strung vertically. The object is for participants to ascend the Playpen without using the side cables for leverage. This element may be done alone or with a partner.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Be sure to check the area surrounding the element for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Be sure to check the condition of each of the components for structural integrity, slivers, etc.
- Lower the element from the haul pulley and remove the haul rope.
- Unwrap and hang the entrance ladder from the rapid links.
- Hang the belay ropes comparable to the number of people using the element.
- At the conclusion of this activity, remove all belay ropes and wrap the rope ladder around the bottom beam and secure the element using the haul pulley system.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- As the climber(s) begin the element, make sure there are adequate numbers of spotters for each progressing climber. At least one spotter per climber is preferred.
- The facilitator will address communication issues between climbers and belayers prior to beginning the element. With potentially two belay teams in such close proximity, it may be difficult for adequate communication between belayer and climber. The use of names between climber and belayer is strongly recommended.
- The facilitator will maintain a steady awareness as to the swinging of the element as the participants ascend, and arrest the swinging as necessary for safety.
- In general, there are very few places for participants to steady themselves on this element. The facilitator will remind the belay teams to maintain tight control of the belay for the entirety of this element.

Parameters for Participants

- Climbers are discouraged from using the vertical cables and the utility rope as a means of support or leverage.
- Remind climbers of the principle of safety concerning "head-over-feet," as there is a tendency on this element to hang in opposition to this principle.
- Climbers will be made aware of the safety concerns relating to climbing each other, or stacking, during this element. Areas to take note of include the collarbone area, fingers, kneecaps and the head/neck area.

Variations

- Have the climbers complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or without another climber to assist them.

The Centipede

Description of Task

The Centipede consists of four 4'X4' beams attached at the terminating ends and hung vertically. The object is for the participants to ascend the element. This event may only be done solo.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Be sure to check the area surrounding the element for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Be sure to check the condition of each climbing section and its staples for structural integrity, slivers, etc.
- Lower the element from the haul pulley and remove the haul rope from the element.
- Hang the lower 4'X4' beam using rapid link.
- Hang belay rope for element.
- At the conclusion of this element, remove belay rope and detachable beam and secure the element using the haul pulley system.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- As the climbers begin the elements, make sure there is a spotter for the progressing climber. At least one spotter for the climber is preferred.
- The facilitator will maintain a steady awareness as to the swinging of the element as the participants ascend, and arrest the swinging as necessary for safety.
- The belay rope and climber hardware has a tendency to catch on the staples used to ascend this element. Facilitators should be in communication with climbers to minimize these hang-ups.
- Watch for climbers jamming their fingers or hands into the ropes and hardware attaching each section of element.

Parameters for Participants

- Climbers should be discouraged from using the attachment hardware and ropes as a handhold.

Variations

- Have the climbers complete the activity blindfolded.

The High Swinging Log

Description of Task

The High Swinging Log consists of a 10' 4'X6' beam hung on vertical cables at each terminating end. Because of the angle of the cables, the log swings/rotates on three planes: side to side, front to back, and on its central axis. The object is for the participants to ascend the element's rope ladder and traverse across. This event may only be done solo.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Be sure to check the area surrounding the element for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Be sure to check the condition of the log and rope ladder for structural integrity.
- Lower the ladder and runner rope from the haul pulley and remove the haul rope from the element.
- Hang belay rope.
- At the conclusion of this element, remove belay rope and secure the element's rope ladder using the haul pulley system.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- The facilitator will watch for swing from the rope ladder, and arrest the swinging as necessary.
- The rope ladder for this element is much longer than the rest of the elements on the indoor course. The facilitator will take note of this and assess the participants' abilities to complete this element.

Parameters for Participants

- Climbers are encouraged to rest as they ascend the ladder or once they reach the element.
- Climbers should be in control of their movements as they cross the log. Climbers should be discouraged from leaping or traversing too fast across the element.

Variations

- Have the climber complete the activity silently or blindfolded.

The Hanging Rope Traverse

Description of Task

The Hanging Rope Traverse consists of a foot cable suspended across the width of the indoor course and a multi-purpose utility rope system suspended directly above it. The three options for using this element as described below are: Multi-Vine

Traverse, Jeebie Lunge, or High Tension Traverse. The object is for the climber to ascend the element's rope ladder and traverse across the cable using whichever combination of the utility ropes is strung. This event may only be done solo.

The utility ropes hang vertically and are on a pulley/curtain system so that they can be extended to provide a steady course across the foot cable for the Multi-Vine or retracted for use in the Jeebie Lunge or High Tension Traverse.

Note: The utility ropes for this element may be strung in any combination of the three listed below, provided a course manager approves the set up.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- **Multi-Vine:** Using the utility rope pulley system, make sure that the utility ropes are extended fully to the middle of the element. Using the utility ropes for support, the object is for the climber to traverse across the length of the foot cable.
- **Jeebie Lunge:** Connect the long hanging utility rope (attached at the anchor on the East Wall of the Indoor Course) to the foot cable anterior to the Crosby Clamp with a small rapid link. Using the utility rope pulley system, retract the hanging utility ropes halfway. The objective is for the climber to traverse part of the way across the foot cable using the hanging utility ropes and then to balance himself or herself and reach ("lunge") for the rope connected at an angle to the foot cable.
- **High Tension Traverse:** Using the utility rope pulley system, retract the hanging ropes fully. If done correctly, there should still be some length of hanging utility ropes over the element. Flake the long hanging utility rope (attached at the anchor on the East Wall of the Indoor Course) and hang it down from the element. Using the long hanging utility rope, the object is for the climber to traverse across the foot cable using only the long hanging utility rope for support. The climber may need a belay assist to traverse across the element, since the entrance point to the element is opposite the anchor site for the long hanging utility rope.
- Be sure to check the area surrounding the element for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Be sure to check the condition of the foot cable, utility rope system and rope ladder for structural integrity.
- Lower the ladder and runner rope from the haul pulley and remove the haul rope from the element.
- Hang belay rope.
- At the conclusion of this element, remove belay rope and secure the element's rope ladder using the haul pulley system. Any utility ropes used in moving the hanging utility ropes will be coiled and placed out of reach from ground participants.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- The facilitator will watch for swing from the rope ladder, and arrest the swinging as necessary.
- When lowering the climber on this element, the facilitator should take note of the proscenium of the stage and lower a safe distance from it.
- Belayers should be ready to arrest a sudden fall, due to the nature and use of the ropes utilized on this element.

Parameters for Participants

- Climbers should be in control of their movements as they traverse the cable. Climbers should be discouraged from leaping or traversing too fast across the element.

Variations

- Have the climber complete the activity silently or blindfolded.

The High Cable Traverse

Description of Task

The High Cable Traverse consists of a foot cable suspended across the width of the indoor course and a multi-purpose set of utility ropes strung horizontally above the foot cable. The three options for using this element as described below are: High Tension Traverse, Postman's Walk, or the Two-Line Traverse. The object is for the climber to ascend the element's rope ladder and traverse across the cable using whichever combination of the utility rope(s) that are strung. This event may only be done solo.

The utility ropes hang horizontally and are attached at each end to a 4"X4" containing 3 evenly spaced eyebolts. The facilitator may attach one end of one rope to the center eyebolt and leave the other end hanging for use as the High Tension Traverse, attach one rope to the center eyebolt on both ends for the Postman's Walk, or a rope to each of the two outermost eyebolts on both ends for use in the Two-Line Traverse.
Note: The utility ropes for this element may be strung in any combination of the three listed below, provided a course manager approves the set up.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- **High Tension Traverse:** Attach the long horizontal utility rope to the center eyebolt on the West side of the Indoor Course directly above the foot cable. Flake the long horizontal utility rope and hang it down from the element. Using the long horizontal utility rope, the object is for the climber to traverse across the foot cable using only the long horizontal utility rope for support.
- **Postman's Walk:** Attach the long horizontal utility rope to the center eyebolt on both sides of the Indoor Course directly above the foot cable. Using the long horizontal utility rope, the object is for participants to traverse across the foot cable using only the long horizontal utility rope for support.
- **Two-Line Traverse:** Attach the two long horizontal utility ropes to the outermost eyebolts on both sides of the Indoor Course slightly offset from the foot cable. Using both long horizontal utility ropes, the object is for the climber to traverse across the foot cable using only the long horizontal utility ropes for support.
- Be sure to check the area surrounding the element for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Be sure to check the condition of the foot cable, utility rope system and rope ladder for structural integrity.
- Lower the ladder and runner rope from the haul pulley and remove the haul rope from the element.
- Hang belay rope.
- At the conclusion of this element, remove belay rope and secure the element's rope ladder using the haul pulley system. Make sure all utility ropes used in this element are coiled and placed out of reach of ground participants.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- The facilitator will watch for swing from the rope ladder, and arrest the swinging as necessary.
- When lowering climbers on this element, the facilitator should take note of the proscenium of the stage and lower a safe distance from it.
- Belayers should be ready to arrest a sudden fall, due to the nature and use of the ropes utilized on this element.
- Due to their proximity this element facilitators should exercise caution when simultaneously using this event with the Vertical Playpen or Dangling Trio.

Parameters for Participants

- Climbers should be in control of their movements as they traverse the cable. Climbers should be discouraged from leaping or traversing too fast across the element.

Variations

- Have the climber complete the activity silently or blindfolded.

Overall Parameters for Climbing Wall Facilitation

Description of Tasks

The following list of parameters are meant to encompass all parameters which are not specific to just one event. This list works in conjunction with and not in opposition to the individual lists for each event.

The Outdoor Climbing Wall consists of 6 different elements (4 climbing walls, 1 rappel wall, 1 low bouldering wall) all starting at ground level, and reaching heights of 25-35 feet. Each climbing side is facilitated with no more than one participant, and the rappel side is limited to two. This lends itself to more individual development, rather than direct team development as with the Low Challenge Course. The Indoor Climbing Wall Consists of three primary pitches on one face. There are 3 belay pulleys available for use.

Objective(s) and Expectation(s) of the Event

There are several overall objectives of the Climbing Wall. Since the Climbing Wall focuses mainly on the experience of the individual (rather than the experience of the team, as with the Low Challenge Course), the objectives also tend to be more personalized.

Activity Preparation and Closure

Facilitator Prerequisites

- Every facilitator must be certified by a designated AYF certified trainer before he or she may facilitate any event on the Outdoor or Indoor Climbing Wall. He or she must also be trained on each element that he or she is going to facilitate.
- There will be at least one manager and one facilitator at the challenge course before it can be utilized in a program. As is stated in our EAP/SERP, a Site Leader shall be on call. The normal ratio of participants : facilitators is 12:1.
- There will be at least two facilitators at the Outdoor or Indoor Climbing Wall before they can be opened for a program. Ideally, there should be one facilitator on each side of the Outdoor Wall where participants are engaged in activity.
- For each rappel deck at the Outdoor Wall in operation there shall be one facilitator on that deck.

Commented [MS7]: Set up minimum for wall only, none for HC.

Prior to the Group's Arrival at the Climbing Wall

- A visual inspection will be completed before opening the Climbing Wall. Refer to Appendix for a maintenance/inspection checklist.
- All ropes, harnesses, helmets, and hardware will be inspected prior to and following each use of the Climbing Wall, and shall be replaced as needed.
- Tracer ropes will be lowered to the ground and the necessary belay ropes threaded.
- All belay systems and other necessary logistics will be in place prior to the group's arrival.
- All staff and participants will only use AYF purchased gear on AYF climbing walls. No exceptions.

Once the group arrives

- (and before the first climb) Notify the Site Leader that climbers will be going up via radio or phone.
- (and after the final climb) Notify the Site Leader that all climbers are down.

A Note on Belaying

- In a mechanical belay scenario, a belayer is effectively equipped when he or she has a harness, helmet, one locking carabiner, and a belay device. For every climber in the air, there is one belayer and one back up belayer as part of

the climbing team. Additional roles may be needed for the climbing team such as rope-stackers, spotters, ladder holders, and goal setters.

- For Rappelling, an approved belay device shall be attached by two carabiners/quick links to the bottom belay cable. The belay rope then is threaded through figure eight and attached to Rappeller. Descent will be controlled by the participant and belayed by the facilitator. The facilitator will always be tethered to the Tower.
- All belay ropes for the rappel are dynamic ropes. Belay ropes for the climbing surfaces can be dynamic or static ropes.
- Rappel ropes are static ropes.
- For the climbing surfaces on the outdoor wall, the belay system will be attached by two carabiners/quick links. This will be either on the belay cable immediately above the climb or one on each swaged cables immediately above the climb. The belay rope will run through these two carabiners/quick links and down to the ground. It will be attached to the climbers using an ACCT recommended knot.
- In general, all belay system carabiners/quick links will be placed opposite and opposed with the nut of the gate rotating downward.
- For climbing on the indoor wall, the belay system runs through a belay pulley. It will be attached to the climbers using an ACCT recommended knot.
- Carabiner attachment to the climber will be made so that the nut on the gate rotates downward and away from the belly of the climber and belayer.
- Attention will be given to the belay device so that it is properly set for a right or left-handed belayer, as appropriate. If the belay device has more than one terminal, the terminal used should be the one farther from the belayer's belly to avoid pinching of clothing (paired with clothing that is not too loose).
- All belays shall be set up onto belay cables or approved belay anchors only. Belay cables are designated by a backup cable at both terminal ends of the cable. Only one belay will be rigged to each belay cable.
- Two belay systems are the maximum number of belay systems that can run off of any belay cable, although one system per cable is preferred. The second belay system attached to a belay cable should be utilized for person or gear rescue.
- If necessary, each belayer should be anchored to the ground by either another person or by another ground-weighted structure. Potential situations could include: the climber's weight vastly outweighs the belayer; the belayer could be dragged into the element during a dramatic fall, etc.
- Minimum thresholds to determine eligibility to belay include: demonstrated competency, demonstrated maturity, and successful completion of a belay orientation. Factors determining whether group members may be oriented to belay would include (but are not limited to): group focus, number of qualified adults present and the discretion of the Course Manager or other qualified Program Staff.

Once the activities end for the day

- Upon completion of the program, the runner ropes should be restrung and the belay ropes placed back in their appropriate storage location.
- All tracer ropes will be secured to an anchor at least 10ft from ground level.
- The tower will be secured from incidental, non-authorized use following each program use. This is done by resetting the locked tarp around the base of the outdoor climbing tower. For the indoor wall they ropes are removed (or replaced with p-cord) and the warning sign strung across. Then all climbing gear is locked away and inaccessible by unsupervised persons.
- All ropes, harnesses, helmets, and hardware will be inspected upon completion of a program.
- Belay ropes will be replaced after three years of use or 1500 uses, whichever comes first.
- The Rope log must be filled out at the end of each climbing session.
- All gear will be locked in a secure location away from the course and any opportunities for unauthorized access should be removed as best as possible.

Risk Management Issues for the Facilitator

Prior to a group's arrival at the Tower

- A first aid kit will be placed at the Climbing Wall at all times during any Climbing Wall program facilitation.

- An emergency/rescue bag will be placed in close proximity to the event(s) that is/are open. This bag will include a rope long enough to hang from any event, several locking carabiners, and other items as deemed necessary by the course manager.
- An emergency vehicle should be available on-site during course operation.
- Some means of electronic, emergency communication shall be present during any Challenge Course program and facilitation on the Climbing Walls.

Once the activities end for the day

- All near misses, accidents, or injuries will be documented on the Accident/Incident Report Form, which can be accessed digitally via the *updated link. *(*Course Managers and Facilitators should check with Site Leader at the beginning of the season to get the updated link.)*
- A written log shall be maintained regarding rope usage. Refer to Appendix for an example of the rope log sheet.

Parameters for Participants

Prerequisites

- All participants of the Climbing Wall must have an assumption of risk form signed. Each participant must also fill out a health history form with a medical release signed. If any participant is designated as a minor, his or her parent or legal guardian must sign as well.
- All participants on the Climbing Wall should meet the facilitator's standards of participation. Among factors to consider are the participants' ages, maturity levels, physical/emotional development, and personal investment.
- All participants should wear comfortable clothing loose enough to permit free movement, but not so baggy that entanglement in the rigging results. Clothing should also be weather appropriate. Clothing should also be long enough to avoid direct contact with the harness (I.e., shirts long enough to cover the belly and shorts long enough to cover the thighs.)
- Securable closed-toed shoes are mandatory on the Climbing Walls. A facilitator should also suggest that jewelry (especially ear and neck) be removed or placed out of the way prior to participation. Jewelry can become damaged due to the nature of the activities or can exacerbate other injuries while on the course.
- No loose items in pockets.
- All participants will use only AYF purchased gear on AYF Climbing Walls. No exceptions.

Once arriving at the Climbing Wall

- Anyone in the outdoor climbing wall activity area will wear a helmet when there is a risk of exposure to anyone's head from falling objects. Generally speaking, the safety zones around the outdoor climbing wall are designated by railroad ties are areas targeted as fall zones during tower operation.
- Anyone involved in the belay team, the climber, or other participants in proximity to the indoor climbing wall when it is in use will wear a helmet when there is a risk of exposure to anyone's head from falling objects. Retired ropes should be placed on the ground around the indoor climbing wall to designate the safety zone and to bring awareness to people who may come through the area who are not a part of the group actively climbing on the wall at a given time.
- The climbers shall have a harness and helmet in order to be considered ready to climb.
- A final check of participants' equipment (ex: harnesses and helmets) will be completed after instruction and prior to climbing. Refer to Appendix for methods.

Once the activities begin

- Prior to beginning any event, a verbal contract consisting of at least two exchanges will be completed between the climber and the belayer. This is done to ensure that both the climber and belayer are in direct communication with regards to each other's safety while on any event. An example is below:

Climber	Belayer
"On belay?"	"Belay is on."

"Climbing." "Climb on."

- The location of non-active participants will be controlled to areas that their own physical vulnerability is not compromised and/or does not result in interference with any other safety system.

Miscellaneous

- Annual Inspection by outside vendor. Equipment is checked on a regular basis for safety, repair and maintenance. Inspections shall be documented. Refer to Appendix for an inspection checklist.
- It is the discretion of the course manager as to whether to close/end the Climbing Wall program for reasons relating to weather, first aid emergency, or potentially faulty hardware or structure. A consultation with the AYF Site Leader (SL) may be warranted. If a decision is made to close the Climbing Wall without consultation of the SL, the SL will be notified of this decision immediately.
- If vandalism is discovered prior to or during the use of any of the AYF Climbing Walls, the SL will be notified immediately.

Climbing Surfaces

Description of Task

The Climbing Walls' climbing routes are designed to meet the needs of all participants, with skill challenges from a slight incline for the beginner, to more challenging surfaces with varying angles.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- Be sure to hang the belay ropes in conjunction with the number of routes being utilized for the program; when applicable, make sure both ends of the belay rope hang down the same side of the wall.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Make sure that the belayers are belaying appropriate to the climber's body position and location on the climbing surface. Refer to training components including belay school and skeletal climbing.
- If necessary, each belayer should be anchored to the ground by either another person or by another ground-weighted structure. Potential situations could include: the climber's weight vastly outweighs the belayer; the belayer could be dragged into the element during a dramatic fall, etc.
- Facilitators will maintain vigilant ground management to ensure that belay systems and inactive participants remain safe.

Bouldering Area

- The Bouldering Area is for low level climbing without belay.
- Spotting is required for each climber that is bouldering.
- A boundary line, 10 ft from ground level, is the maximum height for the bouldering wall. It is imperative that even if the climber is being spotted, he or she should never pass the boundary line above eye level.
- Bouldering may not occur beneath a belayed climber.

Parameters for Participants

- Using the belay rope as a means of support is not suggested.
- Once reaching the top of a climbing wall, the participant should make verbal contact with the belayer, sit back in his or her harness, hold on to the rope and keep his/her feet in contact with the wall, as he or she is lowered to the ground.
- Climbers should remain controlled during ascents and descents. Wild or reckless behavior should not be tolerated.

- Harnesses will be attached with one locking carabiner in accordance with the manufacturer's suggestions.

Variations

- Have the participant complete this task blindfolded, with or without help from ground crew.
- Have participant climb only on selected/color-coded holds.

Rappel Surface

Description of Task

The rappel surface has 2 platforms, one at 33' and the other at roughly 15'. The lower platform has a door, which opens. This platform is for beginning participants and participants with height concerns. The object is for the rappeller to descend the wall, having the control of his or her own descent.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Refer to the maintenance checklist in the Appendix in regards to the daily inspection list.
- To set up a rappel line, attach two steel locking carabiners to the top belay cable. The rappel line should be attached to these two carabiners using an ACCT recommended knot. It is then threaded through a figure eight, which is attached to the rappeller using one steel locking carabiner.
- For the rappel belay, an approved belay device will be attached to the lower belay cable via two steel locking carabiners/quick links. The rappel belay line will be threaded through a Rescue eight belay device, which will be attached to the climber via an ACCT recommended knot and one steel locking carabineer. The other end of the belay line is held and maintained by the facilitator/belayer.
- Participants will gain access to the rappel platform by ascending one of the support telephone poles on which staples are attached. They are belayed from the time they leave the ground.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Instruct participants on how to rappel safely. Areas to include for this instruction are: L-shaped body position, brake hand down and away from descending device, and little or no bounding.
- Facilitator will always keep a hand on the belay line.
- Facilitator will always remain tethered to Tower by lobster claws.
- There will always be at least one trained facilitator on any rappel platform that is in use.

Parameters for Participants

- Rappellers should remain controlled during ascents and descents. Wild or reckless behavior should not be tolerated.

Variations

- Have participant complete this task blindfolded, with or without help from ground crew.

Overall Parameters for Team Challenge Course Facilitation

Description of Tasks

The following list of parameters are meant to encompass all parameters which are not specific to just one event. This list works in conjunction with and not in opposition to the individual lists for each event.

The Outdoor Team Challenge Course consists of roughly 9 elements that do not require participant belay. Spotting is utilized when a participant's safety may be compromised. The elements on the course are facilitated either on low, suspended cables or by utilizing constructed platforms or ground posts.

The Indoor Team Challenge Course consists of 12 elements that do not require participant belay. Spotting is utilized when a participant's safety may be compromised. The elements on the course are facilitated on either low, suspended cables, elements suspended from cables, or portable elements constructed for use anywhere.

Objective(s) and Expectation(s) of the Event

The Team Challenge Course elements are meant to be completed as a part of a team effort. The minimum and maximum number of participants on each element varies depending on how the element is utilized. Most groups facilitated on Miniwanca's Team Challenge Course consist of 8-12 participants. For a list of overall team challenge course objectives, see "Introduction" at the beginning of this manual.

Activity Preparation and Closure

Facilitator Prerequisites

- There will be at least one facilitator at the low course before it can be opened for a program. The normal ratio of participants : facilitators is 12:1.
- Any designated AYF trainer must certify every facilitator before he or she may facilitate any element on the low course. He or she must also be trained on each element that he or she is going to facilitate.
- Every facilitator must read all safety policies and understand their implementation.

Prior to the Group's Arrival at the Course

- Be sure to go over all necessary logistical matters with the group prior to their arrival. Such things to be covered include: Clothing, food/water, goals and objectives, parameters, outdoor ethics, and transportation logistics.
- It is the responsibility of the facilitator to likewise keep tabs on things such as: weather, the group's ages, physical abilities and demographics, each individual's medical history, and any equipment needed.
- When using the indoor course, preliminary planning and setup should take place prior to the group's arrival. Factors to consider include, the group's age and abilities, how many people total will be participating, and how else the indoor space is being utilized (e.g., Is the high course being used as well?).
- A visual inspection will be completed before opening the course. Refer to Appendix for a maintenance/inspection checklist.
- All ropes, cables, tires, beams and standing platforms will be inspected prior to the set-up of the course. All hardware will be inspected prior to and following each use and shall be replaced as needed.

A note on spotting

- Prior to any element that requires it, spotting should be taught to all participants. The facilitator should also cover any aspects of an element with specific differentiation in spotting.
- The primary principle of spotting is to protect the participant's head and upper body from severe ground/object contact. Spotting does not mean catching; rather, it is maintenance from injury. Even if the participant ends up on the ground (albeit without injury) then the spotter has done an effective job.
- Spotters are not static individuals. They are to move with the participant and stay in a strategic position at all times. For every participant in an exposed position of potential physical danger (e.g., off of the ground, traversing a cable, etc.), there should be a minimum of one spotter (more if the activity requires it).
- Facilitators will pay very close attention to size and strength pairings between the participants and those whom they are spotting.
- Clothing (such as belts, belt loops, etc.) will not be used as a means to spot a participant.

Once the group arrives at the course

- Make sure the group understands your role as a facilitator. This should be differentiated from the group's leader (a role which must be filled internally by the group). As facilitator, your chief responsibilities are to frame, game, claim and maintain risk management policies.
- Giving the answer to a problem is not the job of the facilitator; rather, asking appropriate questions may be more appropriate in facilitating the group to an acceptable conclusion. ENCOURAGE, ENCOURAGE, ENCOURAGE.

- Be sure to maintain a level of flexibility, which will in turn maintain the level of difficulty of an element with the group's overall ability and physical make up.
- Create an air of openness and trust by encouraging human emotions. Joy, fear, laughter, pride in accomplishment, disappointment, and pain all have an important role in the growth process.

Risk Management Issues for the Facilitator

Prior to the group's arrival at the course

- A first aid kit is at the course at all times during any team challenge course program facilitation.
- An emergency vehicle should be available on-site during course operation.
- Some means of electronic, emergency communication shall be present during any team challenge course program facilitation.

Once the activities begin for the day

- Either a facilitator or an adult will be present at any critical spotting points on any element.
- At all times, the participant's head will be higher than the feet.
- Be sure to discuss with participants the dangers of lifting each other using the power of their backs instead of their legs.

Once the activities end for the day

- All near misses, accidents, or injuries shall be documented on the Accident/Incident Report Form. See Appendix for a copy of this form.

Parameters for Participants

Prerequisites

- All participants of the team challenge course must have an Assumption of Risk form signed. Each participant must also fill out a Health History form with a medical release signed. If any participant is designated as a minor, his or her parent or legal guardian must sign as well.
- The facilitator should take into account each individual's characteristics as well as overall group dynamics before letting anyone onto the low challenge course. Among factors to consider are the group's age range, their physical/emotional maturity, their current skill levels relating to both group process and physical capability, and their level of safety consciousness.
- All participants should wear comfortable clothing loose enough to permit free movement but not so baggy that a hazard is present. Clothing should also be weather appropriate.
- No open-toed shoes are allowed on the course. A facilitator will also suggest that jewelry (especially ear and neck) be removed or placed out of the way prior to participation. Jewelry can become damaged due to the nature of the activities or can exacerbate other injuries while on the course.

Once arriving at the course

- At no time will anyone enter the team challenge course activity area or mount an element without the expressed consent of the facilitator.
- Whether proceeding from one element to the next or transporting someone as part of an element's requirements, moving should only be done in a slow, controlled manner.
- Participants are allowed to gather around and encourage their fellow team members, provided they are not standing in a place of physical vulnerability, and they are not interfering with the facilitator and/or group process.

Miscellaneous

- Annual Inspection by outside vendor. Equipment is checked on a regular basis for safety, repair and maintenance. Inspections shall be documented. Refer to Appendix for an inspection checklist.

- It is the discretion of the program facilitator as to whether to close/end the team challenge course program for reasons relating to weather, first aid emergency, or potentially faulty hardware or structure. A consultation with the AYF Designated Program Leader may be warranted.
- All ropes and hardware will be inspected upon completion of a program. If a decision is made to close the team challenge course without consultation of the SL, the SL will be notified of this decision immediately.
- If vandalism is discovered prior to or during the use of any of the AYF Team Challenge Course, the SL will be notified immediately.

Specific Parameters for the Outdoor Low Challenge Course

The All Aboard

Description of Task

The All Aboard consists of a 2' X 2' X 8" platform secured in an open area on the ground. The object of the All Aboard is for all of the participants to have at least one foot on the platform with no one touching the ground for a specified time.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the platform for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the platform for structural integrity, protruding nails, etc. Also check for slipperiness.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Keep an eye on the overall balance of the group. Be aware that a fall on this event could result in a "group pile-up."
- The facilitator or any onlookers should aid in spotting this event.

Parameters for Participants

- All participants are to have only one foot on the platform and nothing else touching the ground. (i.e., no stacking or piggybacking).
- Challenge the group to remain off the ground for a specified amount of time (e.g., for 10 seconds or until they sing a verse of "Yankee Doodle").
- Lying down and piling on top of each other is not an option.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or by limiting the number of boards onto which the participants can step.

Partner's Crossing

Description of Task

The Partner's Crossing consists of two cables extending from one tree to two other trees in a "V" formation. The object of the Partner's Crossing is for two participants working together to move from the narrow end of the cables to the wider end.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the cables for any objects that may result in injury should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the cable, paying particular attention to its connection points and overall appearance.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Keep an eye on the overall balance of the pair. Since falling is the natural result, a constant guard on spotting should be kept to make sure that the participants are spotted until they safely dismount the activity.

- Keep an eye out for any interdigitation by the participants, as it is not recommended due to potential injury. Interdigitation could result in hand and finger injuries. Facilitators should assess a group's age and maturity when deciding whether or not to allow this practice.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event.
- Spotting for this event should include several people on the inside and a few outside of the cables, bearing in mind that the most concentrated amount of spotters should be on the inside. A fall to the outside is not as likely once the pair is balanced on the cable.

Parameters for Participants

- All participants will aid in the spotting of this event if they are not the ones attempting it.
- All participants will make sure that they are in constant communication with their spotters, especially when they feel ready to dismount or are about to fall.
- Explain proper and appropriate hand placement prior to beginning this event.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity blindfolded or by designating pairings based on height, gender, etc.

Nitro Crossing

Description of Task

The Nitro Crossing consists of a cable spanning between two trees 14' in the air with a swing rope that attaches to it and reaches the ground. The object of the Nitro Crossing is to transport the entire group and/or a container of "nitro" (water) from one side of a designated boundary to the other without touching the ground within the boundary and without spilling the "nitro."

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the swing for objects that can contribute to injury in the event of a fall especially roots and rocks lying within the swing-only boundary.
- If you are going to utilize the "nitro can" variation, make sure that you have the container filled with water prior to the group's arrival at the element.
- Prior to the beginning the element, be sure that the boundaries are set in concordance with the group's abilities, or have the group set their own boundaries as a part of the process.
- Check that the cable and the swing rope are in good, working condition.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Point out the movements that are necessary for the participants to make while spotting this event.
- On this event, pay extra attention to the upper body strength of each participant. First, the participants could lose their grip on the swing rope as a result of little body strength. Second, the greatest tendency is for people to swing and lose their grip at the lowest point, which usually results in them slamming into the ground. Finally, self-consciousness about one's upper body strength can lead to decreased enthusiasm regarding the element and even result in the participant refusing to attempt the element.
- Caution the participants about the use of a foot loop on the swing rope.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event.
- Watch participants while they are swinging. Be sure they don't swing toward anchors or trees.

Parameters for Participants

- Jumping or diving for the swing rope is prohibited.
- Use of any outside objects (such as sticks or logs) to aid in swinging or reaching the swing rope must first meet with the approval of the facilitator.
- Wrapping a hand or arm around the rope to increase leverage or stability is not an option. Also, tying the rope to anyone is not an option.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, by letting them swing without the "nitro," or by placing a platform on the other side onto which they all must land.

Spider's Web

Description of Task

The Spider's Web consists of an inter-tangling of bungee cord suspended between two trees in a pattern that resembles a spider web. The object of the Spider's Web is for participants to pass through the prefabricated "spider web" without any group member touching the web.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the web for any objects that could result in injury should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the web, both its interior and connection points.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Watch for lax spotting on this event. This usually occurs as group members become more focused on their task.
- Be sure that participants maintain the "head-over-feet" rule.
- Discuss (if necessary) the sensitivity that should be maintained while holding and passing someone (i.e., differing gender contact).
- The facilitator or any onlookers can also aid in spotting this event.

Parameters for Participants

- No passing over the top of, going around, or going underneath the web.
- Do not to let go of a participant until they are safe and steadied. Do not drop them just because they touch the web.
- Have the group set the parameters around what is considered a "touch" of the web and any associated penalties. This will help place accountability for the success/failure of the element on the group members.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or by fulfilling a different role if they feel uncomfortable being passed. Also, a facilitator has the option of reopening holes, when he or she deems it appropriate.
- This is a great element for team members to exercise group accountability. Be sure not to position yourself as the "sole and final judge" of whether or not they accomplished their goal(s).
- Have the group take a length of rope and pass it through a pre-determined number of holes without touching the web.

Horizontal Spider's Web

Description of task

The Horizontal Spider's Web consists of an inter-tangling of bungee cord suspended between four posts in a pattern that resembles a spider web. The web has two height settings for variation. The object of the Horizontal Spider's Web is for participants to pass through the prefabricated "spider web" without any group member touching the web.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the web for any objects that could result in injury should a fall occur.

- Check the condition of the web, both its interior and connection points.
- Make sure the web is clipped into an appropriate height setting for the group.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Discuss (if necessary) the sensitivity that should be maintained while holding and passing someone (i.e., differing gender contact).
- Be sure that participants maintain the "head-over-feet" rule.
- If lifting occurs, make sure to have spotters.

Parameters for Participants

- No running or jumping through the web.
- Have the group set the parameters around what is considered a "touch" of the web and any associated penalties. This will help place accountability for the success/failure of the element on the group members.

Variations

- A rule could be made that once a part of the web has been stepped-in that space must stay occupied or else it will close for the rest of the challenge.
- Create a specific path the group must take to get to the other side of the web in a Kaboom Maze style.

Tension Traverse

Description of Task

The Tension Traverse consists of cables suspended between different trees. The object of the Tension Traverse is for the participants as a group to traverse their way around the cable.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the cables for any objects that may contribute to an injury from a fall.
- Check the condition of the cables (especially at their connection points).

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- There should be an adequate number of spotters for every participant on the cable. Factors to consider when determining the ideal number of spotters should include: balance of the traversing individual, the individuals potential exposure to a fall, and the participant's location in relation to other spotters/group members.
- Watch for sudden falls from the cable.
- Participants have a tendency to engage in this event without spotters. Be sure to watch this and take the necessary steps to minimize this happening.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event. A strategic place for the facilitator to stand is between the participant and the anchor point.
- To further mitigate potentially injurious falls, facilitators should demonstrate stepping off of the cable versus falling from the cable with a person's feet still on the cable.

Parameters for Participants

- Move with the participant when spotting, constantly staying in the most efficient position.
- Dismount this element in a controlled manner; no jumping or swinging off.
- For additional safety, have participants demonstrate how to safely step off of the element. Also, allow participants not actively traversing the cable to place a foot on the ground.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or by stipulating that once a tree is touched, it must have constant human contact until the last person touches it.

The Giant's Finger

Description of Task

The Giant's Finger consists of a 12" diameter pole extending 11' out of the ground. Accompanying the pole is a 15" tire. The object of the Giant's Finger is for the participants to remove the tire from around the pole without disturbing the pole too much (or it will "wake the giant").

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the surrounding area for anything that could cause an injury if fallen upon.
- Check the condition of the pole and tire. Be sure that the pole shows no sign of stress and that the tire is devoid of water, animal nests, and/or harmful insects.
- Place tire prior to groups arrival (i.e., already around the pole if your goal is for the participants to remove it, and vice versa).

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Make sure that the group fully understands and has demonstrated proper spotting techniques, due to the potential height a person can reach during this element.
- Constant attention to the dynamics of the group should be maintained. A facilitator should immediately stop the activity if he or she feels that any participant is in danger of injury.
- This activity should be framed so that the participants take on the responsibility of monitoring the amount of "touching" on the pole. The facilitator should not place themselves in the role of judge or juror.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event.
- Consider the entirety of a group's abilities and internal dynamics when deciding if any proposed solution is safe. Be sure to alter or reframe any safety rules as necessary to ensure that an appropriate level of safety is maintained.

Parameters for Participants

- Be sure to spot when appropriate and throughout the course of the activity.
- The tire must maintain human contact and not be thrown at any time it is off of the ground.
- Participants should not risk the safety of other group members in an effort to not touch the pole. In other words, it is better to allow a group member to touch the pole if it will help keep them from falling. Remember, the participants are in control of how much touching is considered too much.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or by specifying an area around the pole in which participants cannot talk.

The Islands

Description of Task

The Islands consists of 3 platforms extending between 12" and 16" out of the ground and 8' apart. Accompanying the platforms is 3-6' 2 X 10 boards. The object of the Islands is for all of the participants to go from the starting point to the finishing point (using 2 X 10's as bridges between the platforms) without touching the ground.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the surrounding area for anything that could cause an injury if fallen upon.
- Check the condition of each platform and 2 X 10. Be sure that the boards show no signs of stress or cracking.
- Have the boards laid out in a random pattern. Tell the group that once they touch a board, they are not allowed to put it down.
- In the briefing for this element, make sure you show them the correct placement of the boards onto the platform. Also, set a standard for walking across the boards rather than running and jumping.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Keep an eye on the overall balance when a participant begins moving from one platform to the next. Be sure that they are spotted every time they begin to move.
- The boards have a tendency to teeter without proper weight distribution. Lead the participants to recognizing this and taking action accordingly.
- All spotters will be cautioned about keeping an eye out for passing boards.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event.

Parameters for Participants

- Spot when appropriate.
- Running or jumping from platform to platform, or platform to board is prohibited.
- Encourage the group to set appropriate consequences for persons or props touching the ground.
- Boards may not be thrown. Hand them carefully.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or by confiscating a board once it has touched the ground. You can also have the entire group start over or just one person when a participant touches the ground.
- Another variation would be to have all participants start while on the platform and remain on the last platform until everyone is on it.

The Muse

Description of Task

The Muse consists of 14 posts extending between 6" and 8" out of the ground in alternating rows of 4's and 3's and each row is 6' from the next. Accompanying the posts is 4-6' 2 X 10 boards. The object of the Muse is for all of the participants to go from the starting point to the finishing point (using 2 X 10's as bridges between the posts) without touching the ground.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the surrounding area for anything that could cause an injury if fallen upon.
- Check the condition of each post and 2 X 10. Be sure that the boards show no signs of stress or cracking and that the posts are sturdy in the ground.
- Have the boards laid out in a random pattern. Tell the group that once they touch a board, they are not allowed to put it down.
- In the briefing for this element, make sure you show them the safe placement of the boards onto each post. Participants should be guided to conclusions around what consists of a safe board placement. Also, set a standard for walking across the boards rather than running and jumping.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- This activity is largely a process activity. In other words, once the process if figured out by the participants, the task left is a matter of steadfast completion. Facilitators should make sure that attention to safety is not compromised once the process is figured out.
- Keep an eye on the overall balance when a participant begins moving from one post to the next. Spot accordingly.
- The boards have a tendency to teeter without proper weight distribution. Lead the participants to recognizing this and taking action accordingly.
- All spotters will be cautioned about keeping an eye out for passing boards.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event.

Parameters for Participants

- Spot when appropriate.
- Running or jumping from post to post is prohibited.
- Encourage the group to set appropriate consequences for persons or props touching the ground.
- Boards may not be thrown. Hand them carefully.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or by confiscating a board once it has touched the ground. You can also have the entire group start over or just one person when a participant touches the ground.
- Facilitators can also diminish the number of boards available to increase the challenge. However, a minimum of three boards is needed to complete the element.

The Wall

Description of Task

The Wall consists of several boards making a wall between two trees that extends about 12' into the air. The object of the Wall is for all of the participants to get from one side of the wall to the other with no more than two people on the top of the wall at any given time assisting a third over.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the element for anything that may cause injury should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the wall, grounds, ladder, trees, and support beams for any sign of deterioration in structural integrity. Also check the wall (especially the top) for splinters and protruding nails.
- Have an extension ladder unlocked and placed at the wall for participant and facilitator descent.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Maintain a close watch on the spotters to ensure proper coverage and technique. Ensure that climbers are being spotted the entire time they are on this element.
- Make sure that participants are not pulling on loose clothing (belts, belt loops, shirt collars, etc.) as a means of aiding the climbers.
- Make sure that the climbers' heads are above their feet at all times.
- Make sure that when a climber comes down, he or she is gently lowered to the ground and not suddenly dropped. The climber should be in control of his or her descent.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event.

Parameters for Participants

- Using the sides of the wall, holes or slits in the wall, or the trees is not an option.

- When a climber decides that he or she cannot make it up and over and is ready to come down, the spotters should gently push him or her into the wall to help control the descent. Above all, the lowering should be done slowly.
- Spot climbers on both sides of the wall at all times. There should be a minimum of two spotters for every climber in the air. This includes those descending down the back side of the wall. To help insure adequate coverage, engage the entire group in spotting if they are not actively hauling or climbing.
- If utilizing one person to aid in lifting the rest of the team members from the ground over the wall, strongly suggest that the lifter have his or her back flush with the wall and his or her knees bent to avoid back strain.
- Hanging upside down is not an option.
- No more than three climbers can be on top of the wall at any given time. Once the third person has been assisted to the top, one of the three must come down.

Variations

- Set a time limit, or have some participants blindfolded or unable to speak.
- Diminishing Load: once making it over the wall, have those climbers only spot. Do not allow them to assist in getting the rest of their team over the wall (except from the top).

The Trust Fall

Description of Task

The Trust Fall consists of two 3' X 3' platforms about 4' and 5' off of the ground. The object of the Trust Fall is for each participant in turn to get atop the platform and fall backwards down into the catching arms of the rest of the participants.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the platform for any objects that could result in injury should ground contact be made. Be especially thorough when inspecting the fall zone area.
- Check the condition of the platform and its ladder for any hazardous conditions.
- For this event, the facilitator may want another facilitator or trusted adult to aid in spotting. If utilizing two adults or one adult and a facilitator, one person is typically on the platform checking the catching line and the other is on the ground doing the same.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- It is strongly encouraged that the facilitator closely examines his or her group's dynamics before deciding to proceed to this event. It is imperative to judge things like participant upper-body strength, their attention to detail, and their overall attitude regarding personal and group safety.
- Discuss the differentiation in spotting for this event. The proper position for a spotter is outlined below. It is referred to as the "zipper formation."
- The heaviest part of the body for mature females is around the hip area, for mature males it is around the shoulder blade/chest area. Be sure that this is pointed out to the participants and that you are keeping check on this each time a new faller is about to begin. Overall, the further from the feet that the body part is, the more force it is generating while falling. Adjust spotters accordingly, paying attention to the position of the faller's neck and head.
- Position one spotter specifically as the "head catcher." Although he or she may or may not actually catch the head, his or her primary responsibilities are to ensure that the spotting line is in line with the faller and to ensure that the faller's head/neck is not missed on the spotting line.
- Pay special attention to the wearing of jewelry and eyeglasses on this event. Be sure that all items are removed prior to beginning the activity if they are deemed a safety hazard by the facilitator.
- Create some form of verbal contract consisting of at least two exchanges, which is repeated each time that a faller begins to fall. A potential contract is below:

Faller	Spotters (in unison)
"Spotters ready?"	"Ready."
"Falling."	"Fall on."

- There must be a minimum of 8-10 spotters available in order to do this element.
- In determining which platform is appropriate, it is suggested that the platform height be nearest to the average height of the catchers' hips.

Parameters for Participants

- Use the aforementioned verbal contract every time a new faller is about to fall.
- Participants will be instructed to say "STOP, STOP, STOP" (or something to that effect) if at any time they feel uncomfortable with some aspect of the element (spotting line, faller's position, etc.).
- Be sure to rotate the positions of the participants during spotting, either due to the weight ratio between them and the faller or just to move them to an alternate location.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity with some blindfolded or by lowering the faller to the ground and allowing him or her to remain there for a few seconds. Whisper "clouds, clouds, clouds" as he descends. Some form of exclaiming after each faller usually boosts the excitement for this event.
- Play "Salute to the Sun" Activity (Rohnke). Start the "faller" flat and stiff on the ground and have the entire group lift him or her to the platform. Have the spotters place hands on the participants and lower him or her back to the ground.

Zipper Formation Spotting

- Participants stand with feet about shoulder width apart and with one foot slightly in front of the other.
- Participants' knees are slightly bent and their backs straight.
- Participant's arms are bent at the elbows, out in front of him or her and with his or her palms face up.
- As alluded to in its name, every participant's arms should have one other arm from another person between their arms, so that their hands are nearly poking a belly and vice versa. Heads and shoulders should be slightly back so as not to be caught by a falling participant.
- The spotters should have an element of bounce in their body positioning. Not so relaxed that the faller goes through them but not so stiff that they could be injured upon catching the faller. Chiefly, participants should avoid bending at the hips or elbows.
- Upon safely landing in the arms of the spotters, the faller should be lowered to the ground feet first.
- Fallers should maintain a rigid body position (knees locked, ankles locked, etc.). Their arms should be brought across their chest or in some other way secured so as not to flail out and injure a spotter.
- Fallers will be cautioned to fall in a straight line (not sit down into their spotters' hands). Falling while bending at the waist most often results in the faller making ground contact.
- Fallers and spotters will run through the verbal contract each time the faller is ready to fall.

Whale Watch

Description of Task

The Whale Watch consists of a 10' X 12' platform placed on a 12" fulcrum. The object is for participants to evenly spread their group out on the platform so as to balance it off of the ground for a given amount of time.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the surrounding area for anything that could cause an injury if fallen upon.
- Check the condition of the platform. Be sure that the boards show no signs of stress or cracking and that the fulcrum is sturdy in the ground.
- Check under and around the platform for any signs of animals or harmful insects.
- Place the platform on the fulcrum in a place that is appropriate to the dynamics of a group.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Address hand or foot entrapment potential with a group. Be sure that participants are aware of safe entering and exiting procedures for this element.
- Keep an eye on the overall balance of the group on the platform. Place spotters as necessary.
- Make participants aware of catapulting potential when unequal weight is distributed on the platform.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event. Be sure to caution spotters about proper body positioning to avoid personal injury.

Parameters for Participants

- Spot when appropriate.
- Make participants aware of the personal space around them and that while trying to maintain their own balance, they are not dangerously flailing their arms at someone else.
- When entering or exiting this element, participants should step far enough away as to avoid hand/foot entrapment beneath the platform.
- Discourage intentional catapulting.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication or with some blindfolded. You can also have the entire group start over or just one person when a participant touches the ground.
- Facilitators can move the platform off center from the fulcrum.
- Have participants all enter the element at the exact same time.

Specific Parameters for the Indoor Low Challenge Elements

The Portable All Aboard

Description of Task

The Portable All Aboard consists of a 2' X 2' X 8" platform and smaller sized platforms placed in an open area on the floor or ground. The object of the All Aboard is for all of the participants to have at least one foot on the platform with no one touching the ground for a specified time.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the platform for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the platform for structural integrity, protruding nails, etc. Also check for slipperiness.
- Make sure that the area upon which the platform is placed is level and balanced.
- At the conclusion of this activity, make sure all portable platforms are placed in a secure location.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Keep an eye on the overall balance of the group. Be aware that a fall on this event could result in a "group pile-up."
- The facilitator or any onlookers should aid in spotting this event.

Parameters for Participants

- All participants are to have only one foot on the platform and nothing else touching the ground. (i.e., no stacking or piggybacking).
- Challenge the group to remain off the ground for a specified amount of time (e.g., for 10 seconds or until they sing a verse of "Yankee Doodle").
- Lying down and piling on top of each other is not an option.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some people blindfolded, or by limiting the number of boards onto which the participants can step.

The Porthole

Description of Task

The Porthole consists of a tire suspended from two cables, hanging perpendicular to the ground. The Porthole tire also has two stabilizing ropes on its underside that are held by participants for additional support. The object of the Porthole is for the participants to pass through the tire safely with minimal or no touching of the tire.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the tire for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the tire for structural integrity or protruding steel belts (if using steel radials).
- Lower the cables from the cable haul pulley and remove the haul rope from the cables.
- Attach the tire to the cable using rapid links; make sure the gates screw down.
- At the conclusion of this element, secure the element's cables using the haul pulley system. Be sure to return the tire to a secure storage location.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Make sure that the group remains attentive to safety and spotting on both sides of the tire.
- If necessary, it is encouraged that the facilitator rotate rolls of spotting, catching, and holding the rope during this event to maintain overall group interest.
- The facilitator or any onlookers should aid in spotting this event.
- Address issues around body touching/body image with this event, due to the nature of passing participants through the tire.

Parameters for Participants

- Participants will maintain the principle of safety concerning having the head higher than the feet.
- Challenge the group by limiting or not allowing the physical touching of the tire.
- In general, participants should not use the cable or any of its associated attachments as a means of leverage for passing through the tire.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or setting specific consequences for touching the tire.

The Nitro Traverse

Description of Task

The Nitro Traverse consists of a platform suspended from a zip pulley on an overhead cable, hanging about 2' off of the ground. The Nitro Traverse platform is connected to the overhead cable via a rapid link attached to each of the four ropes originating from the corners of the platform. The object of the Nitro Traverse is for the participants to pass an object or a person on the platform between two pre-determined points with little or no contact with the ground.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area that is within the expanse of the cable for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the platform, its ropes and the cable and pulley system for structural integrity, slivers or fraying.
- Lower the cable from the cable haul pulley and remove the haul rope from the cables.

- Attach each of the four ropes originating from each corner of the platform to the cable using a rapid link; make sure the gate screws down.
- Make sure all necessary padding is secure to the walls; or that ample spotters will be available to spot this event.
- At the conclusion of this element, secure the element's cable using the haul pulley system. Be sure to return the platform to a secure storage location.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Make sure that the group remains attentive to safety and spotting throughout this event. Spotters should traverse across the floor and remain in line with the platform and the participant's potential fall points.
- If necessary, it is encouraged that the facilitator rotate rolls of spotting, catching, and holding the platform during this event to maintain overall group interest.
- The facilitator or any onlookers should aid in spotting this event.
- Address issues of reckless behavior and what is and is not an acceptable speed of the swing as it travels between the starting and finishing points.
- This element is designed specifically to better enable people with physical disabilities to fully participate. Facilitators should take each individual's abilities into account when framing safety for this element.

Parameters for Participants

- The swinging or moving of the platform should always be done with control. Fast, violent swings or unnecessary spins should be avoided.
- Participants should remain seated during their time on the platform.
- Participants will be cautioned about the dangling of their feet off of the platform and how to do so without risking injury; i.e., keeping a slight bend at the knees will help to avoid hyperextension of the knees.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, or by placing a cup of water on the platform (in lieu of a person) with the object of getting it across without spilling it.

The Low Swinging Log

Description of Task

The Low Swinging Log consists of a 16' 4"X6" beam hung about 2 feet off of the ground on vertical cables at each terminating end. Because of the angle of the cables, the log swings/rotates on three planes: side to side, front to back, and on its central axis. The object is for the participants to traverse across the beam alone or with a partner.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the log for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the log, cables and bolts for structural integrity, slivers, etc.
- Lower the cables from the cable haul pulleys and remove the haul ropes from the cables.
- Attach each end of the log to the cables using rapid links; make sure the gates screw downwardly.
- At the conclusion of this element, secure the element's cables using the haul pulley system. Be sure to return the log to a secure storage location.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- For this event, there will be a spotter on each side of the log per participant in the air. Make sure that the group remains attentive to safety and spotting on both sides of the log.
- Additionally, there will be two spotters at either end of the beam to arrest any lateral swinging that may result from participant movement on the log.
- If necessary, it is encouraged that the facilitator rotate rolls of spotting and catching during this event to maintain overall group interest.
- The facilitator or any onlookers should aid in spotting this event.

Parameters for Participants

- Participants will maintain the principle of safety concerning having the head higher than the feet.
- Participants should remain in control of their movements across the log. There should be no sudden jumps or running.
- Non-active participants should remain a safe distance away from the sides or ends of the beam because of its large swinging radius.
- Encourage participants to practice stepping off of the element as opposed to falling.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some participants blindfolded, or setting specific consequences for touching the ground. Facilitators can also challenge the entire group to get across the beam without falling.
- Also, facilitators can challenge participants to run and jump onto the log and try to maintain their balance. This should be done one at a time and only with groups who have demonstrated excellence in spotting technique and in their attention to safety.

The Swinging Traverse

Description of Task

The Swinging Traverse consists 4 vertical cables suspended from the ceiling onto which can be attached swinging tires (a single rope attached at the apex of each tire) or swinging platforms (a spliced rope attached at opposing ends of a 3' 1"X6" board). Both the tires and the swinging platforms are attached to each of the overhead cables via a rapid link. The object of the Swinging Traverse is for the participants to move across a predetermined area on the tires or platforms without touching the ground.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area that is within the expanse of the element for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the platforms, their ropes and the cables for structural integrity, slivers or fraying. Be sure to check the condition of the tires, their ropes and the cables for structural integrity, fraying, or the appearance of steel slivers (if using steel radials).
- Lower the cables from the cable haul pulley and remove the haul rope from the cables.
- **Tire Traverse:** Attach each of the tires to an individual cable via a rapid link. Make sure the rapid link nut screws down.
- **Swinging Platform:** Attach each of the platforms to an individual cable via a rapid link. Make sure the rapid link nut screws down.
- **Combination:** After assessing a group's ability to complete the element, attach any combination of tires and platforms to individual cables. If utilizing this option, make sure to discuss differences in spotting and differences in traversing across the different media.
- Make sure all necessary padding is secure to the walls; or that ample spotters will be available to spot this event.
- At the conclusion of this element, remove any attached objects and secure the cables using the cable-hauling pulley. Make sure all platforms and tires are returned to a secure storage location.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Make sure that the group remains attentive to safety and spotting throughout this event. Spotters should traverse across the floor and remain in line with the platforms or tires and the participant's potential fall points.
- If necessary, it is encouraged that the facilitator rotate rolls of spotting and catching during this event to maintain overall group interest.
- The facilitator or any onlookers should aid in spotting this event.

- Address issues of reckless behavior and what is and is not an acceptable speed or distance of swinging as the participants travel between the starting and finishing points.
- This element inherently requires the use of ample upper body strength to progress completely across its length. Make sure to take this into account when framing the activity.

Parameters for Participants

- The swinging or moving of the platforms or tires should always be done with control. Fast, violent swings or unnecessary spins should be avoided.
- Encourage participants to practice stepping off rather than falling before beginning the element.
- If desired, encourage participants to perform a self-weight test to aid in determining each individual's physical ability to perform on this element.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some participants blindfolded, or by placing a cup of water on the platform (in lieu of a person) with the object of getting it across without spilling it.

The Nitro Crossing

Description of Task

The Nitro Crossing consists of two vertical cables. Using rapid links spliced utility ropes with spliced foot loops are attached to the cables. The object of the Nitro Crossing is to transport the entire group and/or a container of "nitro" (water) from one side of a designated boundary to the other without touching the ground within the boundary and without spilling the "nitro." This element may be completed with one rope between two defined points, or two ropes between two defined points with a "safe zone" in the middle.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- Check the area surrounding the swing for objects that can contribute to injury in the event of a fall.
- If you are going to utilize the "nitro can" variation, make sure that you have the container filled with water prior to the group's arrival at the element.
- Lower the swing cables using the haul pulley system and attach the utility ropes with rapid links, making sure that the nut screws down.
- Prior to the beginning of the element, be sure that the boundaries are set in concordance with the group's abilities, or have the group set their own boundaries as a part of the process. When this element is facilitated using two ropes, be sure to assess the starting and landing points of each rope.
- Check that the cable and the swing rope are in good, working condition.
- Make sure all necessary padding is secure to the walls; or that ample spotters will be available to spot this event.
- Upon completion of this element, remove any attached ropes and secure the cables using the cable-hauling pulley. Make sure all ropes are returned to a secure storage location.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Point out the movements that are necessary for the participants to make while spotting this event.
- On this event, pay extra attention to the upper body strength of each participant. First, the participants could lose their grip on the swing rope as a result of little body strength. Second, the greatest tendency is for people to swing and lose their grip at the lowest point, which usually results in them slamming into the ground.
- Encourage the participants to perform a self-weight test prior to beginning the element. This will help the facilitator assess the group's ability to complete this element safely. Self-consciousness about one's upper body strength can lead to decreased enthusiasm regarding the element and even result in the participant refusing to attempt it.

- Caution the participants about the use of a foot loop on the swing rope. Make sure that they understand how to safely step out of the foot loop.
- The facilitator or any onlookers can aid in spotting this event.

Parameters for Participants

- Jumping or diving for the swing rope is not suggested.
- Use of any outside objects (such as sticks or logs) to aid in swinging or reaching the swing rope must first meet with the approval of the facilitator.
- Wrapping a hand or arm around the rope to increase leverage or stability is not an option. Also, tying the rope to anyone is not an option.
- Participants should be able to step straight down from the element, without extending a leg forward. Stepping forward could cause a potentially dangerous fall.
- Have the group assess its need for the foot loop.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity using only non-verbal communication, with some blindfolded, by letting them swing without the "nitro," or by placing a specific landing zone on the other side onto which they all must land.

The Low Cable Traverse

Description of Task

The Low Cable Traverse consists of two foot cables suspended across the width of the indoor course. The three options for using this element as described below are: Tension Traverse, Partner's Crossing, or the Single/Double-Line Traverse. The object is for the participants to traverse across the cable using whichever combination of the utility ropes and cables that are strung.

The utility ropes used in this element hang horizontally above the High Tension Traverse Foot Cable and are attached at each end to a 4"X4" containing 3 evenly spaced eyebolts. The facilitator may attach one end of one rope to the each of the center eyebolts on both sides of the course as well as one cable between each of the cable brackets and leave the other end hanging for use as the Tension Traverse, attach two cables to both of the cable brackets and no ropes for the Partner's Crossing, or one or two cables to the cable brackets and no ropes for use in the Single/Double-Line Traverse.

Note: To attach the foot cables to the brackets, place a rapid link in the bracket. Attach the turnbuckle eyebolt to the rapid link and tighten the turnbuckle until the cable has reached its desired tension.

Activity Preparation and Closure

- **Tension Traverse:** Attach one cable between the widths of the course. Attach one or both of the long hanging utility ropes from the High Cable Traverse to the center eyebolt above the element. Flake the long horizontal utility rope and hang it down from the element. Using the long horizontal utility rope, the object is for participants to traverse across the foot cable using only the long horizontal utility rope for support. All of the participants can start on one side or the element, or the group can be split and each subgroup must traverse to the opposite side of the element.
- **Partner's Crossing:** Attach two cables (one cable to each of the cable brackets). No ropes are needed. Using one partner, the object is for the participants to traverse across the element together.
- **Single/Double-Line Traverse:** If utilizing the Single-Line Traverse, attach one cable between the cable brackets. If utilizing the Double-Line Traverse, attach two cables (one to each of the cable brackets). These cables may be placed parallel to each other or crossing. No ropes are needed. Using other participants and balance, the object of this element is for the group to traverse across the foot cable(s).
- Check the area surrounding the element for any objects, which may result in injury, should a fall occur.
- Check the condition of the foot cables and/or utility ropes for structural integrity.
- At the conclusion of this element, remove all cables and secure the utility ropes. Make sure all cables used in this element are returned to a secure storage location.

Safety Concerns for Facilitator

- Due to their proximity this element should not be facilitated simultaneously with the Vertical Playpen or Dangling Trio.
- Make sure there are adequate spotters for each participant off of the ground. There should be one spotter on each side of the cable for each participant. Also, make sure that spotters understand the correct fall zones for participants utilizing one of the utility ropes for support; more spotters may be needed when the utility ropes are in use.
- Have participants practice stepping off of the cable as opposed to falling.

Parameters for Participants

- Participants should be in control of their movements as they traverse the cable. Participants should be discouraged from leaping or traversing too fast across the element.
- Interdigitation is not recommended for partners utilizing the Partner's Crossing Option or the Single/Double-Line Traverse Option.

Variations

- Have the participants complete the activity silently or blindfolded.

Reference Appendix

The materials located within this appendix are meant to serve as a quick reference for specific parts of the manual and or challenge area operation. The pieces within contain various ideas relating to equipment, inspection, and program implementation. All materials work in conjunction with stipulated procedures throughout the rest of this manual and all levels of training provided.

Daily Use Checklist

Paperwork

- Have all Assumption of Risk Agreements and Health History Forms been turned in and checked for proper signature(s) for each participant?
- Have the Health History Forms been reviewed for potential problems, allergies, or activity restrictions?
- Have appropriate logs been completed?
- Have all accident/incident reports been completed and filed? (if applicable)

Emergency Resources

- Is there a first aid kit adequately packed for the day's activities and is it at the site?
- Is there some form of emergency communication available and working?
- Is there an on-site emergency vehicle at or near the site?
- Is there at least one facilitator present who is currently certified in First Aid and CPR?
- Is there an Emergency/Rescue Bag prepared and at the site (if using any high elements)?

Equipment Checklist (each item should be checked and removed if in poor condition)[2]

- Helmets
- Harnesses
- Carabiners/quick links
- Belay Ropes/Aid Ropes
- Belay Devices
- Utility Ropes
- Cables
- Tires
- Beams
- Emergency/Rescue Bag
- Water Source
- All items needed for the course (e.g., bottom rung of Dangling Duo)
- Facilitator's Lobster Claw Sets
- Belay Pulleys
- Utility Boards (used in the Muse, etc.)
- Ladders

Participant Safety

- Prior to the group's arrival, have the trails been inspected for safety (fallen limbs, protruding roots/stones, hanging deadfall, etc.).
- Has every facilitator working with the group read and do they understand the policies and procedures for the course?
- Has every facilitator working with the group been trained on every element that they plan to facilitate?
- Is there at least one facilitator on the high course set-up crew?
- Do all of the participants understand the parameters of the course?
- Are there any slippery surfaces on the event(s) that is/are being used?
- Is proper clothing worn by all participants?
- Is any participant wearing any jewelry, sharp objects, or large belt buckles, which could result harming him- or herself or others?

[2] See the Appendix section entitled "Things to Look For Checklist" for a more detailed discussion to aid in your decision making for this section.

- Have proper spotting techniques been demonstrated for each participant? Does EVERY participant show a satisfactory level of competence in spotting?
- Have proper belaying techniques been demonstrated for each participant (only applicable if doing a belay clinic with the group)?
- Have all environmental concerns been addressed (e.g., weather, bothersome insects, etc.)?

During Course Activity

- Have the goals and objectives for the course been laid out and discussed?
- Has the group done any stretching exercises before starting?
- Are all of the parameters as discussed in this manual and those of Miniwanca and the AYF being followed?

Area Closure

- Has the bottom rung of the Dangling Duo been dismantled and returned to its proper location (if used)? Have all hanging sections for high elements been re-hung or stowed?
- Have all of the ropes and hardware been inspected prior to storage?
- Have all belay ropes (indoor course) been removed and all lines and elements secured through the haul pulley system?
- Have the boards (Islands, Muse), ladders, tires, cables, the aid ropes (Nitro Crossing, etc.), and Spider Web been returned to their proper storage location (if applicable)?
- Are all events inaccessible by trespassers?
- Have all accident/incident reports been filled out properly?
- Has all rope usage been documented in the rope log?
- If ropes are left hanging, is the building locked and ropes raised out of reach of participants?
- Has all hardware been stored in the appropriate securable location?

Harness Application

The purpose of this section is to give a description of each of the harnesses that Miniwanca uses for its challenge course. It is also to offer an explanation as to how they are worn by the participants as well as the method for hooking up a belay system to them.

Any approved ACCT harness owned by AYF where redundancy is addressed can be used on the course.

Head Wall

This harness is distinguished by its bright blue color and bright pink/purple attachment loop (there is also a dark blue/black for much larger participants and green for smaller participants). Otherwise, it is one-size-fits-most-all. There are three buckles (two on legs; one on waist) and no buckles should be threaded prior to application.

Steps for Application

1. Grab the harness by its bright pink/purple front loop. Yellow tag facing out.
2. While holding the loop, reach behind your legs and pull purple back webbing loop up to your back, through your legs. At this point, you should be in the harness as if you were on a horse's saddle.
3. Thread the waist strap through purple loop and bring it around and through the waist buckle. There is no need to tighten or double back, yet.
4. Take the leg loops and thread those buckles fairly snugly. Double back both buckles. Be sure that the leg loops are not twisted and that all sensitive areas are out of the way. If you see the red "WARNING" label on the buckle, then you have not doubled back.
5. Return to the waist buckle and pull it snugly through the buckle and double it back. The waist strap should be between the hipbone and the rib cage. Tuck the excess belt out of the way.
6. Have the facilitator and fellow team members' double check your harness set-up.

Head Wall Chest Harness

This Chest Harness is used for upper-body, rear attachment on the High Challenge Course. It has three different colors (which, along with the size tag, designate size). It has two buckles. One should always be threaded prior to hook up. This buckle is the one that is the joining point of the three black straps. The other buckle is the chest strap buckle and is not threaded until the harness is on. These chest harnesses should only be used in conjunction with the Adventure Experiences, Inc. Seat Harness.

Steps for Application

1. Hold the harness by black shoulder straps, with the chest buckle toward you.
2. Run one arm into the shoulder strap and bring the harness around your back and place your other arm through the other strap, as if you were putting on a vest.
3. Thread the strap through the chest buckle. Take a deep breath to expand your lungs and then tighten the chest buckle. Be sure to double back the webbing. If you see the red "WARNING" label, then you have not doubled back.
4. Check to be sure there is a few inches of space between the colored straps that come around the rib cage. If there is not, then a smaller harness should be hooked up.
5. Take the black strap with the fastex buckle and run it down through the belay loop on your seat harness and reattach it to itself.
6. Adjust the buckle on the back if necessary. This step can also be done first. Things to look for include the rib cage strap riding too high or too low on the participant's torso.

Attaching a belay system to the harnesses

The purpose of this section is meant as a brief description as to the method of hooking a belay system to a harness. This section is not meant as a substitute for hands-on training.

For the seat harnesses (as a climber)

- Any ACCT recommended knot shall be used on the challenge course to attach a belay system to a participant. This knot is clipped into the seat harness with its screw gate tightened. The carabiner should be attached so that the gate is down when in the locked position, and also away from the belly of the climber.
- Clipping the carabiner through the pink/purple belay loop completes the clip-in on the Head Wall harnesses.
- A squeeze check is completed on each carabiner each time a climber is about to go on belay.

For the seat harnesses (as a belayer)

- One locking carabiner is clipped through the pink/purple belay loop to the belayer's seat harness with its screw gate tightened and rotating downwardly and the gate is away from the belly.
- Run the rope through the belay device and clip both the device and the rope to the locking carabiner.
- A squeeze check is completed on each carabiner each time a climber is about to be belayed.

For the chest harnesses

- Clip large locking carabiner into the rear leg straps and waist straps on the Adventure Experiences, Inc. seat harness and continue it through the belay loop on the back of the chest harness and tighten it. These are the only harnesses used by Miniwanca challenge course to which a chest harness can be attached.

Insert Written Belay Technique / Demo Here

While there are many safe ways and techniques that can be used to belay participants through a high challenge course experience, the following is the preferred method taught to all trained staff and participants at Miniwanca.

Belay team purpose
Belay demo
Helmet Application
7-point check description
How to debrief a challenge block
Gear removal and storage

Rescue Bag Materials

Contents can include: One length of dynamic rope, four steel locking carabiners, descender figure 8, Rescue Lobster Claws, an ATC, Pliers, and EMS Shears

This bag will include a rope long enough to hang from any event, several locking carabiners, and other items as deemed necessary by the course manager.

Challenge Area Maintenance Inspection Checklist

Indoor and Outdoor High Challenge Course

Overall

- Check the grounds within and immediately surrounding the boundaries. Remove any deadfall or trash.
- Check the condition of the railroad ties for signs of excess deterioration.
- Be sure to look up at the trees surrounding the high course for any hanging deadfall.
- Check all cable connection points on the guy wires that stabilize the upright poles. To do this, tug each. They should not be extremely tight, only secure. At the terminating end of each guy wire there should be Crosby Clips (2 per cable, with bolt crimping dead end of cable).
- Be sure that the anchor for the guy wire is securely in the ground.
- In general, all rope haul pulley systems (on the indoor course) should run rope smoothly and have solid anchors.
- Check for rough edges on cable's terminating end.
- Check the condition of all of the upright poles. They should be in good repair, with no major holes from animals or rotting.
- Check the staples on every pole (don't use if loose or disfigured).
- When applicable on the indoor course, check the condition of the hanging rope ladder(s) and belay pulleys for signs of disfiguring, fraying or deterioration.
- Check all connection points on the upright poles. Do not use any event on the course if a cable has a questionable attachment until another qualified person inspects the attachment for security.
- Check the tension on all support and event cables. Check the condition of all turnbuckles. The cable tension should be consistent with the utilitarian purpose of the cable. Do not use the course if there is a question as to the proper tension of a cable(s). A differing amount of tension on a cable could result in breakage.
- Check the condition of all fixed and portable padding. In general, all padding should be without significant tears.
- Make sure that all "No Trespassing" signs are posted QUARTERLY.
- Check the condition of the eyebolts at the bottom of the upright poles. Check the fishplates' conditions (be sure they are bent in accordance with the way in which they are utilized).
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- Check the condition of all A-Frame and Extension Ladders.
- Make sure that the road is in good condition.
- Be sure that there is adequate, designated parking.
- Make sure that all "out-of-bounds" areas are either designated as such or can be made known to participants immediately upon their arrival.
- Check all belay cables, particularly at their attachment points. Be sure that the Crosby Clips or swages are secure, and that strandvises are not misshapen. Check the condition of the backup cable and make sure that it is attached with two Crosby Clips to the belay cable. Make sure all loose cable ends are sleeved if frayed.
- Check all foot cables. There should be two Crosby Clips or a swage on each end, with the turnaround end running around a thimble. Be sure that all loose cable ends are sleeved if frayed. There should be no backup on the foot cable.

Individual Events
Outdoor High Challenge Course

Incline Log

- Base is sturdy and free of clutter
- No slipperiness
- No holes from animals or decay
- Bolt connection to upright pole should include: a cable looped around upright pole, through a staple and eyebolt, and reattached to itself with three Crosby Clips.

Multi-use Cable Traverse

- Activity ropes strung to proper eyebolts
- Eye bolts secured (weight test) and Activity ropes secured (weight test)
- Activity ropes should be attached safely using carabiners or Rapid-links and should be visually tested each time

Tarzan Traverse
- Check all activity rope anchor points
- Perform a visual and weight test of all activity ropes
- Check all Crosby Clips and Rapid-links and perform a weight test

Catwalk
- Be sure anchor points of the foot log are not angled down
- Check for slipperiness
- Be sure there are no noticeable divots or holes from animals or rot on the log

Criss-Cross Logs
- Check for slipperiness
- Be sure there are no noticeable divots or holes from animals or rot on the log

Boson's Chairs
- Complete a visual check of each chair for any signs of rot or deterioration, particularly at the attachment points.
- Complete a weight test of each chair
- Check the hosing and cable on each chair for signs of cracking, tears, splintering, etc.
- Perform a physical check of the Crosby Clips and Rapid-links

Floating Islands
- Visually inspect all of the foot cabling
- Perform a visual inspection of the connection points of the foot cable to the poles and platforms; the cables should not be cutting through the platforms and there should still be solid board all around the pre-drilled cable hole.
- Check for slipperiness
- Check for overall board deterioration

Dangling Duo
- Perform a visual inspection of the ascending cables for signs of splinters or deterioration
- Check each rung for deterioration
- Be sure that the support cables are at the proper angle from the top of the ladder to the upright support poles

Indoor High Challenge Course

Dangling Trio
- Perform a visual inspection of the ascending cables for signs of splinters or deterioration
- Check each rung for deterioration
- Be sure that the support cables are at the proper angle from the top of the ladder to the upright steel beams

Vertical Playpen
- Perform a visual inspection of the ascending cables for signs of deterioration
- Check each rung, rope, attachment point, and/or log for signs of splintering or deterioration

High Swinging Log

- Check the condition of the support cables. Make sure that they are attached at the correct angle to the log
- Check the condition of the log for splintering or signs of deterioration
- Check the condition of the belay cable and belay pulley

Centipede

- Check the condition of each section for signs of splintering or deterioration
- Check the condition of each staple and section attachment point. Do not use if malformed or disfigured
- Check the condition of the belay pulley

Hanging Rope Traverse

- Check the condition of the foot cable, its Crosby Clamp, and its attachment points. There should be no disfiguring
- Check the condition of the belay cable and its belay pulley
- Check the condition of each utility rope and the utility rope pulley system. In general, there should not be excessive fraying and the pulley system should run rope through smoothly
- Check the condition of the long, hanging utility ropes (used for the Tension Traverse Option.)

High Cable Traverse

- Check the condition of the foot cable and its attachment points. There should be no disfiguring
- Check the condition of the belay cable and its belay pulley
- Check the condition of each utility rope and its attachment points. In general, there should not be excessive fraying
- Check the condition of the utility rope anchors. The boards should not be disfigured and the eyebolts should be tight into the boards

Climbing Walls

Overall

- Check the condition of all upright poles for cracks or deterioration
- Check the condition of all guy wires and Crosby Clip attachments
- Inspect all access staples for secure fit into poles
- Check the condition of all belay cables or belay pulleys and their associated back-ups and connections
- Check the condition of the swaged cables above the climbing surfaces
- Check the condition of all handholds; make sure they do not spin in place or are broken or cracked
- From the inside of the tower check the wall braces for structural integrity
- Check the condition of the security tarp
- Check the condition of the rappel platforms; platforms should be sturdy underneath and free of splinters and holes above
- Visually inspect the underside of the roof for any leak spots or deformities
- Check the area surrounding the tower for tree viability

Indoor and Outdoor Low Challenge Course

Overall

- Check the condition of the walking trails. Be on the lookout for fallen limbs and remove them when deemed appropriate. Be sure to check for any hanging deadfall
- Remove any trash from the activity sites and trails
- For the indoor elements, make sure that all haul pulley systems are working properly
- Make sure any overhead cables are secured properly to the anchor points and show no signs of deterioration
- Be sure that all access to and from the course is clear of debris

- Make sure that all trees surrounding the elements and the trees to which those elements are attached show no signs of decay
- Remove all limbs from around the fall zone of each element
- Check the condition of all fixed and portable padding. In general, there should be no excessive tears
- Check all elements for slipperiness

Outdoor Individual Events

All Aboard

- Perform a weight test on the element
- Check of any protruding screws or bolts
- Check the corners and edges for any splinters

Tension Traverse

- Make sure that all cables are in good condition with a weight test
- Check all Crosby Clip connections
- Make sure there are no cable frays
- Check the connection points of the cables at every tree
- Be sure that all eye bolts are secure

Spider's Web

- Check the condition of the bungee for frays or tears
- Make sure that the web is attached to all six attachment points and any top and bottom attachment points
- Make sure that all attachment points are secure
- Check for unwanted twists in the web
- When possible, remove web from the low challenge course during the non-programming season (Late October through April) and/or during any cold season.

Partner's Crossing

- Perform a weight test on all of the cables
- Check the condition of the cable's connection points and eyebolts

The Wall

- Check the face of the wall for any protruding nails, screws, or bolts
- Check the face of the wall for splinters of knotholes with sharp edges
- Check all of the bolt connection points on the wall's frame
- Perform a weight test on each individual upright board
- Around the back, check the platform and the handrail for security
- Check the ground in front of the wall to ensure that it is not sloping toward the wall and that there is sufficient ground surfacing there

The Islands

- Check the condition of the platforms and support posts
- Check the condition of the utility boards
- Check the surfacing around the event

The Muse

- Check the condition of each of the upright posts
- Check the condition of the utility boards
- Check the surfacing around the event

Nitro Crossing

- Perform a visual inspection of the cabling; there should be a backup on both sides of the cable
- Make sure that the rope is in good condition
- Perform a visual inspection of the Crosby Clips on either side of the activity rope connection
- Perform a weight test on the cable and rope assembly; apply your full weight to the rope
- Check the attachment trees for signs of deterioration
- Carefully inspect the ground within the boundary fall zone for exposed roots or stones

Trust Fall

- Be sure the connection points of the platform are secure (the entire structure should not be movable if performing a weight test)
- Perform a weight test on the platform
- Check the entire platform for signs of decay
- Check the entire structure for protruding nails, screws, or bolts
- Carefully inspect the ground within the landing zone for exposed roots or stones
- Make sure that there is adequate ground surfacing

Whale Watch

- Check the condition of the platform. Make sure there are no nails or screws protruding and that it is a relatively smooth surface. Rebalance the platform on the fulcrum as necessary.
- Check the condition of the fulcrum. It should be securely in the ground. Make sure the bolts are in good condition.
- Check beneath the platform for evidence of animals or harmful insects.
- Check the condition of the outer supporting struts for signs of excessive wear.

Indoor Individual Events

Portable All Aboard

- Perform a weight test on the element
- Check of any protruding screws or bolts
- Check the corners and edges for any splinters

Swinging Traverse

- Check the condition of each vertical cable and their attachment points. There should be no disfiguring or signs of deterioration
- Check the condition of each tire or platform, their ropes and their attachment points. There should be no excessive fraying, splintering or presence of protruding steel splinters (if using steel radial tires)

Nitro Crossing

- Check the condition of the swing ropes and their attachment points. In general, there should be no excessive fraying
- Perform a weight test on the cable and rope assembly; apply your full weight to the rope
- Check the condition of the foot loops on each rope

Nitro Traverse

- Check the condition of the swing ropes and their attachment points. In general, there should be no excessive fraying
- Perform a weight test on the cable and rope assembly; apply your full weight to the rope
- Check the condition of the platform. Make sure that the ropes show no signs of excessive fraying
- Check the condition of the sliding security rope. Make sure it is solidly attached
- Check the condition of the zip pulley. In general, it should run smoothly across the cable

Low Swinging Log

- Check the condition of the log for signs of splintering or deterioration
- Check the condition of the cables and their attachment points. In general, there should be no disfiguring or signs of deterioration

Porthole

- Check the condition of the tire for signs of splintering or protruding steel belts (if using steel radials)
- Check the condition of the cables and their attachment points for signs of splintering or deterioration
- Check the condition of the stabilizing utility ropes for excessive fraying

Low Cable Traverse

- Check the condition of the cables. In general, there should be no splintering or deterioration.
- Check the condition of the turnbuckles and their associated attachment points to the wall brackets. There should be no disfiguring
- Check the condition of the wall brackets and their lag bolts. The brackets should be immovable and show no signs of deterioration

Check the condition of the utility ropes. There should not be signs of excessive fraying

Using the Mechanical Lift

Note: All staff members are required to complete an orientation and training of the mechanical lift prior to use. This section and explanation is not a substitute for this experiential training session. It is provided as a guide and resources for those who have completed the training.

Operational Procedure

- The lift is stored under the stairwell at the north end of the Activity Center. It should be removed from its storage location and checked before use.
- Extend the rotating arm and lower the lift on its axis so that all four wheels are in contact with the floor. Retract rotating arm and hauling platform.
- Place the lift directly beneath your target point in the air.
- Make sure the operation key is in the on position.
- Remove each of the stabilizing legs from their storage location and attach them to their sockets.
- Plug the lift into an outlet.
- Level the stabilizing legs by screwing each down until they make contact with the floor. A green balance indicator light should come on once each leg is level. Note: the mechanics of the lift will not operate unless all four legs are level.
- Double-check that all leg screws are tight to the ground, the surface on which you are working is solid and all four green balance indicator lights are on.
- Enter the basket and secure the door.
- To operate the lift, the operator must depress the “on” button and turn the “up/down” switch simultaneously.
- Complete the above steps in reverse to store the lift.

Notes for Safety

- All lift operators must complete training by appropriate Miniwanca personnel. All lift operators must also read the instruction manual in the red box on the lift before using.
- The lift should not be used without two people knowledgeable in its operation present.
- There is a definite swing across the axis of the lift once the lift is fully extended. It is imperative that the lift be placed as close to beneath the target point as possible in order to minimize the swing.
- There is a “kill switch” in the basket, on the ground control panel, and underneath the platform.
- The lift is designed to carry one person and a maximum weight of 300 pounds. Make sure that the weight of the operator and any equipment that is being transported does not exceed 300 pounds.

Things to Look For at the Challenge Area

Description

This Appendix is a list of potential hazards, which you as a facilitator can look for prior to opening the course for the day. This list is by no means exhaustive; rather, it is a starting point.

Helmets

- Strap wear
- Cracks
- Sanitary Issues

Harnesses

- Intact buckle connections
- Cuts
- Ripped/deformed seams
- Defective buckles
- Chemical discoloration
- Hardening or stiffness
- Excessive wear

Carabiners/Rapid links

- Excessive wear
- Cracks/fractures
- Rust
- Deformities
- Improper closure of the gate or locking mechanism

Belay Ropes/Utility Ropes

- Excessive dirt
- Cuts/tears
- Dampness
- Smells or discoloration from chemicals
- Check rope log for usage summary (only on belay ropes)
- Puffs of core fiber
- Overly soft/hard spots

Emergency Needs

- Emergency/Rescue Bag
- Complete belaying system
- Extra carabiners
- First Aid Kit
- Electronic Communication
- Access to an Emergency Vehicle

Ladders

- Sturdy step connections
- Overt rust
- Broken steps/legs

Belay System

Belay device

- Secure joints
- Kinks
- Cracks
- Excessive wear

Belay Pulley

- Wheels' turning
- Connections secure
- Excessive wear

Grounds

- Debris/garbage
- Fallen branches
- Glass
- Hanging Deadfall
- Dead, swaying trees

Course Structure

- Cable connections/terminations
- Turnbuckles
- Guy wire tautness
- Upright pole cracks
- Upright pole deterioration
- All events used (see event list)
- Cracks in upright poles
- Slippery Surfaces
- Smoothness of Surfaces
- Protruding Nails/Bolts/Wire Splinters