CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION

CWI Student Manual
FOUNDATIONS
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DISCLAIMER

The CWI (Climbing Wall Instructor) certification program is a voluntary program for indoor climbing instructors. The CWI Certification Program (CWI) has the authority to confer, deny, suspend, or remove certified status within the program.

While certification is a credential conferred to an individual by the CWI Certification Program, this credential has limits.

- Certification is an assessment by the provider that an individual has met, or appears to meet, the specific minimum standards current at the time of the examination. These certification standards are contained in a published document which is maintained by the CWA Climbing Wall Instructor Certification Standards Committee.
    - Although a certain degree of consistency is the goal of the certification program, it is not possible to guarantee absolute consistency from provider to provider, course to course, or certification decisions from different providers. The CWA program attempts to maintain consistency by offering:
        - Identical course materials,
        - Evaluation instruments, and
        - Performance standards
    - Compliance with the certification standards must be observed directly, and an informed conclusion should be reached by the provider(s) with respect to the candidates' compliance with the current certification standards. Assessment is possible in a variety of ways:
        - Interviews
        - Group discussions
        - Knowledge of written material
        - Written references
        - Reasonable inference
        - Direct observation of the candidate
    - The CWI Certification Program providers evaluate the candidates' actual performance with the understanding that if these skills and tasks are correctly performed, then the candidate has the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities and may be certified.

CWI certification is not a guarantee that certified individuals or their climbers will be free from harm. In fact, risks are inherent in climbing instruction and in the sport of climbing in all its forms. Risk and the uncertain outcomes associated with climbing activities help to provide the endeavor with its allure, its value, and its power as a life-long recreational pursuit.

The CWA may from time-to-time work with product manufacturers or industry professionals but does not endorse or advocate for the use of one particular manufacturer over another. This student manual contains references to examples of branded climbing equipment. It is not the intent of those references to indicate preferential use of those specific devices or brands for facility operations.

CWA Mission, Vision, Values

The mission of the Climbing Wall Association is to support the growth, health, independence, and professionalism of the indoor climbing industry. Our organization provides relevant and actionable climbing business resources that keep the indoor climbing industry healthy and thriving. We do this through advocacy; developing industry standards; publishing industry news, data and analysis; sponsoring certification and professional development programs; and producing community-building and educational events.

History of the CWA

The CWA was originally organized as a part of the Outdoor Recreation Coalition of America, now the Outdoor Industry Association (OIA). After an OIA reorganization, the Climbing Wall Association was incorporated as an independent 501(c)(06) in May of 2003 by founding board members Bob Richards, Rich Johnston, and Nate Postma.

Statement of Inclusion

The CWA is strongly committed to making the sport of climbing accessible to all people, including underserved communities subject to discrimination, harassment, or exclusion.

We believe the sport of climbing is a powerful tool in creating community, and that indoor climbing events can provide healthy, purposeful, and inclusive spaces for all people.

We celebrate all people and are excited to grow our climbing community.

i. We welcome all individuals with an interest in teaching and coaching within the indoor climbing industry to become part of the CWI Certification Program

ii. We encourage instructors and coaches to act in a professional manner and be respectful to all climbers with whom they work

iii. We are committed to offering a safe and comfortable learning environment

iv. We are committed to providing industry determined guidance for sound policies and practices within the teaching environment

v. We are committed to respecting the diversity in facility practices

THE CWI CERTIFICATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The CWI Program was initially designed in collaboration with the American Mountain Guides Association (AMGA) to offer the indoor climbing facilities standards of training for instructors working within climbing facilities. The program has evolved to meet the interests and development of the sport over the ensuing years.

THE SCOPE: The Certification Standards Committee provides training standards and certification for the operators and employees of artificial climbing wall facilities that provide the education of, and recreational participation in, the sport of climbing.

MISSION: To increase the professionalism, knowledge, and experience of Climbing Wall Instructors by providing access to quality certification programs.

The Climbing Wall Instructor program endeavors to improve the level of consistency and quality of instruction of indoor climbing skills and to define a consistent standard of care for Climbing Wall Instructors. Further, the program endeavors to provide an avenue for guidance and continuing knowledge development for people working in the climbing wall industry.

The focus of the Climbing Wall Instructor certification program is to assess the ability of the candidate to teach technical climbing related skills. These skills are appropriate for instruction of bouldering, the use of auto belays, top rope climbing and lead climbing on artificial climbing terrain.

The CWI certification must be renewed every three years. The CWI Certification Program includes three levels of certification:

1. Climbing Wall Instructors
2. Program providers
3. Provider trainers

Certification credits an individual with conforming to a prescribed set of certification standards that existed at the time of the evaluation or examination. It is not a guarantee the candidate will continue to conform to the standard.

CWI Certification Governance

The CWI Certification Program is the responsibility of the CWA. Responsibility for oversight of the program, program policy, day-to-day administration, and development and support of the program provider pool is the responsibility of the CWA. Responsibility for maintenance of the certification standards is delegated to a chartered committee of the CWA called the Certification Standards Committee. The program and committee have been established and empowered by the CWA Board of Directors.

The CWA is responsible for safeguarding the integrity of the CWI Certification Program. The CWA reserves the right to confer, deny, temporarily suspend, or permanently withdraw certification or program provider status at any time for any reason. The CCWI Certification Program may, temporarily suspend, or permanently withdraw certification or program provider status is in no way intended as a judgment by the CWA on any aspect of the instructor candidate's or program provider's programs or services other than the ability to participate in the CWI Certification Program.

Eligibility

The CWI Certification Program maintains program eligibility requirements and recommendations.

Eligibility requirements and recommendations are overseen by the Climbing Wall Instructor Certification Standards Committee (CWI CSC).

Eligibility requirements are specific to the level of certification. The scope of the endorsement is to provide context to the unique aspects of working in an indoor climbing facility.

Candidates may question eligibility determinations made by a provider by appealing to the CWI CSC. The appellant must demonstrate to the committee that the eligibility requirements are inappropriate, irrelevant, or unreasonable prerequisites for competence in their professional role to successfully challenge an eligibility decision.

Minimum Experience Recommendations for the CWI Certification

Prior climbing experience is important in developing the skills necessary to teach basic climbing and belay skills. We recommend CWI certification candidates have the following experience:

- Meet the minimum age requirement
- The candidate has personal climbing experience (Bouldering)
- The candidate meets the minimum climbing experience and competency the Level of certification stipulates. (Top rope 5.8 and 20 hours, Lead 5.9 and 40 hours)

Minimum Experience Recommendations for the CWI Provider Certification

Any person meeting the pre-requisites for CWI certification may stand as a candidate for certification. Eligibility is determined based upon review of the pre-requisites by the course provider.

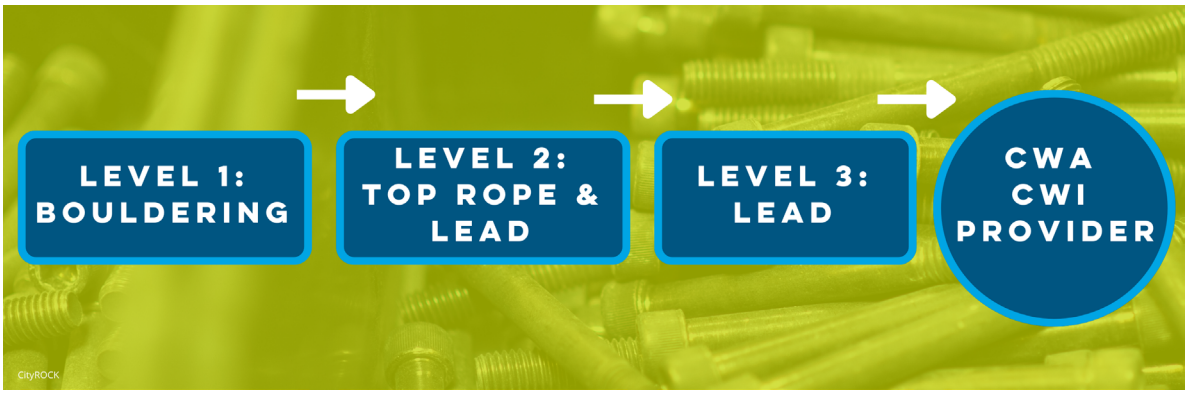
- The candidate is 21 years of age and is a current CWI Lead endorsed instructor.
- The candidate can and is willing to demonstrate the ability to lead climb 5.9.
- The candidate has taken the following steps prior to the course:
    - Has liability insurance coverage through the business they represent
    - The business the candidate represents is a CWA member
    - Current First Aid and CPR certification. The first aid course is a minimum of 5.5-6 hrs.
    - Training in Safe Sport or Respect in Sport, or equivalent.

The candidate has over 200 hours of instruction experience.

EXCEPTIONS

Any prospective candidate for CWI certification not meeting the pre-requisite requirements for the level pursued, may contact the certification coordinator to discuss steps to be taken. The certification coordinator may be contacted by email: certification@cwapro.org

CERTIFICATION ENDORSEMENTS



A prospective CWI candidate begins with the online Foundation self-directed module. With the successful completion of the Foundation module, the candidate would enroll in the subsequent Bouldering module, then auto belay and top rope certification, and finally a lead certification course. Once the candidate holds lead certification, the candidate may apply for a CWI Provider certification.

Certification Endorsement

LEVEL 1 BOULDERING INSTRUCTOR

Bouldering activities involve climbing to a designated height without a rope. This activity has some unique risks:

- Every fall is a ground fall
- Falls from height that result in severe injury, paralysis, or death
- Height limits may be designated in a variety of ways
- Some facilities may allow climbers to "top out"
- Flooring has limitations in the ability to protect a falling climber

The role of a Bouldering endorsed instructor is to provide new climbers with an orientation to the bouldering area and to monitor bouldering activities.

Bouldering endorsed instructors are comfortable with the following responsibilities:

- ☐ Inspection of bouldering facility and equipment
- ☐ Managing the risks in a bouldering area
- ☐ Enforcing the rules in the climbing facility
- ☐ Offering orientations
- ☐ Enacting an emergency action plan

LEVEL 2 ROPE CLIMBING INSTRUCTOR

AUTO BELAY

Auto belays are devices used to allow a roped climber to ascend the wall without a belayer. The device manages the taking in and feeding out of rope as the climber ascends the wall and descends the wall. Risks unique to the use of auto belays include:

- Improper use of, or attachment to, the device
- No partner safety check prior to use
- Inappropriate trust in the device and a lack of understanding of one's responsibility for personal safety
- Limits of the device
- Falls from height that result in severe injury, paralysis, or death

TOP ROPE CLIMBING

When a climber and a belayer (person managing the rope for the climber) use a rope anchored at the top of the wall, and the climber ascends the wall while the belayer ensures the climber will not fall to the ground in the event of a fall. Usually, a belayer must have passed a belay check before being allowed to manage the rope for a climber. Unique risks when top rope climbing:

- Improper or uneducated use of equipment
- Failure of uninspected or properly cared for equipment
- No partner checks,
- Lack of attentiveness to climbers and the task of belaying
- Inappropriate trust in the device and a lack of understanding of one's responsibility for personal safety
- Falls from height that result in severe injury, paralysis, or death

The Auto Belay and Top Rope endorsed Climbing Wall Instructor is comfortable with the above-mentioned Bouldering Instructor responsibilities and the following responsibilities:

- Inspection of PPE and the facility preparedness for climbing activities
- Managing the risks in bouldering, auto belay, and top rope climbing areas
- Enforcing the rules in the climbing facility
- Offering orientations for both bouldering and auto belay
- Conducting top rope belay checks
- Instructing a top rope course
- Enacting an emergency action plan

LEVEL 3 LEAD CLIMBING INSTRUCTOR

When the rope is not anchored at the top of the wall and a climber uses anchors as they ascend the wall to prevent a ground fall, it is called lead climbing. Because the climber climbs above their anchor, the potential for a longer and more dynamic hazardous fall is more likely. The belayer manages the rope for the climber and experiences much greater forces when/if the climber falls. Risks unique to lead climbing include:

- Inspection of PPE and the facility preparedness for climbing activities
- More fall force potential may impact the bodies of the climber, belayer and belay system
- Inappropriate or missed clip of the rope to an anchor
- Limitations of weight differences between climber and belayer
- Inappropriate trust in the device and a lack of understanding of one's responsibility for personal safety
- Falls can be more awkward or uncontrolled
- Falls from height can result in severe injury, paralysis, or death

The lead endorsed Climbing Wall Instructor is comfortable with the above-mentioned Bouldering and Rope Climbing Instructor and the following responsibilities:

- Inspection of PPE and the facility preparedness for climbing activities
- Managing the risks in all areas of an indoor climbing facility
- Conducting lead belay checks
- Offering lead climbing instruction, basic movement skills instruction
- Enacting an emergency action plan

CWI PROVIDER

The Provider is comfortable with the following responsibilities:

- Oversight of PPE and the facility preparedness
- Managing the risks in all areas of an indoor climbing facility
- Conducting lead belay checks
- Course development and the offering of top rope instruction, lead climbing instruction, basic movement skills instruction
- Hiring, training, and supervision of climbing wall staff
- Influencing industry trends, industry practices, facility risk management, and facility policies, and practices
- Assessing and grading Climbing Wall Instructors on both tangible skills, leadership, instructional skills, and professionalism
- Developing and enacting an emergency action plan

Certification Standards for each level of endorsement can be found in the Policy Manual.

Code of Ethics

A code of ethics describes what is considered good or right behaviour. When working with people in the capacity as an instructor, the instructor is considered the expert – more knowledgeable and experienced than the student. This gives the instructor limited power. A code of ethics can define expected actions/ choices for instructors, and students in the learning environment.

- A code of ethics is designed to protect the student and the instructor.
- A code of ethics clarifies what is acceptable and what behaviours are not acceptable.

PRINCIPLE	STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR EXPECTED OF CERTIFIED CANDIDATES
Physical safety & wellness of all	Ensure that the learning environment is safe, inclusive, and appropriate for activities
	Be prepared to act quickly and appropriately in case of emergency, abiding by the duty to report to local government guidelines
	Avoid placing climbers and/or colleagues in situations presenting unnecessary risk or that are beyond their level of expertise
	Strive to preserve the present and future health and well-being of all
	Make wise use of the authority of the position and make decisions in the interest of students
Climbing wall worker/ Instructor/Provider responsibilities	Foster self-esteem among students
	Avoid misrepresenting qualifications
	Act in accordance with one's limitations in terms of knowledge and skills when making decisions, giving instructions, or when acting
	Act as a professional, as outlined in certification documents
	Maintain confidentiality and privacy of personal information

Integrity in relations with others	Avoid situations that may affect objectivity or impartiality when instructing
	Abstain from all behaviors considered to be harassment or inappropriate relations with students
	Always ensure decisions are made equitably
	Ensure that everyone is treated equally, regardless of athletic potential, race, ancestry, place of origin, color, ethnic origin, citizenship, language, creed, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability
Respect	Preserve the dignity of others
	Respect the principles, rules, and policies in force
	Strictly observe and ensure observance of all regulations, including harassment and diversity and inclusion policies, state/provincial duty to report, climbing sport body policies, Work at Height safety policies
	Honor the value of personal responsibility of users in climbing; ensure the willing participation of students, athletes, and respect their limits of willingness
Honoring the climbing community	Model good climbing etiquette
	Maintain dignity in all circumstances and exercise self-control
	Honor the diversity in sport enthusiasm, history, breadth of experience, of users
	Accept personal responsibility for one's choices and actions

RISK MANAGEMENT INTRODUCTION

Definitions

Indoor climbing has inherent risk.

Risk is defined as the possibility that an injury or loss can happen.

A **hazard** describes the thing that can cause harm, in the case of climbing this refers to the potential impact on the floor from a height.

As a climber leaves the ground and climbs higher, the **danger** of injury or harm increases. If one is in danger, it means one is exposed to the risk.

Duty of Care

As a climbing wall worker, you are responsible to inform and be aware of the risks involved when supervising and instructing others. The responsibility to inform, educate, and protect climbers from risk in a climbing facility is the ***duty of care, or legal obligation***, that is owed to climbers in a facility.

In climbing activities, the question is not ***if*** you will face a risk, but how ***often*** and ***what risks are you willing to accept.***

DUTY OF CARE AS A CLIMBING WALL INSTRUCTOR

Falling is an inherent risk in climbing. It is a climbing wall worker's responsibility, a duty of care to ensure all climbers in a climbing facility understand that they will fall and to confirm the climber is prepared to accept that risk. To that end, facilities implement rules, policies, and practices to reduce or eliminate risks. It is your responsibility to enforce the rules, policies, and practices of your facility.

Factors Influencing Duty Owed

- Your job, role, or position
- Experience Level of Climbers
- Age of Climbers
- Your relationship with a participant
- Teaching a class vs. Gym monitoring
- Climbers with different abilities
- Public policy and laws
- An individual facility's policies and rules
- And more...

It is your responsibility to be objective and act professionally when instructing and monitoring climbing activities.

Negligence

Negligence is the failure to behave toward another person to whom a duty is owed. Negligence has the following components:

(1) the party charged must have owed a duty of reasonable care to the person claiming an injury or other loss

(2) that duty must have been violated

(3) a loss must have been suffered, which arose out of the breach of duty and was foreseeable

When things go wrong...
Professionals working in an indoor climbing facility have a responsibility to the climbers visiting the facility. The responsibilities are specifically outlined in the employee job description, however, the standard responsibilities for employees working in an indoor climbing facility are:

- To inform
- To educate
- Manage the risk for users of the facility

This responsibility may also be referred to as the "duty of care."

The CWA offers participants in the certification program access to information regarding recommended industry practices and policies to empower employees to act in accordance with the best practices determined by a variety of members of the indoor climbing industry.

The CWA cannot stipulate specifically how climbing gyms operate because each state, and/or province, has their own regulations regarding licensing. Insurance companies may also have stipulations. The owners of facilities can also create policies and practices as they best see fit and each will have their own level of risk tolerance.

The role of the CWA is to inform indoor climbing industry partners on what members collectively agree upon and ensure that information is accessible.

Negligence is defined in the following way:

> *"If an employee does not act as a **reasonable person** would in the same situation and a person has suffered an injury or loss, there is a question of whether there is a breach of the duty owed to the injured party and if there is a breach of duty, **it is negligence**."*

Negligence must meet four criteria:

1. A duty was owed
2. The duty was breached
3. There was a loss or injury
4. There is a direct relationship between the breach and the injury or loss.

If one of the four elements is missing, the test for negligence has not been met.

Duty to Report

State or provincial governments stipulate residents may have a legal obligation to report concerns of abuse or neglect of a child under the legal age.

Employees working with youth may have a legal obligation to report if there is suspected criminal activity, and/or a potential risk of harm for the youth.

TO WHOM?

Most climbing wall staff will go to their employer first, they may escalate the report to a government agency or the parents. If the employer is not readily available, it may be incumbent on the employee to report directly. Directions should be explicit in the emergency action plan.

Risk Management Steps

To prevent negligence from occurring, climbing facilities have risk management strategies which they have implemented. The strategies are the rules and practices that are acceptable and the determination of practices that are not allowed within the facility. The 3 main avenues to determine the practices are:

- **Identify and prioritize** the potential and inherent risks
- Eliminate, **mitigate/intervene** with each of the risks
- Monitor and **re-evaluate** strategies implemented to manage risk

IDENTIFYING AND PRIORITIZE RISK

Identifying risks is the act of paying attention to prospective consequences of activities that are occurring.

Once risks are identified, consider which risks must be dealt with first, and how to deal with the risks. There are a variety of tools to assist in prioritizing risks. A commonly used tool is the risk prioritization matrix which evaluates risk based on frequency or likelihood of an incident and the severity of the consequence or loss.

- Activities that have a low frequency of occurrence and low negative consequence would be in the green section.
  - E.g.: the possibility of a fall onto a padded floor from a low height.
- Activities with moderate to high frequency or likelihood, and a moderate to high negative impact (consequence) would fall into the orange area.
  - E.g.: bouldering falls while topping out a route
- Activities with high negative outcome and high frequency would be in the red zone.
  - E.g.: A fall from the top of the wall if not tied into a roped would have a high probability of a negative impact but does not happen frequently. Gyms do not allow climbers to climb without protection above a certain height for this reason. Solo climbing is an example of unacceptable risk, or a risk in the red zone.

The **third step** is to decide what to do with risks.

INTERVENTION

When a risk is deemed worthy of treatment, there are multiple solutions possible. Elimination of a risk means just not allowing the activity at all. Transfer of the risk takes shape as educating a climber of the risk and having the climber accept responsibility for the risk, as they do when they sign a participant agreement or waiver. Down climbing holds added to the top of a bouldering wall are an example of reducing the risk or mitigating the risk. These holds make it easier for climbers to exit a boulder problem from a lower height on the wall, and thus allowing for a controlled drop from a less risky height.

Intervening in a risk is the act of reducing risk, eliminating, or transferring risk. Removing objects from a fall zone or landing area, stopping a climber before they get too high without being clipped into an auto belay, asking climbers to wear masks and use hand sanitizer are all examples of interventions designed to mitigate risk.

The CWA does not prescribe precisely how indoor climbing gyms should operate, or all of the rules and policies that should be in place. The CWA oversees an Industry Practices Committee consisting of members from the indoor climbing industry who do determine Standard Industry Practices. These standards provide guidance for indoor climbing facilities.

EVALUATE

Once a policy or practice is in place, it is necessary to monitor the results, confirming the success of the policy in reducing risk, or the failure of the policy to have a substantial impact.

The four steps of risk management; identification, prioritization, intervention, and evaluation; are ongoing. Having staff monitoring climbers is a mitigation strategy to reduce climber error, and staff monitoring is also a method to evaluate of how the policies that are in place are working to the reduce risk of an adverse event. Through the act of monitoring, staff may report new risks they identify.

The CWA Certification Standards Committee reviews and prescribes standards for certification through the certification program and it's certified instructors. These CWA Certification Standards may exceed the Industry Practices Standards.

Emergency Procedures

When things go wrong climbing wall staff have a responsibility to respond to the situation. Climbing wall staff have a responsibility to follow an emergency action plan in place at the facility in which they work.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

Federal and provincial, state governments require businesses to have an Emergency Action Plan in place for the health and wellness of their employees and users.

The CWA Industry Practices requires all climbing facilities must have:

- Written emergency action plan
- Staff that are trained in how to implement the emergency action plan.

> "We don't rise to the level of our **expectations**; we fall to the level of our **training**." - Archilochus

Emergency Action Plans can cover the following emergencies:

- First aid emergencies
- Environmental spills and hazards
- Fire, natural disasters, and evacuations
- Active shooter
- Concerns for safety of a minor
- Additionally, facilities may have a rescue plan that outlines procedures for different climbing areas where someone may need to be secured or lowered from a climbing wall.

As a person trained to respond to an emergency, employees or first aid responders must:

- Stay Calm and assess
- Get Help and avoid further harm to yourself and anyone else
- Follow the specific steps of first aid, or evacuation or emergency response procedures
- Stay within the responsibilities you are trained to manage and be prepared to hand off specific responsibilities to anyone more qualified.
- Account for everyone present in your scope of responsibility
- Once the situation has been handled, OBJECTIVELY record information regarding the event, including collecting the names and contact information of witnesses. Preserve any evidence involved in the incident.
- Plan for rapid recovery from the emergency while preserving or protecting persons, assets, and property

The last step of reporting the events in a manner that reflects the facts of the event is essential.

Climbing instructors should also be trained in the organization's system for collecting and reporting incidents or accidents.

Incident data can be reviewed by management periodically to review performance, identify any trends, and make changes in policies, procedures, and practices, as necessary. Insurance carriers may require an incident reporting system with notification deadlines for serious incidents that might result in a claim.

Written accident or incident reports, including names, contact information and witness statements, should be limited to reporting objective information pertinent to the incident and should avoid subjective conjecture, supposition, and other similar types of statements.

Sufficient first aid training might include a workplace training course covering knowledge and skills necessary to prevent, recognize, and provide basic care for injuries until professional rescuers or advanced medical personnel arrive and take over care or provide transport.

Within the climbing facility, it is prudent to have one person as a minimum who can perform technical rescues on the climbing structure. A technical rescuer should have received rescue training and have adequate and appropriate rescue equipment available.

You can read more about risk in the Appendices.

PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICS

> "Your **smile** is your **logo**, your **personality** is your business card, and the way you make others feel is your **trademark**." - Jay Danzie

Professionalism in the climbing wall industry refers specifically to the specialized knowledge, demonstrated skill and adherence to the policies and best practices in indoor climbing facilities. Climbing professionals are people conforming to the technical and ethical standards within the profession. In this case, technical climbing instruction and operations within a climbing facility.

A **Respectful and Responsible** climbing instructor ensures the safety of the climbers they work with, while also ensuring they represent the facility through which they are employed. Empathetic and intentional. Maintaining curiosity enables you to be more respectful and understanding.

A part of being respectful includes engaging in topics of conversation that are appropriate and avoiding those are not.

Accountable employees make sure to appropriately represent themselves, their experience, and knowledge. They take responsibility for the role they have accepted and act in accordance with the expectations assigned to that role.

Conscientious, confident, and curious employees embody several characteristics essential to quality program delivery, risk management, and service.

- Organized
- Timely
- Clear communication
- Attentive to details
- Following up
- Observant
- Follows rules, policies, and procedures
- Intentional

Knowledge of a specialized area is another element of professionalism. A Climbing Wall Instructor is expected to have knowledge that is specifically related to climbing in an indoor climbing facility.

- Basic technical skills necessary to participate in a climbing facility
- Equipment and facility inspection
- Climber orientation and instruction
- Teaching top rope skills
- Teaching lead skills
- Auto belay skills
- Bouldering and spotting
- Emergency procedures
- Risk management
- Teaching methods and assessment

Examples of **professional conduct:**

- Informs climbers of inherent and foreseeable risks
- Exercises sound judgment gained from education and experience
- Conducts work with competence and quality in a timely manner
- Promotes the well-being of climbers
- Respects the basic rights and dignity of peers, employees, employers, and climbers
- Arrives on time and prepared to perform required duties
- Performs according to accepted standards, and commonly accepted practices
- Acts with accountability, and/or humility, for quality of work, respect of climbers and co-workers, confidentiality of information and accurate representation of abilities
- Accurately represents his or her qualifications, skills, knowledge, experience, and services

Professionals are not merely technically skilled; professionals possess specialized knowledge and perform at a level of proficiency in climbing and teaching that far exceeds an amateur climber.

As a professional one must not only be competent, but also demonstrate good behavior and good judgment in the working environment.

In short, professionalism is a demeanor that invokes the highest standards of knowledge, skill, learning and behavior.

Communication

The lifeblood of relationships is communication.

The goal of communication between people is to create a shared understanding of information. Any climber who comes into a climbing facility will have a degree of motivation to be there, and a degree of understanding of what the facility may offer. The job of a climbing wall working is to ascertain what the climber stands and what they hope to accomplish. Then to clarify what is possible, how the climber can accomplish their goal, and what the risks are present and how to avoid potential injury.

To be a successful and effective communicator, develop the following skills:

- Listen – actively listen to others and ask clarifying questions.
- Pay attention to non-verbal communication – yours and theirs. Maintain an open stance, make eye contact, be relaxed.
- Be concise and clear in your communication, not talking too much or not enough.
- Be friendly and positive in your communications
- Express empathy when appropriate. Expressing that you understand how another feels, or what challenges face someone else, gives them a sense of safety with you.
- Be confident. When the tone of voice goes up at the end of the statement, it sounds more like a question, leaving the person you are talking to wonder if you know what you are saying.
- Be respectful. The goal of communication is to share understanding, to build a rapport.
- Repeat your understanding of the customer's needs or what the respective expectations of the visit are.

HAVING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

The first step... de-escalate your own negativity or reactivity.... Breathe and get curious.

Apply the tips below and if these do not work, sometimes it is best to find someone else to assist you.

Here are a few tips to having difficult conversations:

- Observe the climber through their own eyes
- Be compassionate
- Express curiosity
- Really listen
- Find common ground
- Use humor/ cheerfulness
- Cultivate trust
- Use facility policy as an excuse
- Explain your need
- Explain next steps/ options

Remember – a professional does not allow their emotions to lead. A professional remains calm and collected in the face of a challenge.

Leadership - Instructing vs Coaching

When an instructor is introducing new climbers to information that is new to them, and the student does not have previous experience to help inform what they are learning, the instructor offers information in a direct way. For example, when instructing students which area of the facility they can access, the instructor is more apt to say, "these are the areas of the facility you can use." The instructor would not say, "tell me where you think you can use the facility." The climber with no experience would not necessarily be able to problem solve the answer to the question. Being clear and direct can increase the sense of safety for many new climbers.

Coaching is when the student has some experience and can use the information provided by the coach to further develop or refine a skill. For example, a climber who comes in for a belay check has told you they have experience belaying and climbing. When conducting the check, you mention that you have found the rope easier to manage when it is coiled closer to you, this is an example of coaching.

During instruction, the voice of the instructor may shift from being more directive to conversational and coaching as students learn and practice material. It will be the ability and comfort of the student, and the depth of knowledge of the instructor, that determines whether an instructor is directive and when the instructor shifts to a coaching role.

CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION

CWI Student Manual
FOUNDATIONS
May 2023

WORKING IN A CLIMBING FACILITY

WHY PURSUE CERTIFICATION?

Participation in a certification course and subsequent process is a great way to learn more depth about the information being taught. Why a standard is the way it is; how the industry has changed over time; some of the less apparent risks become more apparent. Certified instructors have not only demonstrated their competency and knowledge, but also have demonstrated their commitment to personal and professional development and personal responsibility while upholding industry standards. Certification verifies a standard of competency and knowledge is present in the facility which informs and shapes operations.

Consider this situation. . .

Chris calls a climbing gym and asks about the price of a day pass. The climbing wall worker tells Chris the price of a day pass is $15. Chris asked if the gym was open and the response was, "Yes." Chris arrives at the gym later that day at 4:30 pm to discover that they are not old enough to sign the waiver and that the gym would be closing in 40 minutes for resetting for an event. Imagine how frustrated Chris must feel.

Technically, the climbing wall worker told Chris all truthful answers. What they did not do was get curious about what Chris wanted. The climbing wall worker assumed Chris was asking the right questions. But Chris does not know what Chris does not know.

Consider the following dialogue. . .

CUSTOMER: Chris calls the climbing gym and asks about the price of the day pass.

EMPLOYEE: The climbing wall worker says, "Hey, my name is Francis, and I am happy to answer some questions for you. We have a variety of pricing options. Are you a student? Or are you looking to come in at a specific time? I want to ensure you get the best available rates."

CUSTOMER: Chris replies they are a student and want to come in that afternoon.

EMPLOYEE: The climbing wall worker responds, "Great, we do have a student rate. There is a snag today though. Today we are closing earlier to do resetting and put new routes up. Will you be in before 4 pm? After 4 pm you might find it a little too short for a visit."

CUSTOMER: Chris responds, "I was planning at coming in at 4:30 pm. Now I will try to get there earlier. Thanks"

EMPLOYEE: "Chris, one more thing," the climbing wall worker says, "If you are student, are you over 18 years of age? You must be 18 years old to sign our participant agreement. If you are not 18, I can send you a copy to have signed by a parent or guardian."

Conclusion – Chris is better prepared for the climbing experience. The climbing wall worker is better able to meet the expectations Chris has about their experience.

A climbing wall worker has a role to inform climbers of things they do not know that they need to know. This communication can start at the very beginning of the conversation with inquiry into:

- What the climber wants
- What the climber hopes to do
- What experience they have
- When and how frequently they hope to come in
- How to best orient the climber to the facility
- Assisting them in having a wonderful experience

Navigating Difficult Conversations

To be a successful and effective communicator, develop the following skills:

- Listen – actively listen to others and ask clarifying questions.
- Pay attention to non-verbal communication – yours and theirs. Maintain an open stance, make eye contact, be relaxed
- Be concise and clear in your communication, not talking too much or not enough
- Be friendly and positive in your communications
- Express empathy when appropriate. Expressing that you understand how another feels, or what challenges face someone else, gives them a sense of safety with you
- Be confident. When the tone of voice goes up at the end of the statement, it sounds more like a question, leaving the person you are talking to wonder if you know what you are saying
- Be respectful. The goal of communication is to share understanding, to build a rapport
- Repeat your understanding of the customer's needs or what the respective expectations of the visit are

Sometimes, despite one's best efforts, conversations can become negative or defensive.

Examples:

- Someone doesn't pay attention to the waiver or attempts to change the participant agreement, or sign for someone they are not eligible to sign for
- Disrespectful comments or attitude toward the instructor during the bouldering orientation
- Not following rules or policies of the facility
- Disregard for facility specific belay technique or devices that may be required and an instance they do not need to change their practice
- When instructing, there is a need to discuss weight differences which may make someone uncomfortable
- Someone in a group is not using inclusive language toward others in the group

As a professional, the first step you want to take is to de-escalate the negative emotions.

The first step… start with yourself and de-escalate your own negativity or reactivity…. Breathe and get curious.

If these do not work, sometimes it is best to find someone else to assist you.

Here are a few tips to having difficult conversations:

- Stay calm - breathe into your belly. Smile. There is research that demonstrates that if your breathing is calm, the other person will begin to self-regulate their breathing
- Listen - actively listen to the needs and wants and get curious about what might be a common ground resolution
- Ask questions about their experience and get creative about potential solutions that may work. Be prepared to negotiate and to explain if something is not a possible solution
- Be empathetic of their perspective, and your own need to be firm in the execution of your duty of care
- Reaffirm your desire to support them.
- Be clear and maintain positive language regarding expected action or next steps
- Be action or behaviour focused - not the person

Remember – a professional does not allow their emotions to lead. A professional remains calm and collected in the face of a challenge.

ACCESS CONTROL

Each facility has its own process to allow customers access to various areas and activities within their facility. The process is explained during a new employee training. Adherence to the process is critical. When an employee does not complete the access control process completely, users may not have enough information to accept personal responsibility.

Participant Agreements

Written agreements such as a Participation Agreement, waiver, or other documents that attempt to shift, reallocate, or release an organization from liability may take different forms. Written participation agreements may include several types of information (for example, a release of liability provision, a waiver of claims provision, an agreement to indemnify or defend, or other provisions). The agreement should be developed or approved by your employer's legal counsel, reviewed for enforceability in your area, and revised periodically as necessary. Please note that statutes, regulations, case law, and other factors may affect the efficacy of these types of agreements; it is imperative that these agreements are properly drafted and reviewed periodically by counsel. It should be made clear to new climbers that this document is not intended to include or provide an exhaustive description of all risks and hazards associated with climbing in a climbing facility.

KEY POINTS

- Written agreements must be signed by an adult or someone with authority to sign on behalf of a minor
- Names and other information must be accurate and legible
- How the document is presented, and explained impacts its enforceability
- Documents must be stored and readily accessible
- Does not replace instruction
- Does not prevent negligence
- New climbers must be willing to acknowledge, accept, and assume the foreseeable risks in a climbing wall environment **before** they are allowed to climb.

Screening New Climbers

Customer screening may include:

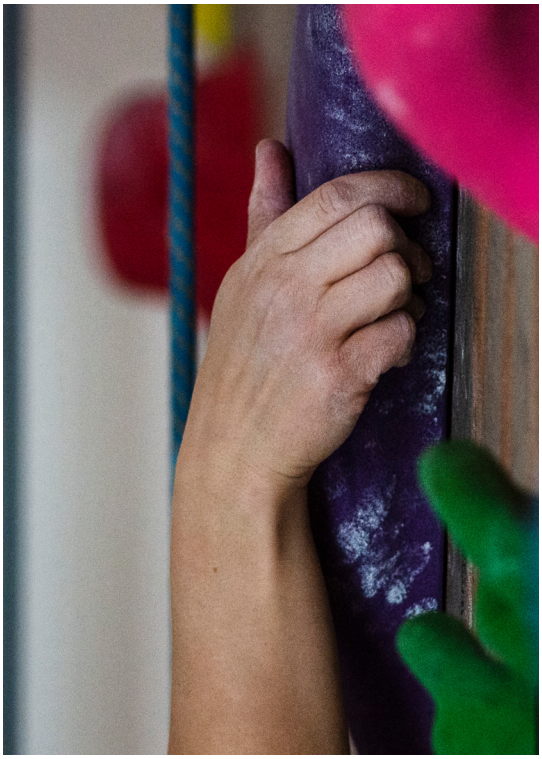
- Climber's age, height, and weight
- How long or often and how recently has the climber climbed
- Level of climbing competency and familiarity with indoor climbing
- Type of climbing experience (indoor, bouldering, sport, traditional climbing, mountaineering)
- Proficiency in top rope or lead climbing and belaying
- Physical readiness to participate i.e., is the participant under the influence of any substances?
- Any other information the climber deems relevant to participation in climbing sports. Bear in mind that activities such as canyoneering, tree work (aborist), first responder/military rescue skills may not be directly transferable skills for roped climbing and belaying

Note: There is a tendency in recreation and fitness activities to place a minimum age for participation without adult supervision. Some facilities allow youth to participate without direct supervision at the age of 12 years, however, in many facilities, youth under the age of 14 years cannot belay other climbers. While 14-year-old youth may demonstrate the appropriate maturity and understanding of the risk, it is generally understood that they may not make the appropriate decisions in favor of the reward of adrenaline associated with risky choices. If you would like to learn more about brain development during adolescence, this video may be of interest[1].

HYGIENE

The nature of climbing involves users sharing shoes, holds, mats and flooring, ropes, harnesses. Climbing equipment has specific care and cleaning protocols to ensure the integrity of the equipment. Hygiene thus is an important consideration. The following things must be considered:

- Street shoes should not be used in the climbing area unless permitted.
- Cleaning practices for blood on volumes, holds, walls are essential
- Climbing shoes are not worn in the restroom facilities
- Food and drinks are generally consumed away from the climbing area
- Training equipment is wiped down after use
- Rental shoes are sprayed and aired prior being provided to another climber
- Climbing shoes, harnesses, belay devices, ropes are not worn or taken into restrooms



[1] *https://theparentswebsite.com.au/free-webinar-with-dr-jared-cooney-horvath-a-tour-through-the-teenage-brain/*

Climbing Facility and Equipment Inspections

There are a variety of climbing facilities offering different services and climbing opportunities. A climbing wall worker should be aware that inspections of the walls, the flooring, and the equipment are conducted on a regular basis.

Your inspection activities are part of thorough facility and life safety equipment management and inspection system maintained by your employer. The equipment management and inspection system should cover routine ongoing inspection and close, at least annual, inspection of facility-owned life safety equipment. You should have access to the original equipment manufacturer's (OEM) published material for equipment such as product information and instructions for use. Your employer will also have quality assurance records such as inspection, maintenance, or repair logs deemed appropriate by the manufacturer and or your employer for all facility-owned equipment.

Your employer will also have an inspection and maintenance program appropriate for the artificial climbing structure at your facility. Wall manufacturers provide facility owner/operators instructions for the scheduling, periodic inspection, periodic maintenance, and, if and where appropriate, instructions for repair of structures, structural components, and associated equipment.

The inspection program should only address matters that the owner/operator is capable and competent to perform. If the owner/operator performs repairs or maintenance on the structure, only replacement parts specified or approved by the manufacturer are used. In some cases, inspections, maintenance, and repair by the manufacturer, or a qualified third-party inspector, may be necessary and a written inspection report provided.

The owner/operator should report serious malfunctions or failures of structures, structural components, or equipment promptly to the manufacturer and/or the installing vendor.

CLIMBING SHOES

Footwear used for climbing allows the climber to stand more firmly on the toes of the shoe with more friction. Shoes are not part of personal protection equipment. There are a variety of climbing shoes available on the market with different intended uses and different fits. Rental shoes are easier to fit for new climbers, having a wider last and less aggressive arch and heel fit.

PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is extremely important in the sport of climbing. PPE is life safety equipment. As a climbing instructor you should possess adequate knowledge of manufacturers' instructions for use, care, storage, and inspection of climbing equipment. Adequate knowledge of inspection procedures comes from formal training, reading, and understanding manufacturers' instructions, and/or hands on experience.

All personal protective equipment should be used and inspected in accordance with the original equipment manufacturer's instructions. You should be able to recognize if equipment is intended for climbing use, is of sound design and construction, and is not defective or damaged. Please see **APPENDIX G: Climbing Wall Instructor Course Provider Requirements** inspection for more information.

Your employer has certain duties to you regarding PPE. For example, your employer must provide, use, and maintain protective equipment in a "sanitary and reliable condition" where necessary to protect you from workplace hazards. Personal protective equipment includes equipment for eyes, face, head, and extremities, protective clothing, shields or barriers, or respiratory devices necessary to protect you where you could be injured or impaired on the job. (There are some limitations on the employer's duty regarding PPE, for example an employer would not be required to provide you with certain footwear or prescription eyewear. However, when you provide your own equipment, your employer is responsible for ensuring it is adequate, it fits and is properly maintained.)

Similarly, you have a duty to your climbers regarding instruction about life safety equipment. Training topics for climber's include:

- When PPE is necessary
- What PPE is necessary
- How to properly put on, remove, adjust, and wear PPE
- The limitations of PPE
- The proper use, care, maintenance, lifetime, and disposal of the PPE

Each climber should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the PPE and how to use it before being allowed to climb. If you have reason to believe that a climber who has already been trained does not understand the PPE or the skill to use it properly, retraining the climber would be appropriate and prudent.

The use of personal climbing equipment is common in climbing facilities. Regardless, all personal equipment used must be manufactured specifically for climbing use and used in accordance with the original equipment manufacturer's instructions. This applies to all equipment, including but not limited to ropes, harnesses, belay devices, carabiners, quickdraws, etc. Personal equipment may or may not be subject to regular and ongoing or close inspection by the owner; therefore, you should at least be aware of the equipment your climbers use. The climbers acknowledge, assume, and accept all responsibility for the proper selection, use, care, maintenance, inspection, and storage of personal climbing equipment. Equipment might also be addressed in the participation agreement the climber signs.

Facility Orientations

The orientation to a facility may include a variety of elements based on the facility's operations. Each climbing facility will have developed their own orientation for you to deliver. A facility orientation should cover the following:

1. Participant agreement and the risks inherent in climbing activities
    a. Ensure the climber understands and has signed
    b. Review of risks involved with climbing
    c. Willingness to accept the risks

2. Facility rules and access policies
    a. Age Restrictions/ policies for minors
    b. Posted warnings and locations
    c. Check-in/check-out protocols
    d. Access or area restrictions
    e. What to do in the case of emergencies

3. A facility tour clearly outlining areas and access restrictions, signage
    a. Introduction to facility amenities
    b. Where to store personal belongings
    c. Areas for spectating and socializing
    d. Hygiene protocols
    e. Gym etiquette

4. Equipment that may be used in the facility
    a. Use and care
    b. Personally owned equipment
    c. Qualified instruction

5. Screening questions
    a. Fitness to participate
    b. Age to participate
    c. Climbing experience

Glossary of Terms

Accountable – expected to be able to justify one's choices, actions to another or an organization.

Auto Belays – device that retract a lanyard connected to a climber as they climb up the wall and slowly lower the climber back to the ground when the climber releases their hold from the wall.

Assisted Braking Belay Device – A belay device that has a camming action on the rope providing more resistance to the rope in the device compared to a passive belay device.

Back Clip – When the rope to the lead climber goes through the carabiner toward the wall as opposed to outward through the carabiner, it is called back clipped.

Back Step – When the climber stands on the outside edge of the climbing shoe near the toes, the foot is in a back step position.

Belay – (verb) The act of managing the rope for a climber to prevent the climber from falling to the ground. (noun) The set-up of the rope and device to belay.

Belayer – The person who manages the belay device and rope for the climber.

Belay device – A piece of climbing equipment designed to assist the belayer in managing the rope for the climber.

Beta – Information about a route that can assist the climber when climbing the route.

Bolt Hanger – An anchor point on the wall that is attached to the wall structure used in lead climbing. On steep terrain, they can be used to protect the top rope climber from swinging outward. Climbers are advised to not put fingers in bolt hangers when climbing.

Brake Hand – The hand of the belayer that is holding the brake strand of rope.

Brake Strand – When the belay device is set-up, one side of the rope goes to the climber (standing line) and the other strand is the brake strand. By securely holding the brake strand, the belayer stops rope from going through the belay device. When the climber falls, the belayer makes sure the brake strand is pulled down to arrest the fall.

Bouldering – Boulderer – Climbing, but only goes to a height where it is reasonable to fall from.

Carabiner – Also referred to as a biner – Equipment used to attach the rope or other equipment to the climber's harness. The carabiner is oval, D, or pear shaped with one long side called the spine and the other side has a gate that opens and closes. The closing action is spring loaded and will automatically snap shut if released. Some carabiners have a locking mechanism to ensure the gate stays closed. Locking mechanisms can be screwed in place, have a spring twisting the mechanism in place. A carabiner is stronger and secured when the gate is closed.

Coaching – A method of instruction on how to develop skills. A coach provides feedback on how to continue to refine and develop a skill.

Crimp – With holds that are thin, not much of the finger can grasp the hold. Often a climber will put just the tips of the fingers on the hold and press against the side of the index finger to have enough force to hold the hold. This is crimping.

Confident – Assure that one knows what they need to know and can conduct themselves in the correct manner to adequately complete the task required of them.

Conscientious – Doing what is right regarding one's work, duties.

Danger – Danger means to be exposed to potential injury or harm.

Demonstration Teaching Method – When the instructor shows the student how to do something it is called demonstration.

Deliberate Practice – To repeat a skill with attention to detail, focus on improvement, in a sustained way. https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1993-40718-001?doi=1

Drop Knee – When a climber uses a back step, the hold is low enough relative to the body, that they are on top of the hold. If the hold is high and behind the climber, the outside edge of the shoe is used to push back against the hold. This position is called a drop knee.

Dynamic Moves – Dead Point – Dyno – Movements made with momentum are called dynamic. When the climber pops up (jumps) to a hold and maintains their feet on the footholds it is called a dead point. If the climber jumps to a hold and the feet release from the footholds, it is called a dyno.

Edge – Some holds are designed for only the first pad of the fingers. These holds are referred to as edges.

Endorsement – Refers to the specific area of expertise of a certified person. For example, the instructor certification has endorsement areas for Bouldering, or Rope Climbing. The Work at Height certification has endorsements for those who are Competent and those who are Qualified.

Experiential Teaching Approach – Asking the students to participate in an experience to learn. For example, teaching students how to tie a figure eight knot by giving them the rope and tying the knot.

Friction-resistor Device – A type of quickdraw which assists a belayer with catching a fall by absorbing much of the shock. Using one can result in a harder catch for a climber on lead.

Front Step – When a climber stands on a hold with the inside edge of the shoe, near the big toe, the foot position is called a front step. Often the knee will point out to the side of the wall.

Gaston - If the best way to hold a handhold is to turn the back of the hand to the shoulder, thumb pointing down and to use fingers on the side of the hold, the hand position is called a gaston.

Geometry Assisted Device – Belay devices which use the shape of the device to increase the friction on the rope for the belayer are called geometry assisted devices. Examples include: Black Diamond ATC pilot; Elderid Giga Jul.

Guide Hand – The hand that guides the rope going to the climber to and from the belay device.

Hazard – An object or item that increases risk of harm or injury.

Heel Hook – A heel hook is a when the climber places the heel of the shoe on a hold, often around a corner or over the side of a roof feature. The heel then acts like a third hand and arm, allowing the climber to release a hand to reach to another hold.

Inquiry Based Teaching Method – Asking questions to confirm information learns have been introduced to.

Interpersonal Learning – Some folks learn best by sharing information with someone else to figure out or absorb new information. The act of being engaged with the material with another person is called interpersonal learning.

Instruct – To direct someone how to complete a skill. Instruction is often used when introducing a new skill and one directs the learner how to execute the steps of the skill.

Jugs – Jugs are hand holds that allow the climber to place their whole fingers into, or around.

Knowledgeable – To have mastered the required information.

Lead Climbing – Using anchor points as one climbs up the wall to protect one from a ground fall.

Leader – The climber who is lead climbing.

Literal Learning Style – Learning by reading or listening to information.

Negligence – failure to behave toward another person to who a duty is owed.

Passive Belay Device – A tubular device which the rope is through, adding friction to the belay and assisting the belayer in arresting the climber's fall. This is also referred to as as an assisted braking device (NOT an auto braking device).

Pinches – The strength gained in holding a hold is significant when the climber can use the thumb. Some holds are designed specifically for the climbing to press the thumb on onside and the fingers on the other.

Pivot – A climber standing on part of the foothold with their toes on the holds can rotate on the toes and move the hips from one side of the hold to the other. This is a helpful way to increase how far in the other direction the climber may reach.

Pockets – A hold designed to have the fingers go into them like a pocket. Pockets can be many sizes and allow for four fingers or as few as one or two.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – refers to equipment used to protect the climber and belayer or the person working at height. Examples include, but is not limited to: harness, carabiner, belay device, helmet, safety glasses.

Problems – In bouldering, a problem is the path the climber takes up the wall. Problems are set on bouldering walls.

Problem Solving Teaching Approach - Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centered approach in which students learn about a subject by working in groups to solve an open-ended problem.

Quickdraw – A quickdraw consists of a sling with a carabiner attached to either end. If a quickdraw is fixed, it may have a quick link on one end affixed to a bolt hanger and a carabiner on the other end. The lead climber clips their rope through the carabiner as they ascend the wall. If/when the leader falls, the quickdraw is the anchor.

Professionalism – A demeanor that invokes the highest standard of knowledge, skill, learning and behaviour.

Redundancy – The philosophy of redundancy in climbing refers to everything having a back-up system in the event of failure. Harness buckles are doubled, there is a knot after the figure eight rethreaded.

Respectful – To show respect toward ones responsibilities, others with who one engages

Responsible – Having an obligation to do something, or to be the decision-maker with important duties

Risk – The potential for harm or loss.

Risk Appetite – Defines the degree to which one is willing to accept risk. For example, one may find lead climbing acceptable, which means they have a risk appetite for lead climbing.

Risk Management – Risk management is a practice of identifying, prioritizing, and determining what actions one will take with risks one may be presented with.

Risk Tolerance – Although a climber may have an appetite for lead climbing, they may have a low tolerance for big lead falls. Or a high tolerance for lead falls. It is an individual's tolerance for being confronted with risks.

Rock Over – When a climber places their foot in a front step on a high foothold, they can shift their hips over the foot. This action of shifting over the foot is called a rock over.

Send – When a climber completes a route successfully it is called a send, or to send the route.

Short Rope – When a lead belayer does not feed enough rope out the climber, it is called short roping.

Side Pull – Not all holds allow the climber to pull directly downward on them. A hold can be turned requiring the climber to pull on the side of the hold.

Slack – A command used in climbing for the climber to ask for more rope from the belayer.

Smear – When climbing on a slab or on a volume, the climber may want as much friction into the foothold as possible. In this case, the climber stands on the whole front part of the shoe from the ball of the foot forward.

Soft Catch – The forces generated by a lead fall on the climber are minimal.

Spotter/Spotting – As with the sport of gymnastics, a spotter is a person who ensures the person executing the skill lands appropriately. The spotter does not catch the person, rather they redirect the person to a better landing.

Standing Line – The rope that comes from the belay device to the climber.

Static – When a climber moves in a slower more controlled way, the movements are called static. This style of movement can be helpful on a slab or vertical wall when one must really rely on their footholds.

Take – A climber will use the command "take" or "tension" if they want the belayer to take the rope tightly.

Tension – A command to the belayer to take the rope tight.

Toe In – If using a pocket for a foothold, a climber will point the front of the toe into the hold.

Top Rope Climbing – When the rope is anchored at the top of the wall.

Undercling – An undercling may seem like a hold that is upside down. The climber turns the palm upward and places their fingers under the hold. An undercling is best used when the hold is below the shoulder.

Visual Learning Style – A visual learner learns by reading or seeing pictures. You understand and remember things by sight. You can picture what you are learning in your head, and you learn best by using methods that are primarily visual. You like to see what you are learning. You often close your eyes to visualize or remember something.

Volumes – Many gyms now have volumes which are large structures that can be bolted to or screwed onto the wall. A volume changes the architecture of the wall and add variety for climbing gyms.

Whipper – A significant lead fall.

Z-clip – If the lead climber pulls rope from below their last anchor and clips it into the anchor above, it is called a z-clip.

CLIMBING WALL ASSOCIATION

CWI Student Manual
UNIT ONE
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Facility Orientations

The orientation to a facility may include a variety of elements based on the facility's operations. Each climbing facility will have developed their own orientation for you to deliver. A facility orientation should cover the following:

1. Participant agreement and the risks inherent in climbing activities
    a. Ensure the climber understands and has signed
    b. Review of risks involved with climbing
    c. Willingness to accept the risks

2. Facility rules and access policies
    a. Age Restrictions/ policies for minors
    b. Posted warnings and locations
    c. Check-in/check-out protocols
    d. Access or area restrictions
    e. What to do in the case of emergencies

3. A facility tour clearly outlining areas and access restrictions, signage
    a. Introduction to facility amenities
    b. Where to store personal belongings
    c. Areas for spectating and socializing
    d. Hygiene protocols
    e. Gym etiquette

4. Equipment that may be used in the facility
    a. Use and care
    b. Personally owned equipment
    c. Qualified instruction

5. Screening questions
    a. Fitness to participate
    b. Age to participate
    c. Climbing experience

APPENDIX B: CWA Certification Program Practices

The CWA has an Industry Practices committee who defines and publishes Industry standards for facility operation. The Certification Standards Committee determines the standards for the CWI Certification Program.

Operational practices will vary from one climbing facility to another. Some facilities will opt for a higher standard or more rigid set of policies than the prescribed industry standards. The following is a table outlines the **CWI Certification Standards** defined by the CWA.

As a representative of the CWA, it is expected that CWI certified instructors will follow the CWI certification standards.

AREA	CWI CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARDS
Professionalism	• CWI certified instructors and providers are expected to operate in accordance with a demeanor of professionalism as defined through this program, Embodying the respect toward oneself and others, being responsible, holding oneself to account, being conscientious and to continue to develop and expand one's knowledge regarding the indoor climbing industry.
Access rules and practices	• Instruction of youth can begin at a young age, assuming the youth can properly wear the equipment required and the impact from falls is adequately protected. • Parents or guardians of any youth are expected to be informed of the risks and agree to the youth's participation **PRIOR** to participation in climbing activities.
	• Youth are **directly** supervised when in instructional programs through the duration of the program. • Ratio of instructor to student for youth between 5-7 years of age is 1:6. • Youth is defined as any participant under the age of 14 years.
Participant Agreement	• Ensuring that the participant agreement has been signed prior to instructing a group is part of the duty of care of an instructor. Documented participant agreements must be properly stored to protect confidentiality of participants. It is a part of the responsibility of an instructor to protect the personal information of all facility users.
Instructor/student ratio	• 8:1 is recognized ratio for adults • 6:1 for youth
Facility Inspection	• Inspecting the area of a facility where instruction will occur is the responsibility of the instructor prior to the course start. Inspection of the facility, walls, flooring, equipment should be documented. Review the facility inspection elements of the manual for details.
Equipment	• Any equipment used during instruction should be inspected prior to use. Questionable equipment should not be used. • Equipment inspection should be documented. • Monitor the care during the course. • Ensure that equipment is used and inspected in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations.

AREA	CWI CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARDS
Emergency Action Plans	• Instructors should ensure they are aware of the Emergency Action Plan and their role in an emergent situation. • Instructors have a duty of care to maintain the safety and supervision of participants.
Duty to Report	• An instructor working with youth has a duty to report any suspected mistreatment or harm. It is an instructor's responsibility to be clear to whom they need to report this information and how to document the incident.
Height limits	• Instructors have a responsibility to review the height limits for smaller participants in their programs and determine if it would be in the best interest of the participants to lower the height limit to reduce the risk of injury or harm.
Participation limits	• There are no minimum or maximum ages for participation in climbing. However, equipment may not be suitable for all bodies or health considerations. If equipment cannot be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations, participation may be limited.
Flooring in facilities	• Each climbing facility is expected to follow the guidelines of the flooring installer. Instructors are likewise expected to follow the guidelines for inspection, use and care of any flooring in the facility. Limits may include whether participants can rest on the floor near the walls, food and drink in the climbing area, the use of outdoor shoes. Instructors are expected to abide by and enforce the rules in the facility in which they are instructing.
Bouldering	• Confirm climbers are willing to accept the risks in bouldering. This can be done by asking the climber to demonstrate a fall.
	• Expected elements of the Bouldering Orientation: • Have climbers demonstrate a fall • Have climbers demonstrate falling techniques, downclimbing • Have climbers explain where the fall zones extend to • New climbers should participate in bouldering orientation to:xplain and enfore the rules
Spotting	• An instructor has a responsibility to explain the pros and cons of spotting, when it is appropriate, how to spot correctly if it is allowed in the facility. • Follow facility rules on spotting

AREA	CWI CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARDS
Facility monitoring	• Monitor all climbing activities of course participants • Monitoring includes periodically walking through the climbing area to ensure that hidden areas can be monitored. • Monitoring includes checking that climbers are exhibiting the following: ◦ Sound falling techniques ◦ Communication with others climbing in the same area ◦ Partner checks or double checks on auto belays ◦ Tying in correctly, clipping in correctly on auto belays ◦ Conducting a retraction test of auto belays ◦ Using equipment in accordance with manufacturer's instructions ◦ Maintaining control of the brake strand of the rope when belaying ◦ Returning equipment to stations for next climbers use ◦ Abiding by the rules of the facility
Auto belays	• Provide orientation as directed by the manufacturer and the key elements outlined in the Unit 3 Auto Belay and Top Rope Student Manual. • CWI Instructors ask the climber to demonstrate use of the auto belay device, including taking a fall and being lowered as part of the orientation.
Auto Belay check	• Prior to assuming a climber understands how to properly use an auto belay, the CWI conducts an auto belay check. Elements of the check include: ○ Climber can clip into the device correctly ○ Climber conducts a retraction test ○ Climber conducts a self-check or double-check prior to climbing ○ Climber climbs within the area appropriate for the device ○ Climber does not redirect the lanyard ○ Climber is comfortable taking a fall ○ Climber lowers properly to the ground ○ Climber returns the lanyard to the floor anchor, leaving it appropriately set up for the next climber

AREA	CWI CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARDS
Belay check	• Back up belay is provided with new belayers or where there is unknown skill. • CWI Instructors ask climbers to demonstrate the following: • Set up for climbing properly using the figure eight rethreaded • Set up for belaying properly • Ensure climber and belayer make appropriate adjustments to manage weight difference. This could include the use of an anchor, weighted backpack, where the belayer stands and how they react to the fall, use of a braking resistor. • Conduct partner checks • Use commands to confirm readiness for climbing • Ensure climber climbs in the appropriate area for the rope they are on • Ensure the belayer maintains control and is ready to brake the rope in the event of a fall. • Ensure the climbers have the appropriate reaction to a fall. • Ensure lowering is done at the appropriate speed and consistency • Leaving the equipment ready for use by the next group of climbers
Knots	• CWI instructors use a figure eight rethreaded with a safety knot or a minimum of 6 inches for a tail during instruction. 
Knot at end of the brake rope	• Not required
Belay device	• All belay equipment should be used in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendation for use. • If the instructor is not familiar with a piece of equipment and how it should be correctly used, the expectation is that the instructor would not allow the use of that equipment. • Some facilities have rules regarding which equipment may be used in their facility. Instructors are expected to follow the specific rules of the facility in which they are working.

AREA	CWI CERTIFICATION PROGRAM STANDARDS
Belay technique	Back up belay for new belayers or unknown belayers. • Instructors may offer instruction with the following belay techniques: • Waterfall • PBUS • Hand Over Hand • **Pinch and Slide, Slip Slap Slide NOT recommended** • Tunnelling is not recommended for novice belayers 
Elements of Lead belay check	See all the previous belay check elements and additionally confirm: • Climber demonstrates appropriate clipping stances • Climber demonstrates finding the appropriate clipping position relative to the bolt – i.e.: not reaching too high or passing the clips • Belayer smoothly feeds out rope in preparation of clipping and takes in slack as appropriate • Belayer provides a soft catch, allowing the appropriate fall length
Lead climbing – personal ropes	• Some climbing facilities may allow users to bring in their personal climbing equipment including ropes. In this instance, the facility may recommend or enforce users tying a knot in the end of the rope to ensure the belayer does not run out of rope.

APPENDIX C: Informative – Fundamental Legal Issues

By Charles R. Gregg

1. **Perspective**
    a. While the subject is legal, the real issue is operational – running a quality program.
    b. A quality program is one which:
        i. Does what it says it is going to do regarding operations and outcomes;
        ii. Manages its risks as a reasonable professional would in the same or similar circumstances

2. **The value of risk. The risk of risk.**
    a. We are willing to tolerate a sprained ankle to achieve the positive values of the experience. Can we similarly justify a death? Two deaths?
    b. Because folks can get hurt, and make claims, and sue, we need to understand the legal implications of what we do or fail to do

3. **A brief risk management strategy – analyze, manage, inform**
    a. If an activity does not serve your mission and you cannot manage its risks, do not do it! Of the activities that pass these tests: What can go wrong? How do you reduce the chances of it going wrong? What do you do when it does go wrong? Inform your climbers of the risks

4. **Issues in protecting students and climbers**
    a. Disclosures, understanding the environment, emergency action plans, established policies and practices, good gear, good records, good administrative support, well selected and supervised staff, and participants

5. **Issues in protecting the program**
    a. A quality program a risk management plan, an understanding of your own policies and the industry's practices and standards, and applicable laws; written contracts, where they are needed; adequate insurance; allocation of possible liabilities (releases and indemnities); wise use of professionals; wise selection of business entity

6. **Contracts**
    a. Elements of a binding contract – clarity, no coercion, legal competency, consideration, etc.
    b. How formed? - implied and expressed, oral and written
    c. How broken? (failure to perform as promised)
    d. Damages (the loss of the benefit of the bargain)
    e. Defenses to a claim of breach – missing element, against public policy, etc.

7. Releases

a. Elements: requirements of a contract; identify who is released and who is releasing liability; describe activities and risks and identify risks as inherent; scope of the release (negligence); indemnities; venue, applicable law, and other.

8. Negligence

a. Elements – duty, breach, loss caused by the breach

b. How duty can be eliminated, reduced, or enlarged – special relationships, active sports doctrine, special statutes, etc.

9. Defenses to claims of negligence

a. Inherency of the loss causing risk, including the assumption of the risk of negligence in active sports (Primary Assumption of Risk), Secondary Assumption of the Risk, release of the claim, etc.

10. Other defenses to claims of negligence

a. Immunities, special statute, volunteer status

11. Takeaways

a. Analyze and eliminate from your program the activities, places, and people that present risks that you cannot manage with confidence

b. Examine the descriptions of your activities and risks in your promotional and other materials. If there is a reasonable possibility of something happening that will surprise your climbers, enlarge your descriptions to include that thing (or those things).

c. Have your Participant Agreement reviewed by competent counsel to determine that you have covered adequately at least the following:

   i. a description of the activities and risks of your program;

   ii. an acknowledgment of the risks as inherent:

   iii. an assumption of the risks;

   iv. a release of you and your organization from claims, including for negligence;

   v. an indemnification of you and your organization against claims of third persons arising from the climber's participation; and

   vi. a provision that fixes the place of and the law to be applied to any suit brought against you or your organization

APPENDIX D: Informative - Inherent Risks

by Charles R. Gregg

1. Inherent risks are those so integral to an activity that, without them, the activity loses its basic character and appeal. These are risks of injury or loss which cannot be reduced or avoided without changing the basic nature of the activity.
2. Some, but not all, falls are an inherent risk of horseback riding, for example. Inherent risks arise from the unpredictable nature of climbing, including a tendency to fall for no apparent reason. Inherent risks may include slipping from a saddle or falling in the event of sudden starts or stops. Falling is not an inherent risk if it results from errors of the equine provider.... unsuitability of the horse for the rider, improper gear, or latent terrain issues, for example. In these latter cases, among others, questions of negligence arise.
3. Inherency is also found in subsets of the more familiar activity: the teaching or coaching of an active sport, for example. The duties of and to persons within the "orbit" of the activity (instructors, co-participants, and spectators) may be relaxed to a degree. Simple carelessness, or negligence, may be regarded as inherent to instruction, co-participation, or observation of an activity. The rationale is that to punish one for an apparently careless act in this context would "chill" the nature of the activity and it would lose its appeal and basic character.
4. A service provider has no duty to eliminate or even reduce inherent risks and cannot be liable for failing to do so.
5. As noted above, inherent risks may be enlarged by circumstances or conduct. A provider has a duty not to enlarge the inherent risks of an activity. Doing so creates a duty to control that enlargement, to avoid injury or loss. Examples from recent case law of enlargements of the inherent risks of activities include placing small children on the floor of a raft; no sequential learning for a horseback ride/ski activity; a wrangler dropping a horse's lead rope; no liquids provided for a marathon event; a troublesome dog on a trail ride); failure to instruct or supervise staff or participants; and failure of equipment.
6. A breach of a duty to reasonably manage the enlarged risks could lead to a claim of negligence if the breach causes an injury or other loss.
7. A climber may, with knowledge of the enlarged risks, expressly (not by mere participation, usually) expressly agree to assume that enlargement of risks and engage in the activity in spite of the enlargement. A climber's assumption of an enlargement of the inherent risks of an activity relieves the service provider of the duty to protect the client from climber caused by that enlarged risk. A service provider has no duty, in most states, to protect a climber from an express assumed risk.
8. Assumption of inherent risks and express assumption of non-inherent risks are often referred to as Primary Assumption of Risks.
9. A climber may choose to engage in the activity and confront known enlarged risks, without expressly agreeing to assume them. This is often referred to as Secondary Assumption of Risk. This Secondary Assumption is often an after-the-fact analysis, whereby the Court initially determines that:
    1. What caused the loss was not an inherent risk
    2. The provider had a duty to protect the climber
    3. The provider failed that duty. The Court or jury may then compare the client's negligence (unreasonableness) in deciding to participate, in the face of the risks, with the service provider's negligence in failing to reasonably manage the enlarged risks. Any recovery for the client may be adjust accordingly. ("Comparative fault" in most states.)

APPENDIX E: IV. Legal Principles - A Primer for Climbing Wall Instructors

by Charles R. Gregg

Climbing Wall Instructors are on the front line when it comes to the physical and emotional well-being of climbers. Instructors are expected to understand and inform climber's activity's *inherent risks* (those which "come with the territory", and without which the activity would lose its appeal and value); and, in varying degrees, depending on the activity and the climber's relationship to it, prevent an enlargement of those risks. Demonstration, instruction, and teaching basic movement skills in the bouldering area of the gym could well include inherent risks. Failing to discuss bouldering risks, facility rules, how to fall and principles of spotting prior to bouldering arguably enlarges those risks.

This distinction between inherent risks and other risks which arise and may be created by events on the floor - conditions of the environment, equipment and gear, and the conduct of instructors or participants - is important to an instructor's understanding of legal liability issues. Instructors have no legal duty to protect climbers from the *inherent risks* of an activity.

Risk is an unavoidable - some would say a desirable - element of adventure recreation activities. Every business, institution, or program hopes to develop good judgment in its staff and promote sound strategies for dealing with risk, desirable or otherwise, including the avoidance of enlarging inherent risks. This risk management responsibility falls squarely on the shoulders of the instructor.

A number of organizations, in their Participation Agreements, ask climbers to agree that they will not make a claim against the program, even if the instructor is negligent. This seems unusual - even offensive - to some. An organization does this to reserve for itself the opportunity to determine, fairly, where the line should be drawn between an injury caused by an inherent risk and one that gives rise to a cause of action.

Many frivolous lawsuits arise out of either a misunderstanding, or an intentional misinterpretation, of where that line should be drawn. Falling off a bouldering problem is an inherent risk of bouldering. Pieces of exercise equipment too close to the bouldering area, separation of sections of floor mats, or faulty maintenance of an auto belay system are not inherent risks of a climbing experience. An error in instructor judgment regarding a climber's preparedness, the difficulty of the climbing route or the physical or emotional condition of a climber may not be an inherent risk depending on the nature of the activity. Certain such errors are forgiven by prevailing law in an instructional context, where the student/climber is encouraged to "push the envelope." (They are also forgiven in certain sporting and recreation activities where, to impose legal liability for simple negligence, would chill active participation). Faced with the need for an immediate choice in an adventure recreation setting, including the forces of nature and human behavior, several options may appear reasonable. With the benefit of hindsight, experts might agree that only one decision was the proper one. Do the inherent risks of an activity include the possibility that an instructor might make one of those "reasonable", but wrong, decisions? We in the industry understand that errors in judgment do in fact "come with the territory" in certain adventure recreation activities, but the public is slow in coming to this same understanding. Continuing to identify inherent risks and informing the public about those risks, including the risks of errors of judgment of participants and staff, is one of the most important tasks of a good business, institution or climbing program. Obviously, and importantly, understanding that risks are inevitable is no reason to relax in management of those risks.

The area of the law which is most likely to be involved in a climber's complaint about events on the floor is negligence.

Negligence is the failure to behave toward another person to whom a duty is owed. Negligence has the following components:

- The party charged must have owed a duty of reasonable care to the person claiming an injury or other loss;
- That duty must have been violated; and (3) a loss must have been suffered, which arose out of the breach of duty and was foreseeable.

Instructors should assume that a duty is owed to any participant under their direct or indirect supervision. (The same might not be true of a stranger who trespasses into the gym.) Again, the nature of that duty will change as activities change, and the relationship of climbers and staff to those activities' changes. For example, the duty may diminish as the climber's level of experience and demonstrated competence increases. A greater duty is owed to a novice in a class or clinic than is owed to a veteran of national competitions. If there is a loss, the question then becomes whether it was caused by an instructor's breach of his or her duty – that is, he or she did not act as a reasonable professional would have acted in the same or similar circumstances. This is what is sometimes referred to as the "reasonable person" test. For a professional, it really becomes a "reasonable professional" test. Instructor conduct will be judged based on what professionals in the field, similarly situated, would have done under the same circumstances. As we have noted above, these circumstances might include the nature of the activity (was it purely recreational, was it instructional, did it involve co-participants?), and the age, maturity, and experience of the climber.

In the bouldering example above, a duty of care clearly exists. The issue of "breach of duty" would be answered by an analysis (often made by hired experts) of whether a reasonable professional would have selected that bouldering problem, or discussed the basics of movement, bouldering rules, how to fall and spotting prior to climbing. The issue of responsibility for an injury would require an analysis of the causal connection between the alleged breach of duty – the decisions described above - and that loss. The program would not be liable, for example, if there was an unforeseen and spontaneous incident such as a missed spot by an attentive spotter, or if the incident were caused by some third party such as another patron.

In summary, the defenses to a claim of negligence include:

1. the absence of a duty,
2. no breach of duty, and
3. no loss, or no causal connection between the breach and the loss.

Other defenses might include a claim that what happened was an "inherent risk" of the activity (again, there is no duty to protect another from the inherent risks of an activity); or that the injured person executed a valid contract including a release or waiver provision, or expressly assumed the risk that caused the injury.

The claimant may have contributed to the loss by his or her conduct, including voluntarily and knowingly participating in an activity in which risks had been enlarged, in violation of duties owed to the claimant. In such a case, a judge or jury may be asked to determine the claimant's share of the blame for what finally happened and adjust any monetary award accordingly.

“Simple” negligence - not acting as a reasonable professional would have acted - can be aggravated by conduct which is so extreme in ignoring the probability of harm and the severity of that harm, that the actor was indifferent to the welfare of the person or persons injured. Such conduct - or failure to act - is “gross negligence”. In cases of gross negligence and intentional wrongs, the injured party may be awarded exemplary or punitive damages above those suffered, to teach the wrong doer a lesson. Such acts or omissions cannot be forgiven by release or waiver provisions of an agreement, or an assumption of the risk of such offensive conduct.

Situations in the facility which give rise to charges of negligent conduct might include the manner in which emergency protocols are exercised, ill-fitting, inappropriate or defective gear, hiring of incompetent or inexperienced staff, inadequate screening, inadequate instruction or supervision of patrons, passing students from a class who are not qualified, overlooking abusive behavior which causes emotional trauma to a fellow patron, and failure to identify environmental or other hazards (for example, a ledge a climber might fall onto, or terrain features into which a falling climber might swing.)

Other legal issues can arise on the floor, such as a staff person’s misrepresentations regarding certain conditions: “You can climb in your bare feet; nothing here can hurt you”; “No one has ever been hurt doing this - give it a try “. Instructors must understand the impact and legal ramifications of such statements. Random statements can create expectations and modify the duty of care owed. A misleading statement which induces participation can nullify the effect of an agreement to release future claims. So be careful with verbal statements.

Instructors are responsible for adequate and true reporting of events in the facility, such as a near-miss, reasons for failing a student, a dangerous condition, or evaluation of a peer. Carelessness or falsehoods in such reporting can lead to problems in determining the truth of certain events and the qualifications of other staff or patrons. How does the administration convince a parent that a child was separated from a program for a valid reason, when the reason given on an incident report is less supportable? How does a manager explain a failure to document or report a condition or behavior issue on the floor, when harm later arises from that condition?

Qualified instructors are vital to a successful climbing program. Instructors have important legal obligations and responsibilities. Instructors are the keepers and communicators of the climbing program’s mission, promises and representations.

We must keep these legal issues in perspective, of course. The law, with its “reasonable professional” standard, attempts to protect those who do their work well and in accordance with the standards of the indoor climbing industry. This is where your energy should be directed - to doing the job you have been trained to do and doing it well. If you do, the legal issues will take care of themselves. See Annexes A and B starting on page 41 for further discussion of legal issues.

APPENDIX F: Informative – PPE Inspection

Periodic visual and close inspection of personal protective equipment should be conducted by a person competent to inspect the equipment. A close inspection is considered to be a "hands on" inspection. Equipment should be retired and replaced at the end of its operational lifetime which is determined after consideration of combination of factors, including but not limited to:

1. the age of the equipment,
2. length of time in storage,
3. length of time in use,
4. amount of use,
5. type of use,
6. deterioration from use, and
7. the overall condition and functioning of the equipment.

Equipment should be, stored, maintained, inspected, repaired (if appropriate), retired and replaced as per the manufacturer's instructions.

Equipment that is excessively worn or damaged and is not in proper working order must be repaired (if appropriate) or retired. Equipment that is obsolete or recalled must be retired. Retired equipment should be disposed of so it cannot be used inadvertently.

Note: In some cases repair of equipment is not possible or advisable. Consult the manufacturer's instructions or recommendations regarding equipment repair.

Inspection, maintenance, and repair activities should be recorded in appropriate quality assurance records or logs.

Rope Inspection Criteria

- Conduct a visual inspection of the entire length of the rope.
- Verify there are no burns, glazing, cuts, nicks, tears, excessive wear, fraying, exposed cores, severe discoloration or stains, changes in diameter, changes in texture, etc.
- Conduct a hands-on inspection of the entire length of the rope.
- Verify there are no flat sections, soft sections, stiff sections, breaks, bulges, marked angles or areas where the radius of a bend changes abruptly.
- Check that the length of the rope has not changed significantly.
- Retire any rope that experienced extreme heat damage, chemical damage, exceeded the rated number of lead falls, or has reached the end of its service life.

Quickdraw Inspection Criteria

- Remove the carabiners from the quickdraw.
- Conduct a visual inspection of the quickdraw.
- Check the woven portion, verify there are no burns, glazing, cuts, nicks, tears, excessive wear, fraying, fuzzing, severe discoloration or stains. Also verify there are no flat sections, soft sections, stiff sections, breaks, bulges, runs, or changes in width, changes in texture, etc.
- Verify the condition of the safety stitching, check for cut, loose, worn, frayed, or severely discolored or faded threads, etc.
- Retire any quickdraw that has experienced extreme heat damage, chemical damage or has reached the end of its service life.

Harness Inspection Criteria

Check all of the safety elements of the harness, including:

- Verify the condition of the webbing and bias tapes, check for burns, glazing, cuts, nicks, tears, excessive wear, fraying, fuzzing, excessive softness or stiffness, severe discoloration or stains, etc.
- Verify the webbing in the area of the adjustment buckle or buckles is not excessively worn.
- Verify the condition of the safety stitching, check for cut, loose, worn, frayed, or severely discolored or faded threads, etc.
- Verify the condition of the belay loop (if applicable) check for burns, glazing, cuts, nicks, tears, excessive wear, fraying, fuzzing, excessive softness or stiffness, severe discoloration or stains, etc.
- Verify the condition of the tie-in point check for burns, glazing, cuts, nicks, tears, excessive wear, fraying, fuzzing, excessive softness or stiffness, severe discoloration or stains, etc.
- Verify the condition of the buckles check for cracks, deformation, heavy marks or scoring, excessive wear, corrosion, etc.
- Verify the webbing is or can be properly threaded through the buckles.
- Assess the overall condition of the harness.

Locking Carabiner Inspection Criteria

- Verify that the frame, gate and locking sleeve have no cracks, deformation, heavy marks or scoring, excessive wear, corrosion, etc.
- Verify the condition of the rivet and locking sleeve.
- Verify proper gate alignment with the nose of the carabiner.
- Verify that the open gate closes automatically when released.
- Verify the gate is not sticky, blocked or obstructed by deformation or foreign matter.
- Verify the locking mechanism is working properly.

Passive Belay Device Inspection Criteria (plate, tube, etc.)

- Verify that the device has no cracks, deformation, heavy marks or scoring, excessive wear, corrosion, etc.
- Verify there are no burrs or sharp edges on the frame that might affect the rope.
- Verify the condition of the friction grooves and rope passages.
- Verify that the cable or cord is firmly attached to the tube or plate and that the cable is not frayed.
- Conduct a function test on the ground with the device rigged.

Mechanical Assist Belay Device Inspection Criteria

- Verify that the device has no cracks, deformation, heavy marks or scoring, excessive wear, corrosion, etc.
- Verify that the attachment holes are not damaged.
- Verify that the moving side plate opens and closes freely.
- Verify that the rope path is not damaged.
- Verify that the cam and friction bushing are not excessively warn
- Verify that the cam and release handle move freely and that the return springs are working properly.
- Check the condition of the rivets, fixing screw, cam and the friction plate.
- Verify there are no foreign objects (sand, etc.) in the mechanism and no lubricant in the rope path.
- Conduct a function test on the ground with the device rigged.

APPENDIX G: Climbing Wall Instructor Course Provider Requirements:

Any person meeting the pre-requisites to become a CWI Certification Program provider, and who maintains appropriate membership status, may stand as a candidate for certification to be a provider and is encouraged to apply. Eligibility is determined based upon review of an application, a current résumé or curriculum vitae, references, completion of a provider course if applicable, and willingness to complete an attestation and agreement. An interview may also be required.

APPLICATION FOR CWI CERTIFICATION PROVIDER CERTIFICATION

- ☐ Current membership in the CWA (provider or provider's employer).
- ☐ 21 years of age.
- ☐ Current first aid and CPR (American Red Cross Basic - 5.5 to 6.5 hours, or equivalent).
- ☐ A résumé or other document showing a minimum of 200 hours of work experience as a climbing instructor, showing expertise in indoor climbing settings.
- ☐ Climbing ability: 5.9 lead on artificial structures.
- ☐ Current CWA Certified Level 3 Lead Climbing Instructor.*
- ☐ Two non-related professional references, including contact information and phone number.
- ☐ A signed agreement and attestation on file.
- ☐ Proof of liability insurance coverage.

**If the candidate is not a current CWA Certified Level 3 Lead Climbing Instructor, the candidate may complete an alternative qualification procedure documenting that the candidate meets the requirements of becoming a provider but showing a minimum of 400 hours of work experience as a climbing instructor. Exceptional and wide-ranging indoor climbing teaching experience, prior experience as an instructor or guide, or other certification will be considered as evidence of qualification.*

CWI PROVIDER CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

- ☐ Candidate demonstrates belay competency with both a passive and an assisted braking belay device
- ☐ Candidate demonstrates requisite climbing competency, 5.9 lead
- ☐ Candidate demonstrates knowledge of basic movement skills
- ☐ Candidate holds a CWI Level 3 Lead Climbing Instructor Certification or equivalent
- ☐ Candidate demonstrates knowledge of the CWA certification program goals, mission, values, and the scope of the program
- ☐ Candidate demonstrates willingness to comply with the CWI Certification Program policies and standards
- ☐ Candidate completes self-directed required learning, and in person assessment successfully
- ☐ Candidate understands the responsibilities and risks of being in the role of a Provider certification
- ☐ Candidate contributes to discussion regarding industry trends, new equipment, and standards, in the climbing wall industry
- ☐ Candidate demonstrates accurate evaluation of a CWI certification candidate, providing skillful feedback and observations
- ☐ Candidate demonstrates a high degree of professionalism and leadership
- ☐ Candidate demonstrates the ability to accurately complete the following:
    - ○ CWA Activity Planning of CWI Course
    - ○ CWA Assessment Tools
    - ○ CWA Course Evaluation Form
    - ○ CWA Roster
    - ○ CWA Provider Course Quiz
- ☐ Candidate demonstrates teaching a CWI Certification Course component using a variety of leadership styles and teaching approaches