

Team Member & Parent Handbook



Mission & Goals

Mission

Spartanburg Climbers is focused on teaching youth the importance of hard work, dedication, teamwork, and physical fitness. Our goal is to educate in climbing as well as encourage positive performance and mindset in all aspects of life.

Goals

The main goals of the Spartanburg Climbers is to teach all around climbing skills to young climbers, cultivate new climbers, be competitive and encouraging, but most importantly, have fun! Our knowledgeable coaches are dedicated to provide an environment of mutual learning as well as adhere to the high safety standards set out by the Spartanburg County Parks Department.

Climber's Goals

What are your goals for this season? Take some time to really think about this and make some very concrete and realistic goals for yourself. Your goals may not be just to get better, but maybe to become stronger and do twice as many pull-ups, to learn how to dyno better, or develop your footwork. Consider the season as a whole and think of specific goals that you want to accomplish. Your goals should be written down. By writing down your goals you can refer back to them and see if you have accomplished them or if you need to work harder. Additionally, crossing off your goals as you attain them can be very satisfying.

Coach's Goals

The coaches strive to create a well-rounded team of young climbers. We actively encourage the enjoyment of climbing but also work toward increasing personal strength and ability. We want to see the Spartanburg Climbers help develop a strong climbing community in Spartanburg County and establish a solid base for the team in the future. Our hope is that this will also create a positive reputation of committed young climbers and a community among the youth in the gym.

Spartanburg Parks Department Climbing Programs

Spartanburg Climbers is in its inaugural year and was designed by Ben Palmer and Elizabeth Hardee in conjunction with Climb Upstate Climbing Gym after the need was recognized for a youth climbing program in Spartanburg County. Ben Palmer, manager of the climbing team, through the experiences of offering climbing education in Georgia, British Columbia, Alaska, and Argentina felt that the resource of a competitive youth climbing team was the next step for the climbing community of Spartanburg County. Our youth climbing program is designed with the intention of providing a well-rounded climbing education that supports the participant's need for self-exploration, a sense of belonging, and experiential learning. We built this program with the values of responsibility, accountability, respect, encouragement, competition, and sportsmanship.

We focus on developing fundamental climbing skills, building self-confidence, teamwork, open communication, establishing goals, and learning how to work toward them. Members of the climbing team regularly will meet challenges, experience difficulties, and progress towards success. Empowered by their own personal experiences, they are better focused, and ready to meet change and challenge in their daily lives.

Gear

Like any sport, the proper equipment is essential to performing well.

Harness

The harness should fit comfortably. Make sure no jabbing or pinching occurs. With the adjustment just above the hips, the climber should be able to grow into their harness, but it should not be too big or bulky.

Harness: \$30-\$100

Shoes

Shoes will be the most costly and reoccurring item you purchase for the young climber. For an adult, climbing shoes should fit tight (1/2 size smaller than street shoe size) and without socks. But for a novice youth team participant, and growing child, (esp. those in puberty), fit them at street shoe size with a sock. When they complain about the tightness, they will take off the sock and most likely have 2 more months in the shoes.

Shoes: \$50-\$150

Chalk Bag & Ball

Every participant in the program must have their own chalk bag. Chalk bags are a personal preference (hand or finger bags). Look for one with a draw string, zip or snap to close.

Chalk bags: \$10-\$30

Chalk Ball: \$5-\$9

Other suggestions

- Do not purchase harness or shoes over the internet if you have not tried them on at an outfitter.
- Do not purchase used harness or other life supporting equipment
- Focus on fit instead of style and color

Practices

To improve climbing skills, members of the climbing team will follow a progressive and well-crafted curriculum. Each practice is uniquely designed to complement the training season and the training cycle. If climbers follow the regiment with an open mind, they will increase their climbing performance, confidence and find a passion for the sport that will take them far. Climbers must commit to training the valuable lessons on their own to improve their climbing performance and stay at the peak of their game. Most team practices involve a cardio & warm up, training focus, peak training, and warm down and cool down.

Our practices take place on Thursday evenings from 5:30pm-7:30pm and Climb Upstate located at 6655 Pottery Rd, Spartanburg SC 29303. Climbers are expected to attend all practices unless prior arrangements are made. Climbing well requires committing movement to muscle memory, and this requires repetition. We have done our best to schedule around any conflicts in holidays and school breaks. If there needs to be a change in dates, we will notify you immediately. If you are unable to make a practice, call or email Ben Palmer as early as possible.

Climbers are not allowed to leave practice with anyone other than their parent or guardian unless a coach has been notified ahead of time. Notification must be in the form of an email or text. All climbers must be signed out prior to leaving also. We understand that this can be inconvenient at times, but it is done for the protection of all parties involved; and consistent with other SCPD programs.

Team Member's Code of Conduct

By joining the team, each member becomes a representative of Spartanburg County Parks Department, both in the gym and at other locations. It is imperative that each member of the team conduct themselves in a matter that is respectful and mature.

1. **I will live up to the core values of respect and fairness**
 - I will respect myself, my fellow team members, and their parents, my coaches, and all others in the climbing community. I will treat my team members as I would like to be treated, and help them attain their goals through my support and encouragement.
 - I will display good sportsmanship in victory and defeat, and uphold the rules of the gym.
2. **I will represent the team positively through my behavior, language, attitude, and dress.**
 - I understand that words are powerful and should be used to build myself and others up.
 - The team shirt is required for all practices. All team members will adhere to a "shirts on policy", whether in practice or personal climbing. The bottom of any shorts must be at or below a team member's fingertips when they are standing up with arms extended at their sides.
3. **I will strive for my personal best, while never forgetting that the goal is to have fun!**
4. **My communication with my coaches and parents will be open and honest.**

Other Rules and Policies

1. Maintain safety at all times.
2. Be on time for practice, or contact coach if you are not coming to practice or will be late.
3. No use of cell phones during practice.
4. Bring your required equipment & tennis shoes to every practice.
5. Clean up after practice and return borrowed equipment at the end of each practice.
6. Do not leave practice without checking in with the coach.
7. Do not leave from practice with anyone except parents, caregivers, or approved chaperones.
8. No use of profanity in practice, social or outdoor events.
9. No bullying will be tolerated.
10. No caffeine products or performance enhancing beverages/food before, during, or after practice.
11. No drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes in practice or during the climbing team season. **Your membership will be revoked, with no refund of team fees. No exceptions.**

Coaches Code of Conduct

The climbing team coaches are given an opportunity to be an enormously positive influence on the kids that they coach, both in terms of their climbing performance and personal development. The Coach's Code of Conduct is intended to reinforce that positive influence as opposed to squelching it. However, being a coach is a privilege with great responsibility. Coaches must appreciate and respect the inherent power imbalance that exists in the relationship between a coach and a team member. Coaches are conduits through which the values and goals of the sport are channeled to the athletes. Thus, how athletes regard their sport is often dependent on the behavior of their coach.

1. **I will always put the wellbeing of the climbing team first.**
 - **My relationship with the youth is professional, not personal**
 - I will adhere to the rules of threes and avoid isolating myself with a child.
 - My language, attire, and behaviors shall be age appropriate and professional.
 - My physical contact with youth will be of an appropriate an professional nature.
 - The nature of my communication with the youth that I work with will be limited by the context of my professional responsibilities.
 - I will not tolerate bullying and will take appropriate actions to protect the targeted minor and discipline the individual(s) who are engaged in bullying or hazing.
 - I will learn to recognize the warning signs of child abuse.
 - I will take personal responsibility for “pushing it up” by reporting any signs I witness.
2. **My coaching methods and style will at all times uphold the core values of respect and fairness.**
 - I will respect myself, the team members and their parents, and all others in the climbing community.
 - I will display high standards for the sport of climbing and of coaching.
 - I will treat everyone with respect in both victory and defeat, and promote good sportsmanship amongst team members.
 - I will strive to evenly spread my coaching time among all team members.
3. **I understand that I'm an ambassador for the team, Spartanburg County Parks Dept, and the sport of Climbing and will serve in that role positively at all times.**
4. **I will commit myself to the climbing and personal development of each team member.**
 - I will encourage team members to achieve their personal best through positive feedback.
 - I will ensure that the activities being undertaken are suitable for the age, experience, ability, and fitness level of the team member.

Policies and other Information

Attendance Policy

You have agreed to commit to be a member of the climbing team. It is vital to your improvement as a climber to attend each and every practice. The practice calendar is sensitive to holiday and school breaks for the area schools. Recognizing that rest is required for our mental and physical state, days off are also incorporated into the calendar. Therefore, as a team member, absences must be kept to a minimum. Excessive absences can result in being removed from the program entirely. A phone call, email, or text is required **before** practice stating the reasons for your absences.

Tardy Policy

It is important to get to practice on time. Warming up together and stretching helps climbers transition from school and creates a communal connection. However, we recognize some schools let out later and traffic can be an issue. Please text or call if you are going to be late, and by how much time.

Outdoor Trips

Weather permitting; we will schedule one team camping trip each season. This will be to Crowders Mountain, or other locations in NC. Parents and siblings are encouraged to attend. All members of the team are encouraged to attend, but children under the age of 13 must be accompanied by an adult.

Parental Involvement

We highly encourage parents to stay for practices and watch; however we ask that you respect the coaches and allow them to perform their jobs without interruption. Parents have the following responsibilities and expectations when participating in programs.

Parents have a responsibility to their children:

To make sure that your child gets the most out of his or her experience, parents should show their unwavering support, including positive reinforcement of your child's performance and effort. This is absolutely essential, especially at an early age, to ensure their healthy development. Parents should also be positive role models, including, but not limited to, showing proper sportsmanship at all times and refraining from negativity of any kind. We highly suggest that parents enroll in one of Climb Upstate's Belay Classes so that they may belay their child whenever they want instead of relying on the availability of staff.

Parents have a responsibility to the coaches:

Our coaches are committed to giving your child a quality and lasting experience. They need you to be supportive of their decisions and not undermine their efforts. If you don't agree with a coach, you are expected to tell that coach, but make certain it is done at the right time and place and not in front of the children. Parents are also expected to drop off and pick up their children on time for practice.

Parents have a responsibility to other parents:

Personal gain and satisfaction should not be derived from your child's performance. Competition and taunting between parents is never acceptable, and no parent should ever feel embarrassed or disappointed by their child's performance. Successes should always be cheered, and disappointments should always be consoled, no matter whose team it affects.

Parents have a responsibility to themselves:

It is your responsibility to enjoy watching your child and other children participate and learn. The joy and pride associated with watching children participate in sports should be experienced to the fullest, because a lifetime of memories is being created before your very eyes.

Member agreement

I, _____, have fully read the rules and codes of conduct established in this handbook, and understand that as a member of the climbing team, I represent Spartanburg County Parks Department and therefore will abide by these rules and policies. I also understand that if my conduct is unbecoming enough that the coach has to continuously reprimand me and/or speak with my parent/guardian; this is grounds to be dismissed or suspended from the team. This is a binding agreement for the 2013/2014 season.

Team Member

Date

Parent/Guardian

Date

Important Contact Information

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