



Risk Assessments: Tree Climbing

Experience: Tree Climbing	Group Details:	
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Benefits of experience / activity

Gross & fine motor skill development, hand-eye coordination, spatial awareness, increasing physical strength, assessment and management of risks, estimation and comparison of dimensions, self control, self esteem, confidence.

Steps	Hazard & Risk	Level of Risk	Action Proposed	New level of Risk
1. Assessing a tree for climbing- estimating and comparing branch size and strength, identifying dead wood, identifying climbing route.	1. Dead wood or small diameter branch snapping with weight of climber causing loss of hold. Broken limbs, concussion, internal bleeding, death.	1.H	• only 1 participant on tree at a time. 1. Leader to verbally assess with climber the tree limbs for signs of decay, life, suitable strength.	1. M
2. Assessing ground fall area and neighboring trees/shrubs for hazards and removing hard, sharp objects checking for soft fall materials.	2. Falling on to sharp or hard objects causing wounds, broken bones, external/internal bleeding, impaling, concussion, death.	2.H	2. Ground fall area and nearby vegetation assessed for hazardous materials and tree for climbing rejected if hazards cannot be removed. Remove hazards if possible.	2. M

<p>3. Give an explanation of safest way to climb trees. This could be during the tour round the site or before learners are able to climb trees.</p>	<p>3. Child climbs, hurts self or others by falling, standing on hands, branch snapping, climbing unsafely.</p>	<p>3.H</p>	<p>3. Tell learners to check with Leader before climbing a tree as some trees are not good for climbing. Explain safest ways to climb trees, ie, hands and feet on shoulder of tree. Keeping body close to the trunk and three points of contact at all times. Explain only one person to climb at a time. Explain that some trees aren't as safe for climbing, ie elder trees.</p>	<p>3. M</p>
<p>4.Begin by climbing to maximum of head height and find route down checking for safe hand and foot holds throughout climb and decent. Hands must be free and nothing carried on climb. No loose cords, neckties etc that could become caught in branches.</p>	<p>4.Child loses confidence and panics about getting down, freezes with fear. Rapid dismount failing to check for safe route. Attempting to carry a stick or object whilst climbing causing loss of hand hold or dropping it on to observer. Items around neck / loose clothing becoming caught in branches strangling or trapping wearer.</p>	<p>3. H</p>	<p>4.Restrict climb to no more than leader's head height so child can be helped down. Ensure no objects carried or worn round neck, or loose cords, clothing</p>	<p>3. M</p>
<p>5.Dismount tree safely ensuring safety of any observers.</p>	<p>5.Landing badly and sprain or broken bones. Falling on to observer causing injury.</p>	<p>4.M</p>	<p>5.Leader verbally reminding and coaching about safe dismounts. Any observers must be outside fall zone.</p>	<p>4. L</p>
<p>6.Progress to higher climbs as confidence and skill develops to a height that can be safely supported by tree being climbed to an absolute maximum of 5 meters.</p>	<p>6. Height causes fear and participant gets stuck. Less control by Leader as participant further away. Increased height increased fall damage.</p>	<p>5.H</p>	<p>6.Only those participants that can follow directions on head height climbs and show confidence to be permitted to progress to higher climbs progressively as they demonstrate ability and risk awareness.</p>	<p>5.M</p>