CHALLENGE COURSES: Skills Training & Amusement Devices

GENERAL NOTES
SKILLS TRAINING
A challenge course is considered to be an Educational Program and Skills Training Program. It includes a series of individual and group, physical, social and emotional challenges that require a combination of teamwork, skills and individual commitment. Challenge courses are constructed outdoors using trees or utility poles and ropes, cables and wood. These courses may also be constructed indoors within an existing structure.

High elements require a person to climb higher than can be safely spotted, above shoulder height, from the ground and require a belay system to protect the participant. This includes indoor and outdoor climbing walls.

Low elements are non-belayed activities below shoulder height, which focus on a set goal within a supportive group environment. This includes indoor and outdoor bouldering walls. Low elements can be removable.

Initiative tasks challenge the group to utilize its resources to solve a set of problems. Initiative can use permanent or portable equipment either indoors or outdoors.

AMUSEMENT DEVICES
According to Technical Standards and Safety Authority (TSSA), Amusement Devices are used to entertain persons by moving them or causing them to be moved. Amusement Devices may include, land inflatables, some waterslides and Ziplines.

RELEVANT REGULATIONS AND RESOURCES
Challenges Unlimited <www.challengesunlimited.com>
Adventure Works Associates Inc. <www.adventureworks.org>
Association for Challenge Course Technology (A.C.C.T.) <www.acctinfo.org>
Climbing Wall Association www.climbingwall.org
TSSA - http://www.tssa.org/

QUESTIONS – SKILL TRAINING
CAMPS WITH ANY TYPE OF CHALLENGE COURSE ANSWER QUESTIONS CC-ST1 to CC-ST23

CC-ST1 Does the Camp Comply with all TSSA Regulations?

CC-ST2 Has the challenge course been installed using the minimum standard recommended by The Association for Challenge Course Technology (A.C.C.T.)?

The primary concern is for the safety of the participants.

CC-ST3 Has the climbing wall been installed using the minimum standards recommended by the Climbing Wall Association?

CC-ST4 Is the challenge course designed, installed and operated to deter unauthorized access and use?

CC-ST5 Annually, prior to the camp season, has a qualified “third-party challenge course professional” completed a safety inspection of the course and provided a written report to the director?

Third-party challenge course professional means an individual, external to the camp, who possesses the necessary training and skills to operate and inspect challenge courses.

CC-ST6 Does the camp implement the recommendations from the annual inspection prior to the use of the challenge course?

CC-ST7 Is there an annual inspection of the ground beneath the challenge course for proper drainage, rotting of poles or trees, insect or animal damage and potential future hazards?
CC-ST8 Are all trees and poles in the challenge course inspected on an ongoing basis to determine their health?

CC-ST9 Do trained camp staff inspect the challenge course and equipment prior to each use?

CC-ST10 Have all instructors completed a training course appropriate to the site and program?

Challenge course instructors must have completed a course offered by a challenge course professional trainer.

CC-ST11 Have all spotters received proper instruction in their roles?

CC-ST12 Does the camp have a written emergency plan for the challenge course?

The written emergency plan must describe the appropriate response for medical emergencies, injuries, panic attacks and equipment failures.

CC-ST13 Are the instructional staff trained in the written emergency plan?

CC-ST14 Are the numbers of instructors and spotters sufficient for the number of participants engaged in the challenge course as recommended by the installer or qualified challenge course professional?

CC-ST15 When high elements are in use, are at least two trained staff supervising?

CC-ST16 When low elements are in use, is at least one trained staff supervising?

CC-ST17 Are the safety rules posted and explained to the campers prior to their participation?

CC-ST18 Is safety terminology explained and used by both staff and campers?

CC-ST19 Does all safety equipment meet the manufacturer’s & installer’s recommendations?

CC-ST20 Is an ongoing, written record maintained and kept on file detailing the condition of the challenge course and the safety and belay equipment?

CC-ST21 Are near-miss incidents recorded for future assessment of risk?

A near miss is an event that could have resulted in unwanted consequences, but did not because either by chance or through timely intervention the incident did not occur. By documenting 'near miss incidents' camps can hopefully prevent future incidents from occurring.

CC-ST22 Is a first aid kit accessible when the challenge course is in use?

CC-ST23 Do the instructors have a communication method to summon assistance while the challenge course is in use?

CAMPS WITH HIGH ELEMENTS ALSO ANSWER QUESTIONS CC-ST24 TO CC-ST30

CC-ST24 Are helmets, ropes, harnesses, carabiners and belay devices inspected on a use-by-use basis?

The staff and participants must wear full safety equipment. For high elements, this will include a helmet, harness and belay system for all activities.

CC-ST25 Is the challenge equipment removed and stored in a cool, dry, locked area while not in use?

CC-ST26 Are the high elements and climbing equipment used only for the purpose of a challenge course program?

CC-ST27 If campers are belaying, are there sufficient belayers for the weight of the climber when using a belay post?
CC-ST28 Is a standardized system of communication used among instructors on the high elements and the staff spotting on the ground and campers dismounting the elements?

CC-ST29 Are all campers and staff equipped with helmets, harnesses, locking carabineers and a belay system when they are on high elements?

CC-ST30 Does the head of challenge courses have easy access to equipment for a participant rescue?

CAMPS WITH LOW ELEMENTS AND INITIATIVE TASKS ALSO ANSWER QUESTIONS CC-ST31 TO CC-ST33

CC-ST31 Are portable low elements and initiatives removed and stored in a locked area when not in use?

CC-ST32 Is the equipment for portable low elements and initiatives used only for the purpose of initiative challenges?

CC-ST33 Is the area below a bouldering wall appropriately and sufficiently padded according to manufacturer’s recommendations to prevent injury to climbers?

QUESTIONS – Amusement Devices

CAMPS WITH ZIPLINES, WATERSLIDES & LAND INFLATABLES ANSWER QUESTIONS CC-AD1 TO AD7

CC-AD1 Does the Camp Comply with all TSSA Regulations?

CC-AD2 Does the Camp have an annual Audit Inspection completed by an approved TSSA Mechanic?

CC-AD3 Is work, identified by the TSSA Mechanic during the Audit Inspection completed prior to TSSA’s formal inspection?

CC-AD4 Was the assigned TSSA Inspector contacted to schedule an inspection prior to May 31st?
   Camps will be sent a renewal invoice approximately two months prior to their permit’s expiry date. Permits for most Ziplines expire March 31st of each year.

CC-AD5 Has the camp had their TSSA Inspection and received their permit prior to the use of each Recreational Device?

CC-AD6 Do you have a Technical Dossier ready for review by TSSA?
   Camps who build Zipline Courses after 2014 need to have Engineering - Technical dossiers (submissions) and an engineering review for new recreational devices.
   Camps who built Zipline Courses prior to 2014 are not required to have Technical dossiers. However, if the design is changed in any fashion that affects its inherent safety (even if for the better), then the design change must be submitted to TSSA and is subject to review and inspection, regardless of whether the zip line was grandfathered via variance or not.
   All new amusement devices, other than the zip lines with variances, require Initial Inspections before the device is used by the public. The initial inspection would occur after the technical dossier had been reviewed by TSSA Engineering but before the permit is issued.
   Camps that have never had an approved variance are required to complete the technical dossier/design review process that is outlined in detail on the TSSA website (www.tssa.org).

C-AD7 If you are rent or own Inflatables do they have all of the following:
   - TSSA Amusement Device License
   - TSSA Amusement Device Permit
   - “AD” Permit Number for Each Device
   - Certified Amusement Device Mechanic Audit
   - Proof of $2,000,000.00 Liability Insurance

CC-ST & CC-AD Challenge Courses

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