

Log Cabin Camp

ACTIVITIES INSTRUCTIONS

SPOTTING: SAFE AND EASY

Spotting is the primary safety system used for initiative activities. It requires an individual to actively protect a “participant”, who may be involved in activities some distance off the ground. The main role of the spotter is to protect the head and upper body of the “participant” should a fall occur.

The term catching, is often used in both the teaching and practice of spotting. But while spotters usually need to be in a position to catch a participant in the event of a fall, it is very difficult to literally catch a falling body, even from just a small height. Spotters and participants must understand that spotting means to support and protect the upper body and head in case of a fall (sometimes referred to as breaking the fall).

Here are some key aspects to remember when spotting:

- Effective spotters should mimic the movements of the participants on the activity. The spotter duplicates the movements of the participants and positions him/herself to move with any falling action.
- The spotter needs to be constantly focused on the participant.
- Spotters need to be anticipating a fall from the moment the participant begins until they conclude an activity.
- Spotters need to be able to move in and dampen any motion in a swinging activity, i.e. swinging off a rope swing.
- Spotters need to understand how vital their role is and that they must take it seriously in order for the participant to feel safe in their hands. Joking around is not acceptable behaviour. A high level of concentration is required at all times.

From: Project Adventure Australia, “Spotting: Safe and Easy”, by Kristin Jones.