

CHAPERONE GUIDELINES

Challenge Discovery – Mission in Action

Building Relationships. Being at Challenge Discovery is all about building bonds and friendships through experiencing one another in group activities, and overcoming challenges together. We hope participants not only spend time with friends, but also new people.

Enhancing Self-Esteem and Self-Awareness. By accomplishing some really hard tasks, individuals may leave feeling empowered, or built up in their own abilities. Participants will hopefully see or reflect on their own experiences, and have an “ah-ha!” moment.

Creating a mutually supportive environment. Ideas from communication to empathy and everything in-between will surface throughout the experience. Groups will face difficulties, reflect on why they were difficult, how to improve, and how it relates to their team, group and life

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Our Challenge Discovery Facilitator to participant ratio is 1:15. Your role as a chaperone is VERY HELPFUL, and you can make a big difference on how the day goes!

Here are some guiding principles to help support the Challenge Discovery mission as a chaperone:

- **Participate.** This can be so beneficial as a parent, teacher, group leader, etc... We have heard from others who participate that it is nice to experience the students almost as a peer, and not having to worry about managing the group's experience.
- **Let the students do the problems solving.** Remember that the day is about the participants, not chaperones. But still be an extra set of eyes, ears and hands (if participating), but allow the students to do the mental “heavy-lifting”. It will be tempting to shout out an answer or take control of moments of chaos. We have found this can detract from the students' opportunity to work through the problem.
- **Listen and watch.** You might be surprised what you see and hear, which may be advantageous - so that these points can be brought up in debriefs and conversations back at school, church, etc.
- **Avoid generating unnecessary competition.** Sometimes a comment intended to be motivational (“The other group could do it!”) prevents a team from setting their own goals and taking ownership of their results.
- **Speak up.** If you feel it is important to give the facilitator relevant information about a certain participant - regarding medical concerns, or other information that may help both the individual and the group - please tell the facilitator or ground facilitator as soon as possible.
- **Be conscious of your language.** For example, instead of: “that won't work,” try “what will happen if we try that?” We want the participants to discover on their own why something will or will not work. Rather than, “Don't look down!” try “Look up!” which focuses their attention on the positive.
- **Aid with disruption and de-escalation.** Our facilitators may ask you to take a disruptive participant aside to talk to him/her. We will ask this if the individual is creating a negative or unsafe experience for others. Please keep the discussion positive; ask the individual what he/she might do to be a more effective member of the team, if he/she is not behaving respectfully or responsibly. Generate a discussion rather than telling the participant what to do or not to do. If you are uncomfortable in this role, please just have the individual stand beside you until the facilitator can talk to him/her.
- **Hand over the reins.** Please respect the experience and role of the facilitator in charge of the team. Challenge Discovery facilitators have extensive training in facilitation and risk management and will maintain responsibility for the team and its participants throughout the program.