



Parent Handbook & Team Code of Conduct

Earth Treks Climbing Centers
2014/2015 Season





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Earth Treks' Climbing Team – History and Mission:

The climbing team was launched in 1998 with eight eager young climbers; just a year after Earth Treks' first climbing gym in Columbia, MD opened its doors. At that time only one of the team members even competed. Today, Earth Treks' climbing team boasts over 100 competitive athletes, and dozens of nationally ranked climbers. For the 2013/2014 bouldering season the team was 1st in the Capital region and 12th in the nation, and for the 2014 sport climbing season the team was 1st in the Capital region and 10th in the nation.

Earth Treks' Climbing Team Mission: *To develop high performing climbing athletes in a way that emphasizes fun, fosters a love of the sport, and supports each team member's personal development and growth.*

Earth Treks' Coaches:

Earth Treks' Climbing Team is led by Team Manager, Janet Hirsch who partners with a Head Coach from each climbing center. As Team Manager, Janet is responsible for the overall leadership of the program from an administrative and communication capacity. The Head Coaches from each climbing center are responsible for the development and delivery of coaching sessions as well as coaching at competitions. Both Janet and the Head Coaches are excellent resources for parents and team members and collaborate to run the program.

Janet's first taste of climbing was in the 2nd grade, and she's had the climbing bug ever since. In 2006, Janet transferred to SUNY New Paltz, the home of the Gunks, and was introduced to the joys of multi-pitch trad climbing. For the next two years, she balanced school with climbing every weekend and working at the local indoor gym. Once graduated, Janet hung around the Hudson River Valley and became Manager at the Inner Wall. Such a small gym provided the opportunity to set, schedule staff, book-keep, and create curriculum including youth summer camps and after school programs. In 2011 Janet began working for Earth Treks as an instructor and part time assistant coach in Columbia, and in 2012 became the lead instructor for Earth Treks Columbia. In the summer of 2013 Janet became the Indoor Climbing School Director for all Maryland based programming, with climbing team management being one of her primary responsibilities.



Each climbing center has its own Head Coach, including Justin Wyse (Timonium), Matt Jones (Columbia), and Victoria Guido (Rockville). Our coaching staff is comprised of former competitive climbers, experienced Earth Treks instructors, and veteran coaches from climbing and other disciplines. All Earth



Treks coaches are required to complete a comprehensive criminal background check and drug screening, as well as extensive training on youth protection.

Tryout Details and Criteria for Participation:

All team level programs (Intermediate, Advanced, and Team Earth Treks) are by invitation only and require a successful tryout. Tryouts are utilized to ensure that every team member is placed on the team that best matches their skills and goals. Space limitations also necessitate the use of competitive tryouts. **Team members must be between 9 and 19 years of age.**

All climbers, regardless of prior participation, are required to tryout and compete for their spot on the team. Pre-registration for tryouts is required and multiple tryout sessions are offered in advance of the fall season to accommodate the 150 to 200 climbers that typically participate. A second tryout may be held in March for prospective new team members, but only as space allows.

There is no strict performance requirement used for tryouts; rather each child's climbing ability is assessed relative to their peers. Their motivation and ability to meet the expectations of the different teams is also taken into account. In all cases prospective team members must demonstrate a positive attitude and a commitment to their personal development as a climber.

All athletes are expected to treat both their peers and coaches with respect both during Try Outs and beyond. By joining an Earth Treks team, you're agreeing to live up to our [Team Code of Conduct](#), and spots on the team can be revoked.

Competitions:

USA Climbing:

All climbing team members will be encouraged to participate in the competitive circuit run by [USA Climbing](#) and practices are tailored to prepare for upcoming events. The importance of participating in competitions (aka "comps") grows as you progress through the Earth Treks team ranks.

[USA Climbing](#) is the national governing body of competitive climbing in the United States and competitions run from September thru July. Earth Treks competes in the Capital Region. Success at the Regional level sets climbers on a path to the Divisional, National, and even World level. The year is broken into two seasons, the American Bouldering Series (ABS) and the Sport Climbing Series (SCS). Membership in [USA Climbing](#) is required to participate in competitions. Please note that to qualify for higher level comps (i.e. Regionals and beyond) in the ABS or SCS, athletes must attend at least two local competitions for that series. Visit [USA Climbing](#) for membership registration and competition dates and registration.

American Bouldering Series (ABS): ABS is the biggest competition series and has been around for years. The ABS season runs from September through February. This series is both youth and adult, so parents, feel free to join up.

Sport Climbing Series (SCS): Most SCS competitions are top roping, lead climbing, and speed climbing. SCS season is from March through July. While most SCS competitions are youth only, check the USA Climbing website for various events including the adult levels.

Supervision Expectations at Competitions & Transportation:

It takes a big commitment from both kids and their guardians to participate in the USA Climbing competitive circuit. Some competitions (including many regional events) are single day events and only require a short drive, while others are multi day events and may take place across the country.

Competitions are often large gatherings and can involve overnights, offsite meals, and social events. The very nature of this travel has inherent risks to youth. ***It's the guardian's responsibility to ensure adult supervision for their children during the entirety of any competition, including the travel, lodging and offsite events that may be occurring.*** Earth Treks' coach's responsibility for the supervision of your child is limited to their coaching duties at the competition venue.

Transportation to competitions is not provided by Earth Treks, but parent carpools may be coordinated. Team members are not permitted to travel with coaches to competitions, or travel in a coach's personal vehicle for any reason.



Communication:

The predominant method of communication will be email. In addition to the emails being sent to team member guardians, email announcements can also be sent to team members directly if the guardian requests it via the [Team Registration and Billing Agreement](#). Facebook communication between coaches and team members/parents will be done exclusively through the [Climbing Team Facebook](#) page. Announcements will also be posted online on the [Team Results & News Page](#).

Contact Info:

Climbing Team Management:

- Submit an [Online Inquiry](#) to the Team Manager.
- Climbing Team Manager, Janet Hirsch
janet@earthtreksclimbing.com
410-872-0060 x206
- Timonium Head Coach, Justin Wyse
justin@earthtreksclimbing.com
- Columbia Head Coach, Matt Jones
mattj@earthtreksclimbing.com
- Rockville Head Coach, Taylor Reed
victoria@earthtreksclimbing.com

Climbing Center Management:

- Columbia Climbing Center Director, Matt Elletson
matt@earthtreksclimbing.com
410-872-0060 x121
- Timonium Climbing Center Director, Dan Francis
danf@earthtreksclimbing.com
410-560-5665 x205
- Rockville Climbing Center Director, Katrina Papavasiliou
katrina@earthtreksclimbing.com
240-283-9942 x304

Corporate Management:

- Chief Operating Officer, Chris Jenkins
cj@earthtreksclimbing.com
410-872-0060 x117

Our priority is the safety and well-being of the youth who participate on the teams. **If at any time a parent, coach, or team member has a concern about the well-being of a team member, we encourage them to reach out to the [Youth Protection Committee](#).** This web form allows direct and anonymous communication to Earth Treks' management including the owner, Chris Warner, Chris Jenkins, Scot Heidtman, and Katrina Papavasiliou.

Climbing Team Code of Conduct:

Every participant and coach is choosing to be part of a team with a common mission *to develop high performing climbing athletes in a way that emphasizes fun, fosters a love of the sport, and supports each team member's personal development and growth*. The Code of Conduct spells out the manner in which we'll achieve the team's mission and lays out expectations for both coaches and team members in terms of how they represent the team.

Coach's Code of Conduct:

Earth Treks 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 athletes. Thus, how athletes regard their sport is often dependent on the behavior of their coach. The first item in the Coach's Code of Conduct refers to Earth Treks' Youth Protection Program, which is Earth Treks' compass in the handling of all issues related to the supervision of youth and abuse prevention.

#1: I will always put the well being of climbing team members first and adhere to Earth Treks' Youth Protection Code of Conduct.

My relationship with youth at Earth Treks is professional, not personal.

I'll adhere to the Rule 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 and 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 warning 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 officials and opponents with respect both in victory and defeat, and promote good sportsmanship amongst the team members. I will uphold the rules of climbing competitions.

I will strive to evenly spread my coaching time among all team members.



#3: I understand that I'm an ambassador for the team, the Earth Treks community, and the sport of climbing and will strive to 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.

I will promote my own development as a climber and coach by pushing my own personal limits, maintaining a passion for the sport of climbing, and seeking continuing education activities.

Team Member's Code of Conduct:

#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 climbing competitions.

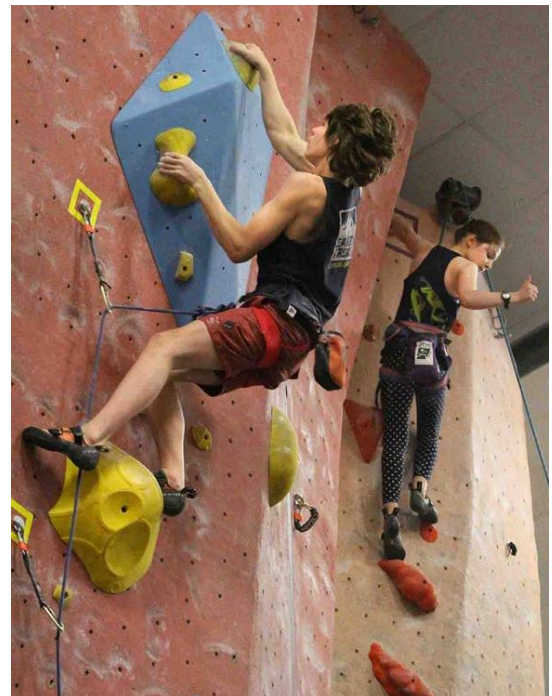
#2: I will represent the team positively through my behavior, language, attitude, and dress.

I understand that words are powerful and should be used to build myself and others up.

The team shirt is required for all practices and competitions. All team members will adhere to a "shirts on policy", whether in practice, competitions, or personal climbing at the gyms. The bottom of any shorts must be at least 2 inches below the bottom of a harness leg loop.

#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.





Registration Instructions & Billing Procedures:

After tryout results are posted, team registration is completed in two easy steps...

1. No later than Sunday August 24th, accept your child's team invitation and set up monthly billing by completing the [Team Registration and Billing Agreement](#). Monthly team dues are automatically charged each month for the length of the season (September through June).*
2. Complete and sign the Team Member and Parent Agreement (Page 11) and bring it with you to the first practice.

***Team dues are charged automatically on a monthly basis, September thru June. September dues include one added fee as outlined below.**

Earth Treks Climbing Team Dues			
	Monthly Dues	One Time Fee**	Total September Dues
Intermediate Team			
Member*	\$ 65.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 85.00
Non Member	\$ 95.00	\$ 20.00	\$ 115.00
Advanced Team			
Member*	\$ 95.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 130.00
Non Member	\$ 125.00	\$ 35.00	\$ 160.00
Team ET			
Member*	\$ 125.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 170.00
Non Member	\$ 175.00	\$ 45.00	\$ 220.00

* Member team dues rates are in addition to normal monthly membership dues.

** One time registration fee includes team t-shirt(s).

Annual Members: Team dues will be added to the normal monthly billing that occurs on the 1st of each month (membership dues, on-account purchases, and team dues will be charged in one lump sum). The billing information presently on the membership account will be used for all charges. Please note that team dues are separate from your membership, and are billed under a separate contract with separate rules, regulations and policies. Visit the [Members Page](#) for details and resources on making changes to your membership.

Non Members: For those participants who are not annual members, team dues will be processed on the 1st of each month (or the first business day) via credit card.

Suspending Dues Payments: If your dues payment needs to be suspended mid-season for any reason please notify Team Manager Janet Hirsch [online](#) as soon as possible.

