

Ropes and Challenges Education Program

General Program Information

The activities are an exciting extension of the MPS curriculum. The course is constructed outdoor at ground level and in trees using ropes, cables, and wood. The activities which will take place at the course are made up of a series of individual and group physical challenges which require a combination of individual and teamwork skills. The activities progress from mild (warmups, game, trust and problem solving activities) to moderate (low and high ropes elements) challenges which are designed to reinforce personal confidence, safe risk-taking, and general trust of others. By working together on these activities and challenges, group members practice and build leadership and communication skills.

"Challenge by Choice " is a philosophy used at the course. This means that students are not required to do any activity they do not feel they are ready to do. Participation in each activity is at all times up to the participants choice, with MPS Ropes and Challenges Course Staff constantly monitoring each activity. There is a role for every participant. We have found that students and staff enjoy participating and are good judges of their own abilities.

MPS Ropes and Challenges Course staff is made up of MPS employees such as teachers, psychologists, social workers, counselors, assistants and paraprofessionals, who are released from their other duties to donate time to the course. These employees have been trained to instruct and assist students at the course with emphasis on making this a safe experience for every child.

As part of a curriculum unit at each school, students and their teachers receive information about the course, the philosophy and curriculum, as well as participating in a series of lead up activities which serve to prepare students before coming to the course site. These activities serve to reinforce needed team building and safety awareness skills.

Although safety is a primary concern at the Ropes and Challenges Course site. It is important to inform parents that due to the physical activities, some of which are physically challenging , there is a risk that your child may be injured. Many of the activities take place on the ground, followed by low challenges taking place at height of 1 to 4 feet, with a few high challenges ranging for 20 to 30 feet in height. Both low and high challenges require climbing and or balancing, with the use of specialized equipment for the high level activities. The equipment used is state of the art and all participants are instructed in safety procedures for each activity and challenge with positive reinforcement continuously provided. All MPS employees and students are asked to use a Full Value Contract. This is an agreement , written or unwritten , by all group members, signifying that they fully understand the safety and spotting rules as given by their group leader before course activities begin. All group members are encouraged to speak up whenever they feel another member of the group is not following the rules.

MPS will supply all necessary equipment at the course these include a first aid kit and phone.

If you have any questions or would like to receive additional information about our program please contact Denise Sather at 414 475-8438 or email at, satherdl@milwaukee.k12.wi.us .