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C/A/M  
Climb Alongside Mental Health

C / A / M

#WeveGotYouSpotted

Climb  
Alongside  
Mental Health

[www.climbalongsidementalhealth.org](http://www.climbalongsidementalhealth.org)  
[info@climbalongsidementalhealth.org](mailto:info@climbalongsidementalhealth.org)

A non-profit awareness campaign

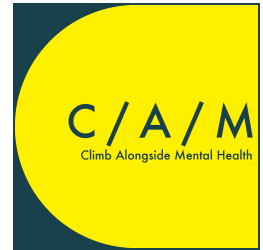


**C/A/M**

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## **CLIMBING INITIATIVE WELCOME PACK**

Thank you!

... for your interest in supporting C/A/M and the climbing initiative. This welcome pack will provide you with the information you require about our charity, Climb Alongside Mental Health (C/A/M) and the C/A/M climbing initiative.



## OUR MISSION

Climb Alongside Mental Health is a non-profit awareness movement dedicated to promoting the positive effects of rock climbing in helping with mental health, including (but not exclusive to) depression, anxiety, self-injury, and thoughts of suicide.

Our objectives are three-fold:

1

To raise awareness of mental health within the climbing community, through creating and encouraging sustained dialogue around mental health.

2

To raise awareness of the positive benefits of climbing for mental health.

3

To provide, or assist in providing climbing services, facilities, and equipment to people suffering from poor mental health.

## **The C/A/M Climbing initiative**

Climbing centres across England and Wales have kindly agreed to show their support for this charity and help us in providing facilities and services for people suffering from poor mental health (objective 3).

Alongside promoting the charity by using the #WeveGotYouSpotted in social media posts, they have also signed up to the climbing initiative.

This involves offering **one free** climbing session for anyone (plus a friend) who has been referred by a healthcare professional (such as a GP, therapist, counsellor, social prescriber/link worker, occupational therapist, or support worker).

The free session would be provided by your climbing centre, in whatever format you deem most suitable. This may be a taster session, introductory group session, or induction. You would also provide any equipment required for the duration of the session (shoes, chalk, harness).

We hope that by providing this opportunity, people who are suffering with their mental health, who may never have considered climbing, may give it a try... and may find climbing a useful tool to improve their mental health.

### **How the referral works**

The person, or their healthcare professional, will call/email and book onto a session, and mention C/A/M . They will then bring their referral form to the centre on the day, or email it to you.

OR, some centres are providing a voucher for a free session. In this instance, someone will come in with their referral form and exchange it for a voucher. Or, the individual or healthcare professional will email the centre with their referral form and request the voucher via email. Then they then be able to book onto a session using the voucher.

**This is what the referral form looks like.**



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**'The C/A/M Climbing Initiative'**  
**Referral Form**

I declare that \_\_\_\_\_ is eligible for 'The C/A/M Climbing Initiative'.

Job Title:

Place of Work:

Signed:

Printed:

Date:

Please bring this form to a supporting climbing wall to claim a free induction session for yourself and up to one accompanying adult.

A list of supporting walls can be found on our website:  
[www.climbalongsidementalhealth.org](http://www.climbalongsidementalhealth.org)

## **STEPS YOUR CENTRE NEEDS TO TAKE**

- Discuss and decide as a centre:
  - What exactly you can offer for the free session (e.g. taster session, induction, intro lesson).
  - How you will receive referral forms (paper, email).
  - How you will confidentially store referral forms, and dispose of them once processed.
- Brief all staff on the initiative including; a) what to do with forms, and b) remind them that it is sensitive and confidential information and that once signed up, the referee should not be singled out as being referred through CAM - they are just another climber looking to climb.
- Centre owner/director/manager email CAM to confirm willingness to offer the climbing initiative.
- Email C/A/M a photo of the centre to use on social media posts.
- Email C/A/M a high quality logo of the centre.
- Confirm by email to C/A/M when you are ready to accept referrals and for us to advertise the centre involvement on our website/social media pages.
- Share your involvement on your social media channels and website.

For a checklist and further suggested actions, please see page 9 of this pack.

### **GDPR & Confidentiality**

A general reminder that The Data Protection Act (UK's GDPR) legislation must be followed when dealing with the referral forms, and that the referral forms constitute sensitive information. As mentioned above, please process these forms taking this into account e.g. do not leave out on the reception for anyone to see. If someone is referred through this initiative they may not want anyone to know, once they have been booked onto a session.

### **Sensitivity & Encouragement**

Individuals referred through this initiative should be treated as any other climber entering your centre should be treated - with respect, dignity, support, and encouragement. Your staff may not know during the session whether someone there has been referred through the initiative or not, so best practices on inclusivity and sensitivity during sessions should be followed as standard.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **Will under 18s be referred?**

They may be. We have stated on our advertising material that it is up to each individual climbing centre on whether they feel comfortable offering this to under 18s. As such, the healthcare professional referring should check with you prior to making the referral, and it is your choice as a centre on whether to accept under 18s, or if so, what requirements are necessary (e.g. only with an accompanying parent/guardian). Additionally, ensure you are aware of safeguarding procedures within your company for children at risk.

At the moment we advertise this as a referral scheme for 16+ year olds.

### **What is the evidence for climbing helping with mental health?**

Beside a wealth of anecdotal evidence, there is a growing research evidence base.

Research teams in Austria and Germany have developed and tested structured 8-week bouldering and psychotherapy courses and found significant reductions in symptoms of depression.

Whilst we are not yet at the stage of offering longer courses, there is also some evidence that even a one-off bouldering session can result in a strong increase in positive mood and a reduction in negative mood.

We have further information on our website: <https://www.climbalongsidementalhealth.org/further-reading>

Ways in which climbing can help improve mental health include;

- Boosting self-confidence and self-esteem through accomplishing goals and overcoming fears
- Providing positive social interactions (reducing isolation)
- Dealing with and learning from perceived failures
- Mindfulness/present moment awareness
- Being physically active

### **We have not yet had many referrals, why is this?**

This charity is still relatively in its infancy. Raising awareness of the charity and this initiative still has a long way to go, particularly within the health sector. It is expected to be slow at first. But stick with it. Anything you can do to spread the word of it outside of the climbing community and into the health sector will help. It's all worth it if even if one person benefits from this.

**Who covers the cost of the free session?**

The cost of the one-off free session for the referee plus their accompanying adult (and all equipment required e.g. hire shoes) is covered by the participating climbing wall. C/A/M cannot reimburse these as we simply do not have the funds or the volunteers required to manage this.

**What is the benefit for us, as a business?**

By showing your support for people suffering from low mental health, you promote a caring and open environment within your centres, which is a good reason in itself.

Additionally, if those who attend the free session have a positive experience, they will likely be returning customers.

**Who is eligible to refer someone?**

Any qualified health care professional. This includes (but is not necessarily limited to); counsellors, therapists, psychologists, general practitioners, occupational therapists, carers, support workers, link workers, hospital consultants, mental health professionals, psychiatric nurses.



## CHECKLIST FOR YOUR CLIMBING CENTRE

Below are some essential, and suggested tasks for becoming a participating centre.

	Essential / Recommended	DONE
Decide on the best session to offer for referrals (e.g. taster session)	Essential	
Decide on how to receive and process referral forms	Essential	
Brief all staff on the climbing initiative	Essential	
Wall owner/director/manager email CAM to confirm willingness to offer the climbing initiative.	Essential	
Email C/A/M a photo of the centre and the centre logo	Essential	
Confirm by email to C/A/M that you are ready to accept referrals	Essential	
Share social media posts advertising centre participation	Essential	
Put up a C/A/M poster in your climbing centre	Recommended	
Contact local services informing them of your involvement	Recommended	

Additional steps you may wish to consider taking, to further support C/A/M's objectives could be:

- Put up a poster advertising C/A/M and the initiative in your centre: <https://www.climbalongsidementalhealth.org/media>
- Contact local healthcare professionals to tell them about the initiative. We've drafted a template letter you can download and edit to start you off: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tKXuLvNKTxVLkUsSqeIE6lmnMiMA4PYM/edit?usp=sharing&oid=115594763146549791134&rtpof=true&sd=true>
- Use #WeveGotYouSpotted on your instagram posts and tag @cam\_climbing
- Organise a fundraising event for C/A/M, to enable us to help more people with mental illnesses to access both indoor and outdoor climbing opportunities.

- Stock our merchandise to help increase awareness. The T-shirts also advertise that the wearer is supporting the cause and is happy to be approached by anyone who might be climbing alone, in need of climbing tips or a friendly face: <https://climbalongsidementalhealth.teemill.com/>
- Arrange some mental health awareness training for your staff. Mind have a specific training course for sport and physical activity sector: <https://www.mind.org.uk/about-us/our-policy-work/sport-physical-activity-and-mental-health/mental-health-awareness-training-for-sport/>
  - They also have a free guide that we recommend reading. You can access it here: <https://www.mind.org.uk/media-a/6169/sport-sector-toolkit-full-guide.pdf>

We are always keen to hear your ideas too, so if you have something in mind that you would like to do with us, or with our support, please get in touch via email.

[info@climbalongsidementalhealth.org](mailto:info@climbalongsidementalhealth.org)

## **SIGNPOSTING**

If you or someone you know are struggling with mental health, and are looking for advice or someone to talk to, please get in touch or signpost them to one of the organisations below:

**SAMARITANS:** For everyone.

CALL: 116 123

EMAIL: [jo@Samaritans.org](mailto:jo@Samaritans.org)

**CAMPAIGN AGAINST LIVING MISERABLY**

CALL: 0800 58 58 58 (5pm to midnight)

**PAPYRUS:** For people under 35.

CALL: 0800 068 41 41 (Monday to Friday 10 am to 10pm, Weekends 2pm to 10pm)

TEXT: 07786 209697

EMAIL: [pat@papyrus-uk.org.uk](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org.uk)

**CHILDLINE:** For children under 19.

CALL: 0800 11 11

**THE SILVERLINE:** For older people.

CALL: 0800 470 80 90

**ANDYS MAN CLUB:** For men. Holding regular supportive meetings across the UK.

<https://andysmanclub.co.uk/>

**NHS**

CALL 111 (They will help you find the help and support you need)

[HTTPS://WWW.HELPGUIDE.ORG](https://www.helpguide.org) : A trusted guide to mental and emotional help.

<https://www.rethink.org/about-us/our-mental-health-advice> : Mental health information and advice