



AAC Publications

Rockfall – Child Hit at Base of Cliff

Washington, Index Town Wall

On July 10, an unidentified climber (age unknown) released a rock while climbing. The rock fell and struck a child (age 6) on the head. The child was playing at the base of a route called Zoom (5.10d) and was not wearing a helmet. Snohomish County Fire District 26 responded, and the child was flown by helicopter to Seattle. After many months in the hospital and several surgeries, the youngster is alive and in ongoing therapy for the injury.

ANALYSIS

Overhead hazards at the crag pose risks to all. All bystanders at climbing crags will benefit from wearing a helmet. This includes children. Several climbing hardware companies make helmets for kids down to age three (or head circumference of 18.9 inches). In the past, a head injury from falling rock at a rock climbing crag might have been more unusual. This accident is the fourth of its kind we are reporting this year. As climbing grows in popularity and more climbers—and climbing families—flock to the crags, extra vigilance will need to become the norm. (Sources: Seattle Herald and the Editors.)

Images

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