

## The Field Team Leader

The full benefit of the Field Leader Program is only realized when every element of the program is in place. The single most important element is the Supervisor or in a flat organizational structure Team Leader. Here we will call this person the 'Field Team Leader'

The Field Leader Program is designed to maximize the potential of each person within a field team to contribute to the quality and safety of the program. Success in achieving this depends on strong teamwork within the organization such that:

- 1) Each individual is empowered to make decisions within the limits of their expertise and according to their role in the team.
- 2) Each individual receives the support required to:
  - a) Enable them to make their contribution
  - b) Assist them in recognizing the limits of their own expertise
  - c) Help them grow their abilities.
- 3) Each individual trusts every other team member to perform their role with integrity.

This sort of team exemplifies a 'service culture'. In this culture the traditional organizational structure is inverted so that the Field Leader sees their primary role as being to meet the needs of the participant, and the Field Team Leader sees their role as being to meet the needs of his/her team members. In functional terms, this means that the Field Team Leader answers to the needs of Field Leaders, including their need to have clear expectations set.

The Field Team Leader has these responsibilities:

- 1) The Field Team Leader trains, mentors and supports the team members. The overarching goal is to enable Field Leaders to perform their duties to the highest level they are capable of. When achieved the Field Team Leader is effective in:
  - a) Empowering field leaders to make decisions within their area of competence
  - b) Maintaining motivation toward the goals of quality and safety
  - c) Identifying areas for intervention and/or growth
  - d) Achieving administrative efficiency
  - e) Creating and maintaining an organizational culture of participant-centered programming
- 2) The Field Team Leader takes responsibility for verifying that each Field Leader is competent to assume the field responsibilities demanded by the programs that they lead. Verification requires active monitoring of demonstrated performance. This monitoring must be a 360° process and must include recorded data from participants, co-leaders, and stakeholders.
- 3) The Field Team Leader ensures that the risk management protocols are followed. (In larger organizations part of this responsibility will fall to a higher authority.)

In order to perform these duties the Field Team Leader must have certain attributes as follows:

- 1) Be an experienced outdoor leader
- 2) Be imbued with the virtues of empathy, tolerance, and patience
- 3) Be able to delegate
- 4) Have conflict resolution skills
- 5) Be able to manage details effectively
- 6) Be decisive when required