

## 30 STUDENTS ENROL FOR TRAINING

# Rock climbing makes its way to New Town school

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Calcutta: A school in New Town will train its students in rock climbing, paving the way for adventure sports among the young.

The Newtown School has set up a 36x24 ft artificial wall on one of its facades, that was inaugurated last Friday.

Already 30 students from Classes III to VIII have enrolled for the after-school activity twice a week.

"This will trigger an interest in adventure sports and augment physical fitness in the children. We keep talking about a lack of focus and mindfulness among young people, and wall climbing would help build that," said Satabdi Bhattacharjee, principal, The Newtown School.

Everester Lakshmikanta Mandal, a Bengal police constable who summited the world's highest peak in May, inaugurated the wall.

Training will start this month, a school official said.

"It will help build the endurance and strength among children," said Sunil Agarwal, founder director, The Newtown School.

Mountaineers who have summited Mount Everest and other treacherous peaks said that such an initiative would lay the foundation for an interest in pursuing adventure sports.

"Sport climbing (wall climbing) is now an Olympic sport and an early start would generate interest among students," said Satyarup Siddhanta, who has climbed all seven summits — the highest point of the seven continents.

"If schools are installing an artificial wall, it is a welcome move and would go a long way in laying the foundation for adventure sports among children. It will open up many avenues, and parents might feel more comfortable in sending their children for rock climbing courses or camps that are conducted in various places," said Siddhanta.

Debraj Dutta, an Everester, said wall climb-



The climbing wall at The Newtown School

ing tests both the physical endurance and mental alertness of an individual.

"These are also used as climbing gyms now. While it requires physical fitness, the sport also requires mental alertness and enhances the problem-solving skills of an individual," said Dutta.

Trekking has become another favourite sport for many over the last few years. It also requires physical fitness and endurance to be able to acclimatise oneself to different conditions.

"This is the beginning. We feel that these adventure sports will generate an interest among other students also when they see their peers participating in it," said principal Bhattacharjee.