



Rein and Shine
Horses That Heal

Volunteer Handbook

Rein & Shine – Horses that Heal
A Therapeutic Riding Facility

The minimum age for riders is 4 years old. Prior the riding, all participants are required to complete paperwork including a signed physician's statement. Participants are assessed by staff to determine that riding is a safe, appropriate activity, one they will benefit from. An individual riding plan is developed by their therapeutic riding instructor which includes each rider's goals and objectives to reach those goals. Riders participate in one lesson per week for the length of the session. Lessons include activities such as learning horse care, riding skills, exercise, games, obstacle courses and trail rides. Progress is documented after each session.

VOLUNTEERING AT REIN AND SHINE

Volunteer Training: A volunteer must be at least 16 years old to assist with riding lessons. All volunteers who work with the riders as leaders and side walkers must be physically fit to walk approximately one hour and jog occasionally. Volunteers are required to attend a training session. Training sessions are held at the beginning of each session.

Volunteer Paperwork: Volunteer paperwork must be completed prior to volunteering at Rein and Shine and updated annually.

Volunteer Sign In: It is important for you to sign in when you come to Rein & Shine. Maintaining records of volunteer horse is a requirement of accreditation, helps with fund raising, and provides an accurate record for those who need verification of hours. REMEMBER – sign in Every Time you volunteer.

Arrival and Departure Times: Please plan to arrive 15 minutes prior to scheduled lesson time. Plan to stay 15 minutes after the conclusion of the lesson.

Absences: Please provide the staff at Rein and Shine at least twenty-four hours notice if you will not be able to make it to any of your scheduled times.

Cell Phones: All cell phones should be left in your vehicle when volunteering. The only exception would be an emergency in which case you may carry your phone on vibrate.

Dogs: No dogs are allowed at Rein and Shine while lessons are in session.

In Case of an Emergency: Please inform us of any accident, no matter how minor it may seem to you. First aid supplies are located in the tack room. If you are asked to call for assistance, dial 911 from the phone located in the office. The directions and emergency procedures are posted. There are three fire extinguishers in the barn.

Feedback: As a Rein & Shine volunteer, your feedback is a valuable resource. Your ideas, comments and suggestions help us constantly improve the program. There is time set aside immediately following the riding lesson for your questions and input.

When you can no longer volunteer please let us know as far in advance as possible of your plans to leave your volunteer position at Rein & Shine.

Conduct of Personnel and Participants: Each individual involved with Rein & Shine program is expected to show respect for the rights and person of all participants both human and equine. If you witness an act of abuse either physically or verbally, please report the incident and the circumstances immediately to an instructor or the Executive Director.

The possession or use of drugs or alcohol on the premises of Rein & Shine is strictly prohibited. Anyone found on the premises in possession of or using any illegal substances will be asked to leave immediately and may be barred from further participation in the program.

All personnel and participants are expected to follow the Rein & Shine established safety procedures. If you observe an instance of unsafe practice, inform an instructor or the Executive Director immediately.

Pastures, horse trailer (if parked in area), manure pile, personal residence, pond, dock, and hayloft are off limits.

Please be aware that Rein and Shine is a trained facility on child sexual abuse prevention via Darkness to Light.

Volunteer Attire Policy: Wear safe and comfortable shoes (NO SANDALS). Dangling, jingling jewelry or keys can upset a horse or be pulled on by the rider. Perfume can attract insects and some students may be allergic to certain types of perfumes. No cell phones when you are volunteering please. Shorts or reasonable length are permitted. Please NO tank tops, short shorts, spaghetti straps, provocative shirts, strapless shirts, tummies showing.

Attire is a neat, clean and workman like, to include closed toed shoes, preferably boots.

The following is unacceptable attire:

1. Open toed shoes, sandals, flip-flops, etc.
2. Halter tops, tube tops, see through apparel, etc.
3. Any clothing item with vulgar images or profanity

Procedure and Policy for Dismissal of Volunteers and Guest : Volunteers and guest are subject to dismissal if at any time they become disruptive at the center, are a threat to others safety through their actions or comments, or reflect negatively on the center by their actions.

Volunteers are subject to dismissal if they break any of the Conduct guidelines provided in the Volunteer Manual, breach the Confidentiality Policy or fail their background search. Volunteers are also subject to legal action if any of the above occurs.

Procedure for dismissal is as follows:

If an action is a treat, the instructor in charge is to pull the person aside, explain the reason for dismissal and ask them to leave immediately. If the person will not comply, the sheriff's office is to be called immediately by dialing 911. The instructor will direct other volunteers and participants to another area to keep them separate.

If a volunteer or guest is disruptive, the instructor will let the person know of the issue and request they cease. If that does not happen, the instructor will tell the person to leave the center immediately. Again, non-compliance will be referred to the sheriff's office.

If a volunteer breaches the confidentiality policy, breaks a volunteer rule or fails their background check, the Lead Instructor will handle dismissal by informing the person personally and then in writing of the reason for dismissal.

Volunteer Positions

Lesson Volunteers:

Many students need assistance to ride a horse. There may be as many as three volunteers with each student. During mounted instruction there are several volunteer positions: Leaders, side walkers, siders and off-siders. Each is a specific role.

Horse Handler

A leader's main concern is the proper control of the horse. This control is not a mastering of the horse but a feat of patient and positive persuasion. Leading can be done from either side - the inside is toward the center of the arena and the outside is toward the fence. Usually the leader is on the inside but the outside can be better sometimes, i.e. the day your horse is bothered or hurried or keeps trying to turn into the center. Please read enclosed article "Follow the leader"

It is the leader who must help in guiding; stopping and starting without making the rider feel that he is simply a passenger. The rider must be allowed to do as much as possible with the leader helping only when necessary.

The leader must walk beside the horse at the point between the horse's head and the point of his shoulder - holding the lead rope about 6 - 8" from the horse's head. DO NOT walk ahead of the horse dragging him behind you, or be so far back that you're in the way of the side walker or be back at the rider's knee. Either of these positions reduces your ability to control the horse. No sharp or quick turns that may compromise the rider's balance.

It is the leader's responsibility to position the horse during mounting. Mounting may occur in the arena, at a mounting ramp or block. When mounting occurs at a mounting block or ramp, the leader must place the horse as close as possible to the side of the ramp or block. The leader must keep the horse as quiet as possible. Stand directly in front of the horse with your hands on either side of the horse's halter. Do not hold too tightly as it will cause the horse to throw his head. After mounting and before the stirrups are adjusted the leader will move the horse from the ramp or block under the direction of the instructor. Make sure that the horse is lead straight so that the person on the ramp does not have to make an aerial leap. The stirrups will be adjusted in the ring.

If the rider is mounted in the ring, the student will go to the assigned horse. The horse should be lined up facing the gate so he can see the student coming. Stand directly in front of and facing

the horse's head in order to act as a barrier and to be able to see both sides of the horse. Monitor the student's position until the instructor comes to mount the rider.

Remember that there may be a side walker on the off side of the horse. It is sometimes easy to forget and lead the horse too close to the rail. Please allow enough room for your offside side walker. The leader must maintain safe spacing.

Riders are often asked to trot during a lesson. The instructor will give directions concerning trotting. Remember trotting should not be a race; keep the horse at a slow, steady pace. Consistent input is important to the rider. If the horse is reluctant to trot, do not get in front of the horse and pull on the lead. Maintain your position and use short tugs. The instructor will give direction for horse's that may be reluctant to trot. When the command is given to walk or stop, do so in a straight line so the rider will not be unseated.

Side walker

A side walker's job is just as important as the leader's job, but for different reasons. Some riders have very poor balance, some are very nervous, some have very little or no muscle power in their legs, some simply require the mental support of having someone close by "in case", or as an extension of the instructor's requests. Side walkers walk beside the horse and rider, ready to steady the rider if necessary. They position themselves just behind the body line of the rider, taking care to avoid putting pressure on any of the major muscles, exert a gentle pressure pushing the rider firmly against the saddle or vaulting surcingle. You can rest your hand on the saddle in front of the rider, but take care that you do not allow yourself to be dragged along by the horse. Keep an active pace beside the horse. If you are the only side walker for the rider, it is easier for you to walk on the opposite side to the leader, especially at the trot. However, if there are two side walkers, you will have to work as a well coordinated team to avoid stepping on one another's heels. Take care not to rest your arm or hand on the horse's back behind the saddle; this can be very aggravating to the horse. Please read enclosed article: "Effective Side walking" Some riders require an ankle hold, which requires steadying the ankle joint in the correct position on the horse.

Side walkers give support, both physical and mental. They are there to help the rider carry out the instructions to the best of his/her ability, keeping the right position on the horse, and without loosing his/her balance. If the rider starts to slip to one side, alert the leader, and take the horse in off the track for adjustments.

Side walkers may be requested to help the student with right and left orientation, basic control or spatial awareness. Side walkers should give praise and encouragement when appropriate. Give the students' time to process the directions. Help the rider focus attention to the instructor. If the student does not hear or was not paying attention to the instructor. then the side walker can reinforce the directions.

Feed Shift Volunteer:

Rein and Shine's horses are fed twice a day by volunteers. Feed shift volunteers are supervised by the barn manager. All feeding instructions and turn-out locations are posted in the feed room.

Responsibilities of Feed Shift Volunteers

1. Read the board for any new instructions at the beginning of each feed shift
2. Give each horse the proper feed in the correct amount, including any supplements or medications as per instructions
3. Give each horse the proper amount of hay as per instructions
4. Check auto-waterers to insure they are working properly
5. Make sure water troughs in turn-outs are filled
6. Check each horse for injury or illness
7. Immediately call emergency contacts in case of injury or illness
8. Write any concerns or comments in the feed book
9. Blow out barn

In case of inclement weather (below 30 F or below 40 F with precipitation), feed shift volunteers are responsible for the following:

- PM feed shift-bring all horses into the barn
- AM feed shift-turn all horse back out and clean stalls

Barn Worker Volunteers: Assist with barn maintenance tasks, under the supervision of staff.

Administrative Help Volunteers: Assist with administrative work in the office, under the supervision of staff

Volunteer Ability Guidelines

Due to the inherent risks associated with volunteering at a therapeutic riding center and for the safety of our riders and volunteers, the following guidelines are offered to prospective volunteers to acquaint you with the variety of tasks associated with being a lesson volunteer.

Horse Handlers: Responsible for the control of the horse from the time the animal leaves the stall, throughout the lesson, and upon return of the animal to the stall or pasture area.

1. Ability to control large animal.
2. Calm and gentle nature with animals.
3. Knowledge of proper leading position.
4. Ability to walk and/or jog for a minimum of 20 minutes for each lesson.
-jogging will be minimal and for short periods of time
5. Comfortable with the responsibility of handling horses.

Side Walkers: Responsible for the rider during the lesson. Side walker are responsible for the rider upon arrival for lessons and sees to it that the rider is safely back with parents/guardians after the lesson if the instructor so directs. Side walkers are positioned at each side of the rider to assist with balance.

1. Ability to walk with arms raised and in a supporting position for a minimum of 20 minutes (Volunteers are encouraged and allowed to change sides throughout the lessons with proper safety guidelines followed) OR ability to walk or jog for a minimum of 20 minutes as a safety spotter for riders.
 2. Ability to relate to riders in encouraging and humorous way.
 3. Ability to reassure frightened/nervous riders.
 4. Responsible for the rider while mounted.
 5. Ability to assist the riding instructor with the mounting/dismounting if requested.
- Ability to perform an emergency dismount when directed by the instructor.

Volunteer Job Checklists

The volunteer job checklists help the volunteers determine mastery of all the elements of a particular volunteer job.

NOTE: If any volunteer is interested in receiving additional training for some of the more specialized volunteer jobs, please let the instructor know so that a training session can be arranged.

Side walker:

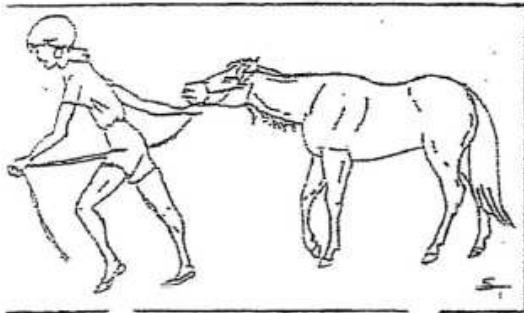
1. Demonstrate how to pay attention to the student.
2. Demonstrate how to stay close to the student in order to assist if needed.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of amount of physical assistance the rider needs to maintain balance.
4. Know consequences of pushing on the rider's back or holding on to a waist belt.
5. Demonstrate how to let rider be as independent as possible.
6. Direct rider attention to the instructor
7. Does not carry on disruptive conversation during the lesson

Horse Handler:

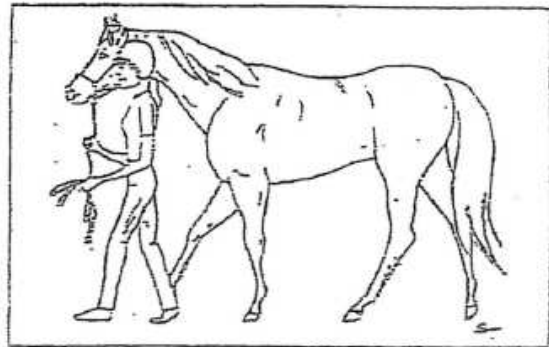
1. Demonstrate side walker duties
2. Demonstrate proper distance from the rail.
3. Demonstrate how to maintain horse speed appropriate to the disability
4. Demonstrate what to do if a horse tries to bite.
5. Demonstrate what to do if a rider steers the horse too close to another horse.
6. Demonstrate how to allow the rider to control the horse- knows when to help and when to back off.
7. Demonstrate how to reinforce the rider when the rider attempts to control the horse and the horse doesn't respond.
8. Demonstrate how to properly hold the lead rope.
9. Demonstrate proper safety procedures for leading a horse.



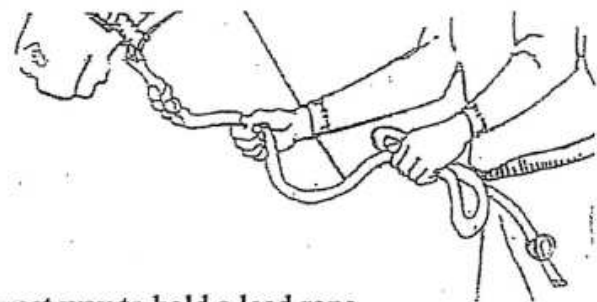
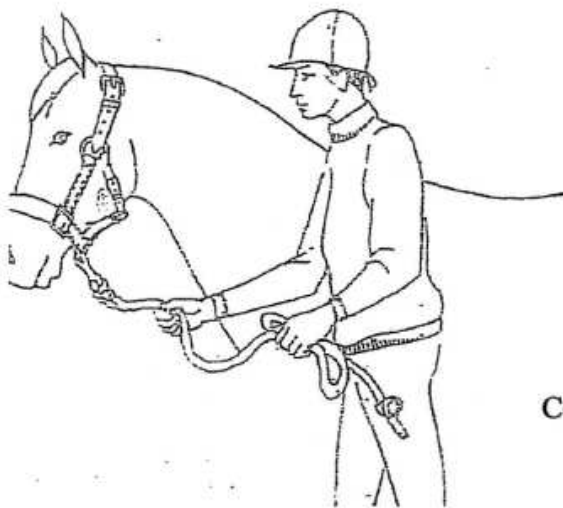
"Arm Over"



Incorrect Leading



Correct Leading



Correct way to hold a lead rope

When You Meet a Person with a Disability

Have fun! Talk about the same things you would with any person. A disability does not limit or dampen a person's sense of humor.

Remember that a person with a disability is a person like everyone else.

Be yourself! Don't be sickly sweet. Don't offer pity or charity. Be honest and genuine at all times.

Don't make up your mind about the person ahead of time. You may be surprised at how wrong you are at prejudging the person.

Avoid asking embarrassing questions. If a rider wants to tell you about his disability, he/she will bring up the subject themselves.

HELP only if requested by the rider. When in doubt ask -May I help you?

Don't separate the rider from his wheelchair or crutches unless the rider asks you to remove them.

Be patient, let the rider set his own pace in walking or talking.

Self satisfaction is important for the rider. Use help sparingly because it is important that the individual experience the satisfaction of accomplishing a task by himself.

Respect the confidentiality rights, dignity and privacy of the rider.

Be optimistic about life in general and the rider's outlook in particular, however ,don't encourage unrealistic goals or attitudes.

Be supportive and encouraging.

Please use proper terminology when you are on the premises.

Horse and Rider Hints

No smoking in the barn.

Please make sure all stalls and gates are securely latched. Take care that the stall doors are fully open when bringing horses in or out.

Horses may be tied only as directed by the instructor. Never tie the horse by his bridle or to a fence board. Remember that a horse cannot see directly behind him, so take to him when you approach from behind so he knows you are there.

When walking around a tied or held horse, do not walk under or over the lead rope.

Do not kneel or squat around a horse.

When patting a horse, pat his neck firmly. Do not pat or poke at the end of the horse's nose.

When turning a horse loose in a stall or in the pasture, lead the horse in and turn him completely around so his head is facing the door or gate before letting him loose.

Do not let the horses sniff noses, they are apt to squeal and misbehave.

Helmets are **ALWAYS** worn (with harness snapped) by the students when they are working around or riding a horse. Helmets are worn by volunteers when they are riding a horse.

It is important to remember that the horse is held, not led. The rider is taught to ride, he is not just taken for a ride. If at all possible, the rider grooms and completes the various tasks associated with the horse. The rider learns a skill and begins to participate in a sport. The benefits are great.

When working with a student, make sure directions and explanations are clear and broken down into several steps. Use demonstration when possible. Be consistent. Directions may need to be repeated several times and possibly in several different ways. Be positive and praise success.

Do not feed the horses treats by hand. All treats must be put in the feed buckets in the stalls or in a bucket set aside for treats for the horse. Horses learn much too quickly to bite if they are given treats by hand.

IN AN EMERGENCY

1. The instructor will give the command to halt all horses, "Emergency Halt!"
2. Volunteers and students respond immediately, ride halts.
3. Horse leader to assume halt position at horse's head, on hearing "Emergency Halt" command.
4. Side Walker(s) to stand beside rider with hands in place for an emergency dismount.
5. If situation warrants emergency dismount, instructor will give the command "Emergency Dismount!"
6. Volunteers are not to leave their assigned rider and horse for any reason, except under instructor's direction.
7. All volunteers keep one eye on the rider and horse, and the other on the emergency situation.
8. All volunteers keep ears open for any instructor directives.
9. Volunteers try to involve rider in some attention-getting activity; ex. name the parts of the horse, or do simple exercises.
10. Return to normal riding activities when the instructor gives the directive, "Ride Resume."
11. Try to assess any effect the emergency situation may have had on the rider and/or horse. Inform the instructor if the effect is significant.
12. Fill out an occurrence report on all incidents, located in the office.

An emergency dismount must be done quickly and efficiently. The purpose of the emergency dismount is to get the rider off the horse and away from the horse and any other danger that may exist at that moment.

Procedure when there is only one side walker: The side walker will disengage the rider's left foot from the stirrup and get a firm grip on the rider (not the rider's clothes), and pull the rider off the mount toward the side walker. Walk or carry the rider a safe distance away from the horse

and/or the danger. This dismount will be toward the side walker regardless of the side the helper is on at that moment.

Procedure when there are two side walkers: The side walker on the near (left) side of the horse will catch the rider in an embrace and pull or lift the rider from the horse. The side walker on the off (right) side of the horse will assist by disengaging the rider's foot from the stirrup, and moving the rider (in the mid-body area) into the near side walker's embrace. The side walker with the rider should turn away from the horse, so that he/she is between the rider and the horse. Then, walk or carry the rider a safe distance from the horse and/or the danger.

Bottom line: The emergency dismount cannot be defined in a simple format. This process depends on the ability of the rider, and the severity of the situation. The process outlined above may also be reversed, dismounting to the far side, should the rider's disability warrant that solution. Remember to fill out an incident report found in the office.

Note: The emergency dismount should be practiced on a regular basis with volunteers in training sessions until, like a fire drill, it is automatic and smooth. Rehearsals will take place on a regular basis, volunteers are required to attend at least one drill a year.

Loose Horse

- If the horse gets loose in a lesson, due to a fall or any other reason, stop the lesson and have everyone remain standing until the horse is caught.

Horse Health Emergencies

- If a horse is injured, limping, or not acting normally, please notify a staff person immediately. If you can not find a staff person, then call Stuart Foss 843-860-7346 and leave a message. Describe the problem and advise if it is an emergency situation.
- If the emergency occurs on a weekend and you are unable to reach anyone by phone, beep the on duty person.
- If a horse is in his stall or the field obviously in discomfort, the horse may be colicing. Halter and lead the horse quietly until help arrives.
- If the horse has sustained serious injury and can not move, try to keep him quiet and covered to help prevent shock.
- If the horse is bleeding constantly seriously, have someone hold him while you apply pressure to the wound with a clean dressing or towel. You may try to stop the bleeding by applying a pressure wrap if you have the necessary skill.

Inclement Weather: Severe winds, tornadoes, hurricanes and thunderstorms

* If a storm is approaching and there are high winds and/or thunder and lightning, dismount all students immediately and return horses to the barn.

* Personnel will untack all horses in case of severe weather. Students are not to be in stalls with horses during a storm

* If severe weather includes high winds and possibility of a tornado, everyone will go into the office near the inside wall. Bring a flashlight. Review the Tornado safety tips brochure.

Hurricanes

* Monitor the track of a hurricane.

* If the hurricane is headed for us, the following preparations will occur:

- Fill all available water buckets, water troughs, muck buckets in anticipation of an extended power outage.
- Secure anything that could possibly fly around such as garbage cans, rakes, shovels, etc.
- The horses may be left outside in pasture, as the pasture may be the safest place for them.

* Following the storm, survey the area. Look for:

- Possible injuries to the horses
- Possible downed power lines
- Damage to the building and potential unsafe situations

* Review the Hurricane safety tips brochure

Fire

When Fire strikes, you have just 30 seconds to get a horse out of a burning stall. Loose straw bums 3 times faster than gasoline. It will consume a 12' x 12' box stall in about 90 seconds. Careful planning and practice can help you win the R-A-C-E against death:

Remove all riders, volunteers and staff from danger, Report the Fire, Release the Horses
If a class is in session, the instructor will be responsible for dismounting riders and direct everyone to a safe area.

Designate someone to call the fire department at 911. Stay on the line and give directions as outlined on the emergency number poster. If you delay this step, the fire may consume the whole stable before the fire department arrives.

Begin to evacuate the horses, but first, determine if it is safe to enter the bam.

- Be familiar with the stable map to determine access locations.
- Begin with the horse closest to the fire
- If possible, horses should be contained in a field or covered arena.
- If the horse is frightened and does not want to leave the stall, talk quietly to reassure the horse. It may be necessary to cover the horse's eyes.
- If the horse is unmanageable and you are unable to get the horse out of the stall, leave the door open and move on to the next horse.

- Be aware that once the horse is outside of the barn, he may want to run back into the barn (security). Shut stalls doors once horses are out if safely possible.
- Loose horses can pose a safety hazard for arriving emergency equipment

Aid the Fire Department's Arrival

- Open all gates and clear roads for easy access
- Make sure parking and fire lanes are strictly enforced

Control the Fire

Fire extinguisher is in the feed room to the right of the washer & dryer. Water buckets and hoses can also be used.

Simple guidelines for use of fire extinguishers

1. Pull the ring pin to free the release handle
2. Stand at least 5 feet away from the fire
3. Squeeze the release handle, aiming the discharge at the base of the flames
4. If the burning material splatters, back away from the fire and sweep the stream from the extinguisher slowly from side to side

- Wet blankets or sand can be used to try to smother the fire
- Do not use water on an electrical fire

Expect where the Fire Department will come

Have someone meet the fire department at the end of the road and direct them to the fire.

Remember: No one should endanger themselves in order to attempt to put out the fire or to remove horses from a burning barn.

Mitigation

To help prevent the possibility of fire, the following preventative measures are taken:

- Remove cobwebs
- Check wiring for indication of wear or rodent damage
- Rodent control program
- Check lighting fixtures
- Lead ropes and halters on stall doors
- Training and practice for personnel and volunteers
- Maintenance of fire extinguishers
- No smoking signs posted
- Review escape plan
- Interact with fire department

Power Outage

If the power fails, flashlights are located next to the fire extinguishers. Flashlights and extra batteries are also located in the first aid kits.

When the power fails, the well goes out and the barn is without water. The pastures have large water troughs that can be a source of water for the horses until the power is restored.

Equipment

- Power equipment (such as blower for aisle, lawn mower for lawn) must be used with caution. Safety goggles are to be worn when working with potentially dangerous power equipment.

Injuries to participants, volunteers, visitors

- If anyone is injured while on the premises of the Rein and Shine Program, appropriate medical action will be carried out (see emergency info in section concerned with rider falls and injuries). Occurrences reports are filled out for any injury, no matter how minor it may seem.

Dangerous Items

Potentially dangerous items include: medicines, poisons, needles and syringes. Only authorized personnel have access to these items. In order to insure safety each of these items are kept in the following secured areas:

- Medicines, needles and syringes are kept in the lower barn kitchen cabinets.
- Poisons, paints, gas for the blower are kept in the tool shed behind the lower barn.
- All areas of the lower barn are marked as off limits to participants in the Rein and Shine program

Understanding Horse Behavior

Equine Senses

Communication is key when developing relationships and working with horses. It is critical to provide a safe environment in a therapeutic riding setting. Beginning a process of understanding the horse senses, instincts and Implications is a step in predicting behaviors, managing risk and increasing positive relationships.

Smell: The horse's sense of smell is thought to be very acute and it allows him to recognize other horses and people. Smell also enables the horse to evaluate situations.

Implications:

- Allow horses to opportunity to become familiar with new objects and their environment by smelling.
- It is recommended that treats are not carried in your pocket since horses may desire to go after them.
- Volunteers should be discouraged from eating or having food in the arena.

Hearing: The horse's sense of hearing is also thought to be very acute. The horse may also combine their sense of hearing and sight to become more familiar with new or alerting sounds. "Hearing and not seeing" is often the cause of the fright/flight response. Note the position of the horse's ears. Forward ears communicate attentiveness and interest. Ears that are laid back often

communicates that they are very upset and/or showing aggression towards another horse or person.

Implications:

- Horses are wary when they hear something but do not see it. If your horse is acting nervous, talk to him in a quiet and calm voice for reassurance.
- Avoid shouting or using a loud voice. This can be frightening to a horse.
- Watch your horse's ears for increased communication. Stiffly pricked ears indicate interest. Drooping ears indicate relaxation, inattentiveness (easily startled), exhaustion or illness. Flattened ears indicate anger, threat or fear. Ears flicking back and forth indicate attentiveness or interest.

Sight: The horse's eyes are set on either side of the head; there is a good peripheral (lateral) vision, but poorer frontal vision. A horse focuses on objects by raising and lowering its head. The horse's visual memory is very accurate. Horses are thought to see quite well in the dark, due to the large size of their eyes. There is still controversy as to whether or not horses see in color.

Implications:

- The horse may notice if something in the arena or out on a trail is different. Allow the horse an opportunity to look at new objects. Introduce new props that the horse may be unfamiliar with.
- The horse has better peripheral vision; consider a slightly looser rein, enabling him to move his head when taking a look at objects.
- Although the horse has good peripheral vision, consider two blind spots; directly in front and directly behind. The best way to approach a horse is to his shoulder. It may startle him if you approach from behind to directly in front. The horse may be unable to see around the mouth area, which is a safety consideration when hand feeding.

Touch: Touch is used as a communication between horses and between horses and people. Horses are sensitive to soft or rough touch with a person's hands or legs.

Implications:

- Handlers should treat the horses gently but firmly.
- Each horse has sensitive areas, and it is important to be familiar with them (i.e. flank and belly areas).
- Watch rider's leg position. Riders may need appropriate assistance to reduce a "clothes pin" effect with their legs. Ask the instructor/therapist what is best handling technique.
- Horses will often touch or pay at unfamiliar objects. For example, a horse may pay at a bridge or ground pole before crossing it.

Taste: Taste is closely linked with the sense of smell and helps the horse to distinguish palatable foods and other objects.

Implications:

- Taste is closely linked with smell or touch; therefore, a horse may lick or nibble while becoming familiar with objects and people. Be careful, as this could lead to possible biting.

Sixth Sense: Horses do have a ‘sixth sense’ when evaluating the disposition of those around him. Horses can be hypersensitive in detecting the moods of their handlers and riders. A good therapy horse is chosen for their sensitive response to the rider. At times there may exist a personality conflict between handlers and horses. It is important to let the instructor/therapist know if you are having a difficult time relating or getting along with a particular horse.

The Horse’s Lifestyle: In addition to the understanding the horse’s sixth senses, we need to appreciate and increase our awareness of the horse’s lifestyle. This will assist us in responding appropriately to his reactions to situations.

Flight as Natural Instinct: Horses would rather turn and run away from danger than face and fight it.

Implications:

- At a sudden movement or noise, the horse might try to flee. Speak to the horse calmly.
- A frightened horse being held tightly might try to escape by pulling back. Relax your hold or untie him quickly and usually he will relax. Be sure not to stand directly behind the horse.
- If flight is not possible, the horse could either turn to kick out or face the problem and rear, especially in a tight area like a stall. Use a halter with a lead rope to maintain control while working around the horse in a stall.
- If a horse appears to be frightened or fearful, please alert the instructor or staff.
- Most horses chosen to work in a therapeutic riding setting have less of an instinct to flee. The horse may look to you for reassurance. It is helpful if the volunteer remains calm and talks to the horse in a soothing voice.

Heard Animal: Horses like to stay together in a herd or a group with one or two horses dominant, with a pecking order amongst the rest.

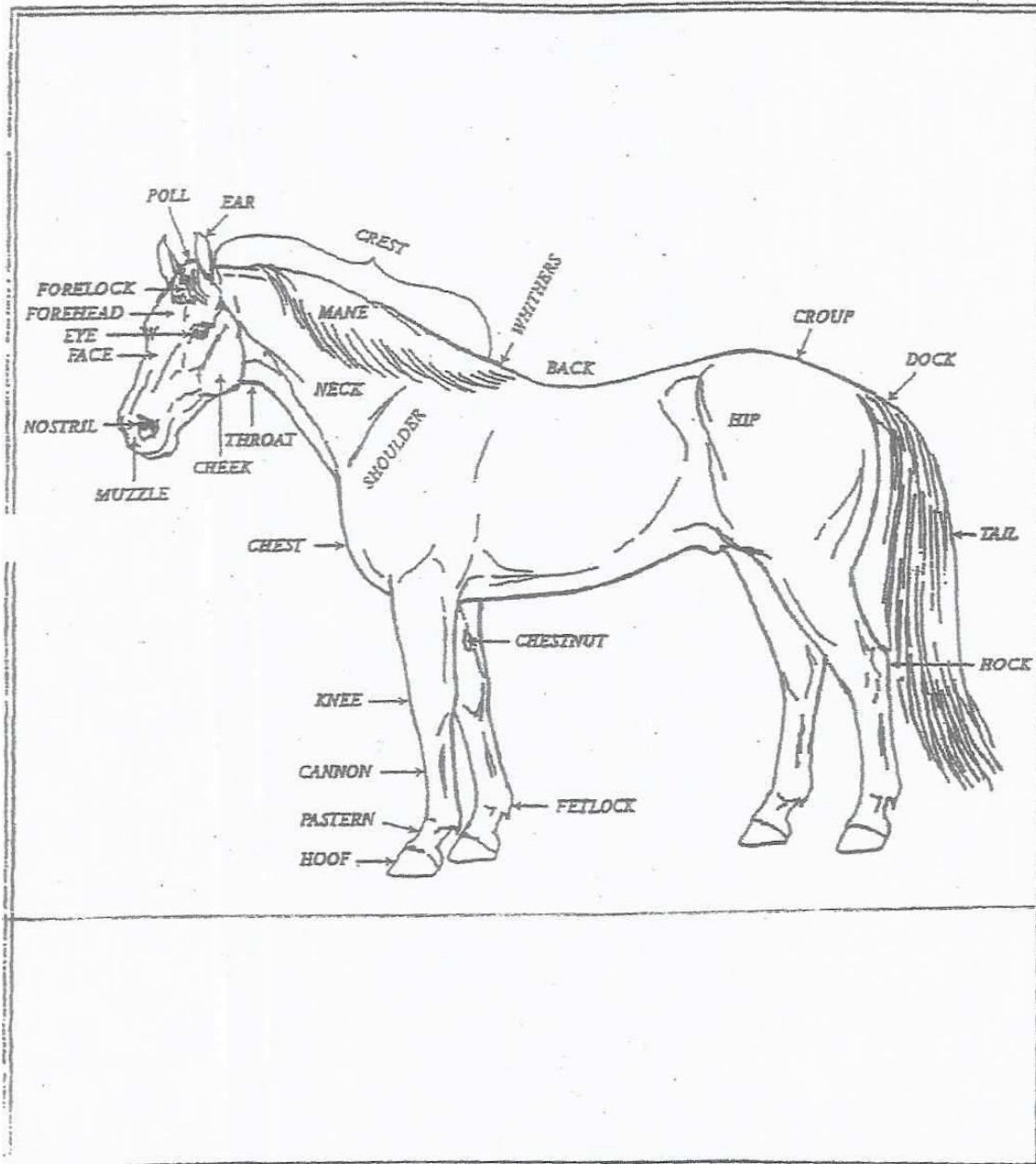
Implications:

- Be aware that a horse may not like being alone. This is a consideration when horses are leaving the arena or a horse loses sight of the others while on a trail ride.
- Be aware that if the horse in front of a line is trotting or cantering, the horse that is following may also attempt to trot or canter.
- If one horse spooks at something, the surrounding horses may also be affected.
- For safety, it is recommended to keep at least one horse’s length between horses when riding within a group to respect the horse’s space and pecking order.

PARTS OF THE HORSE AND TACK

PARTS OF THE HORSE

When working around horses there are some special words and terms that you will need to know.
Some parts of the horse are shown below.



READING HIS EARS

The horse's ears and actions are the key to his emotions. He can tell you what he is paying attention to and how by the way he uses his ears and the way he acts. Following are some tips to his emotions.



Ears forward but relaxed
interested in what's
in front of him.



Ears turned back but relaxed
listening to his rider
or what's behind him.



Ears pointed stiffly forward
alarmed or nervous about what
ahead. Looking for danger.



Ears pointed left and right
relaxed. paying attention
to the scenery on both sides.



Ears stiffly back
annoyed or worried about what's
behind him: might kick if annoyed.



Droopy ears
calm and resting.
horse may be dozing.



Ears flattened against neck
fiercely angry, in a fighting mood.
May fight, bite or kick.

OTHER SIGNS YOU SHOULD NOTICE ARE:

- Tucking the tail down tightly.
Danger to the rear.
Horse may bolt, buck or kick.
Watch out if ears are flattened, too!
- Switching the tail.
Annoyance and irritation:
at biting flies, stinging insects or
tickling bothersome actions of a rider or another horse.
- Droopy ears and resting one hind leg on toe.
Calm and resting, horse may be dozing.
Don't wake him up by startling him!
- Wrinkling up the face and swinging the head.
Threatening gesture of an angry or bossy horse.
Watch out for biting or kicking.

A Brief History of Therapeutic Riding

References to the physical and emotional benefits of therapeutic horseback riding date back to writings in the 1600s. Liz Hartel of Denmark won the silver medal for dressage at the 1952 Helsinki Olympic Games despite having paralysis from polio. Medical and Equine professionals took active notice. It was not long before therapeutic riding was being used for rehabilitation in England and then in North America. The first centers for therapeutic riding in North America began operation in the 1960s. Today, there are more than 500 NARHA (North American Riding for the Handicapped Association) affiliated centers worldwide.

Benefits of Therapeutic Riding

Physically – It is the horse's movement which has dynamic affect on the rider's body. The horse stimulates the rider's pelvis and trunk in a manner that closely resembles the normal gait of a human. This movement can be used to produce specific physical changes in the rider including normalization of muscle tone and improvement in posture, balance, coordination, and increased endurance.

Sensory – The horse and the riding environment offer a wide variety of input to participants. Movement exploration on the horse combined with so many other sights and sounds one encounters in the riding program contribute to the overall sensory experience.

Emotionally – The success of overcoming fear and anxiety and the ability to achieve riding skills help a rider to realize self-worth and increase self-esteem. For those involved with the various activities of a therapeutic riding program, the companion animal bonding and development of new skills are critical components to the success of the experience offered. Relationships develop between riders, volunteers, horses, and staff and are all an integral part of a positive, emotional experience provided by a therapeutic riding program.

Cognitively – The horse provides a strong motivator for riders. Riding lessons incorporate activities and games on horseback designed to help each rider achieve specific goals such as following direction, staying on task, color and number recognition, and reinforcing existing skills as well as learning new ones.

Socially – Therapeutic riding programs and their associated activities provide an excellent opportunity for participants to interact with their peers, program volunteers and staff in a positive and enjoyable environment.

The horse, rider, instructor and volunteers make up a unique treatment team providing an opportunity for physical, emotional, social, recreational and educational gains for participants with disabilities.

GLOSSARY OF PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE DISABILITIES

The following are brief, non-medical descriptions of some disabilities and conditions of participants one might encounter in a therapeutic riding setting. This is not intended as a comprehensive explanation of a specific disability. Rather it is a general overview with an explanation of how therapeutic riding can be beneficial.

Arthritis

Inflammatory disease of the joints.

Types: Osteo, rheumatoid, and juvenile rheumatoid.

Characteristics: Pain, lack of mobility; loss of strength.

Benefits of therapeutic riding: Gentle rhythmic movements to promote joint mobility and to relieve pain; increase strength.

Autism

A broad spectrum of disorders ranging from mild to severe, which affects thought, perceptions and attention.

Characteristics: Impairments in social interactions and communication; restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior, interests and activities; impairments in the use of nonverbal behaviors such as eye to eye gaze and facial expressions; lack of social or emotional reciprocity; delays in, or lack of the development of spoken language; impairments in ability to initiate or sustain conversations with others; abnormal responses to senses such as sight, hearing, touch, balance, smell, taste, reaction to pain; deficits in gross and fine motor skills.

Benefits: Provides sensory input and promotes sensory integration. Promotes communication skills (expressive and receptive). Develops strength, coordination, muscle tone and gross and fine motor skills. Promotes socialization.

Cerebral Palsy

Brain damage occurring before, at or shortly after birth. It is a non-progressive motor disorder.

Types and characteristics:

Spastic: increased muscle tone, muscle imbalances and equilibrium. Increased startle reflex and other pathological reflexes.

Athetoid: extensor muscle tension, involuntary movements, difficulty maintaining upright posture.

Ataxic: weakened muscles, poor balance, difficulty with quick, fine movements.

Benefits: Normalization of muscle tone, muscle strengthening, development of posture, balance and motor coordination. Promotes socialization and confidence.

Cerebral Vascular Accident (CVA)—Stroke

Hemorrhage in brain, which causes varying degrees of functional impairment.

Characteristics: Flaccid or spastic paralysis of arm and leg on same side of the body. May impair thought, speech, sight, balance, coordination and strength.

Benefits: Promotes symmetry, stimulates balance, posture, motor planning, speech, socialization and confidence.

Developmental Disabilities (DD)

A diverse group of physical, cognitive, psychological, sensory and speech impairments that begin anytime during development up to 18 years of age.

Characteristics: Varied, but can include processing delays, and delays in physical, motor and social development.

Benefits: Increased confidence and self-esteem, stimulates processing, speech and body awareness, provides opportunity for sport and recreation, promotes socialization.

Down Syndrome

A genetic disorder in which a person is born with an extra chromosome (chromosome 21).

Characteristics: Mild to severe learning disabilities, low muscle tone, speech impairments.

Benefits: Promotes expressive and receptive language skills. Increases gross and fine motor skills, balance, coordination, posture and muscle tone. Promotes social skills. Increases confidence and esteem.

Emotional Disabilities

Social, emotional or behavioral functioning which is not age appropriate and affects a child's academics, social relationships and self-care.

Characteristics: Difficulty coping with everyday life situations and interpersonal relations, inappropriate affect or behavior responses, depression, anxiety, physical symptoms, difficulty learning, withdrawal, and aggressiveness.

Benefits: Increase confidence and self-esteem, provide opportunities for accomplishments, promotes positive socialization.

Hearing Impairment

Congenital or acquired hearing loss varying from mild to profound.

Characteristics: Difficulties in communication of communication through sign language, lip reading or finger spelling.

Benefits: Increases confidence, self-esteem, and sense of accomplishment. Provides recreational activity with opportunity for socialization. Stimulates balance, posture and coordination.

Learning Disabilities

Neurological disorders that interfere with a person's ability to store, process or produce information.

Characteristics: Difficulties with reading, writing, speech, computing math. May affect development and social skills.

Benefits: Promotes processing, language skills and attending skills, increases confidence and self-esteem, provides opportunity for success, increases balance, coordination and posture, provides opportunity for socialization.

Mental Impairment or Mental Retardation (MR)

A disorder in which a persons overall intellectual functioning is below average with an IQ of 70 or less. Impaired ability to cope with common life demands and daily living skills.

Characteristics: Impairments in learning, communication, social interaction, self-care.

Benefits: Increased balance, coordination, strength and posture, improves gross and fine motor skills, promotes socialization, increases confidence, reinforce life and vocational skills.

Multiple Sclerosis (MS)

Progressive neurological disease with degeneration of spinal column tracts, resulting in scar formation.

Characteristics: Most commonly occurs in the 20 to 40 year old range. It is progressive with periods of exacerbation and remissions. Fatigues easily. Symptoms include weakness, visual impairment, fatigue, loss of coordination and emotional sensitivity.

Benefits: Maintains and strengthens weak muscles, maintains balance, increases confidence and self-esteem.

Muscular Dystrophy (MD)

Deficiency in muscle nutrition with degeneration of skeletal muscle. Hereditary disease that mainly affects males.

Characteristics: Progressive muscular weakness, fatigues easily, sensitive to temperature extremes.

Benefits: Provides opportunity for recreational, physical, and social activity. May help slow progressive loss of strength, stimulates postural and trunk alignment, allows for movement free of assistive devices.

Polio (post)

Infectious virus disease.

Characteristics: Flaccid paralysis, atrophy of skeletal muscle, deformity.

Benefits: Strengthens non-paralyzed muscles, stimulates posture, increases confidence.

Scoliosis

Lateral curve of the spine with a C or S shape with rotary component.

Characteristics: Shoulder, trunk and waistline asymmetry. May have back pain and postural fatigue. (Curvature over 30 degrees is contraindicated)

Benefits: Stimulates postural symmetry, strengthens trunk muscles.

Spina Bifida

Congenital failure of vertebral arch closure which results in spinal cord damage.

Characteristics: Varying degrees of paralysis of the lower limbs coupled with sensory loss. May also be associated with hydrocephalus, lordosis, scoliosis, and hip dislocations

Benefits: Stimulates posture and balance, increases strength, balance and coordination, promotes confidence and self-esteem.

Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)

Trauma to the spinal cord resulting in a loss of neurological function.

Characteristics: Paralysis of muscles below the level of injury—can be flaccid or spastic.

Fatigue, sensory loss and pressure sores.

Benefits: Stimulates posture and balance, strengthens trunk muscles, provides opportunity for recreational and social activity.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)

Accidental injury to the head resulting in impairment of cognitive, emotional and/or physical functioning.

Characteristics: May include deficits in gross and fine motor skills, balance, coordination and strength. May have deficits in language, communication, processing, memory and perceptual skills.

Benefits: Stimulates balance, posture, coordination, and gross and fine motor skills. Stimulates speech and perceptual skills. Increases confidence.

Visual Impairment

Moderate to total loss of sight.

Characteristics: May include insecure posture, lack of visual memory, anterior center of gravity and fearfulness.

Benefits: Stimulates spatial awareness, proprioception, posture, balance and coordination. Provides opportunity for socialization, structural risk-taking and freedom of movement.

Conduct of Personnel and Participants

- Each individual involved with Rein and Shine program is expected to show respect for the rights and person of all participants both human and equine. If you witness an act of abuse either physically or verbal, please report the incident and the circumstances to the therapeutic riding program director in cooperation with the Executive Director.
- The Possession or use of drugs or alcohol on the premises of the Rein and Shine therapeutic riding program operates is strictly prohibited. Anyone found on the premises in possession of or using any substances will be asked to leave the premises immediately and may be barred from further participation in the program pending a hearing with the Executive Director.
- All personnel and participants are expected to follow the Rein and Shine established safety procedures. Failure to do so can result in the loss of riding privileges for participants. Any volunteer or paid personnel not in compliance with safety procedures will meet the Executive Director before allowed to continue with the program. If you observe an instance of unsafe practice, please inform the therapeutic riding program director.
- All volunteers will sign a confidentiality agreement concerning divulging any information contained in the participant's files. Personnel shall keep participant information confidential and will provide only relevant information to the volunteers.