

HORSES & HORIZONS THERAPEUTIC LEARNING CENTER, INC. PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Welcome to Horses & Horizons Therapeutic Learning Center, Inc.! This guide has been prepared in order to make the time you/your rider spends with us a safe and pleasant experience for all.

ARRIVAL AND LESSON TIMES

- **Please call us as soon as possible (570-386-5679) if you/your child are unable to attend a lesson.** We cannot accommodate riders with repeated unreported absences.
- Please be at the farm 10 minutes before riding time. Instructors must be informed of anticipated lateness, absence, or any other change in a rider's schedule. If a rider is more than 10 minutes late for a lesson and you have not notified the instructor, the horse will be put away, and the volunteers will either be given other assignments or will be sent home.
- No rider may be left at Horses & Horizons Therapeutic learning Center (H.H.T.L.C., Inc.) for lessons unattended. A parent/caregiver must remain on the premises during the rider's lesson and take responsibility for the rider when he/she is finished with their lesson. You must be available in case of an unforeseen health problem, or if the rider's lesson should end early due to a behavior, horse, or weather issue.

ATTENDANCE

We have volunteers who have chosen to dedicate their time and effort to helping our participants, and our instructors carefully plan each lesson. "No-shows," tardiness or excessive absences do not take into consideration the commitment of our willing volunteers and affect the planning and execution of lessons. For these reasons, we have instituted the following rules:

- Please do not come or bring your participant to the facility if you/they are sick.
- In the event of an unexpected absence please call 570-386-5679 as early as possible. If your child is home sick from school, please do not wait until the last minute to notify us that he/she will not be coming to lessons.
- In the event a vacation or other event would prevent you from coming to a lesson, please inform us in advance so that schedules can be modified accordingly. There are no credits for vacation or away days.
- If your rider must miss a lesson, due to the tightness of our lesson schedules and volunteer availability, we are unable to arrange for a make-up lesson. Tuition paid reserves the rider's spot in our lesson schedule, so no money will be refunded if a rider misses a lesson, except in the case of unexpected surgery or an extended illness or injury.
- Consistent failure to notify program personnel of a rider's inability to attend, or patterns of tardiness and/or absenteeism may necessitate a review of the rider's status in the program. Three "no show" absences may result in discharge without refund.

ATTIRE

- Because SAFETY IS OUR PRIMARY CONCERN, we supply specially approved riding helmets which must be worn by all riders.
- Boots or tie shoes with a low heel must be worn unless contraindicated because of leg braces or other physical reason. We have sturdy ankle high riding boots available in most sizes for a \$20. rental fee. Upon return of these boots in good condition, your \$20. rental fee will be refunded.

ATTIRE Continued

- Riders should wear comfortable, sturdy clothing and appropriate outerwear for changing weather conditions. Jackets and gloves will be needed for cool spring and fall evenings. **Riders must wear long pants even in the hot weather to prevent sores on their legs, which can be caused by rubs from the saddle.**

COVID-19 GUIDELINES

- Participants who have tested positive for Covid 19 or who have a sick family member at home should notify H.H.T.L.C., Inc. and not come to the facility until cleared by CDC guidelines. If a participant or someone they have been in contact with is confirmed to have COVID-19, the participant should notify H.H.T.L.C., Inc. immediately and not come to the facility. H.H.T.L.C. will maintain records of those who are on the farm in order to contact trace as needed and will maintain confidentiality as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

DISCHARGE CRITERIA

Participants may be discharged (possibly without refund) for the following reasons:

- Exhibiting behavior that is considered inappropriate and unsafe during lessons. If a rider acts out during a lesson, he or she will be taken off the horse and sent home. This includes, but is not limited to hysteria, screaming, cursing, willful and sustained refusal to perform a requested task, or repeated pinching, biting, kicking, punching, hitting, or hair pulling directed at their horse or helpers. Repeated offenses will result in expulsion from H.H.T.L.C., Inc.'s lesson program.
- Three unexcused absences with no prior notification.
- Developing a medical contraindication to riding. If a program participant develops a temporary contraindication (e.g. surgery) that requires discharge for the rest of the season, that program participant will be accepted back into the program after receiving medical clearance to resume riding.
- If a participant no longer qualifies under the guidelines of admission/eligibility criteria. Example: weight gain causing the rider to exceed H.H.T.L.C., Inc.'s weight limit.
- Failing to pay the tuition fee by the second lesson of a session.
- Consistent disregard for any of the H.H.T.L.C., Inc Guidelines

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Because we have an indoor riding arena, **we do not cancel classes because of rain.** However, we may find it necessary to cancel lessons under the following conditions:

- Severe Thunderstorms
- Tornado Warnings or Watches
- Heat Index in excess of 100 degrees

In the event of a normal thunderstorm, we will remove riders from their horses and pause the lesson until the storm has safely passed. This may delay the start of any subsequent lessons. If the heat index registers 100 degrees or above, we may deem it necessary to cancel lessons depending on other prevailing conditions such as the presence of a breeze. If we find it necessary to cancel a lesson or lessons due to inclement weather, we will do our best to notify you directly as soon as possible. If we must cancel a lesson due to inclement weather or a situation beyond our control, we will refund the cost of the lesson.

SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Safety is our number one priority. For this reason, we have established the following rules:

- **No child is to be in the stabling or riding areas unless he or she is accompanied by H.H.T.L.C. staff (instructors or senior volunteers).**
- **No one is permitted in the horse fields without H.H.T.L.C. staff.**
- **Only riders and H.H.T.L.C. volunteers are allowed in the riding arenas before and after lessons.**
- **Our insurance only covers children who are enrolled in the riding program. Please do not ask us to let your other children ride.**
- **Horses are not permitted to be fed by hand, because this encourages them to nip or bite. Apples and carrots brought to lessons will be fed to the horses with their dinner meal after lessons.**
- **Park only in designated areas near the outdoor arena or the indoor arena driveway. DO NOT park along the road.**
- **H.H.T.L.C., Inc has ZERO TOLERANCE for alcohol and/or drugs on or near the program facility.**
- **Smoking is NOT permitted in or near any buildings or anywhere on the farm property except in your car. Do not throw cigarette butts on the ground where owners/staff must pick them up.**
- **Please make a point of letting us know if there has been a change in or complications from yours/your rider's medication.**

Please feel free to discuss the program with the instructor privately after class or **during non-lesson hours.**

WEIGHT GUIDELINES FOR RIDERS

For the safety of our special horses and volunteers, there is a weight limit of 150 lbs. for riders who can sit independently astride the horse. The weight and height of riders requiring hands-on assistance will be assessed individually during the pre-lesson evaluation to make certain we can provide a safe and effective lesson for him/her.

Regardless of body weight, H.H.T.L.C., Inc. reserves the right to determine the eligibility of a rider based on our ability to provide a safe and effective riding experience, which will not be harmful to our animals.

VOLUNTEERING

We sometimes find it necessary to enlist the help of parents or caregivers in the lessons, if we have a shortage of volunteers. Our other alternative is to cancel these lessons. For this reason, we strongly urge all able-bodied parents and caregivers to attend our Volunteer Training Sessions, which are held before the start of each session. Please consult your copy of the H.H.T.L.C., Inc. Planning Calendar for this year's dates. After completing a volunteer training session, you will be placed on our volunteer substitute list as being available during your rider's lesson time slot.

FUNDRAISING

Even though we are staffed entirely by volunteers, the nominal fees charged for lessons do not begin to cover the costs of operating a quality therapeutic riding program, For this reason, it is necessary to hold fundraising events such as bingo, candy sales, a membership drive, and so on. We ask your help in making these fundraisers a success. Also, we welcome suggestions for fundraising activities and volunteers to organize them. Those who have been involved with our program in the past know that H.H.T.L.C., Inc.'s success truly is a group effort!