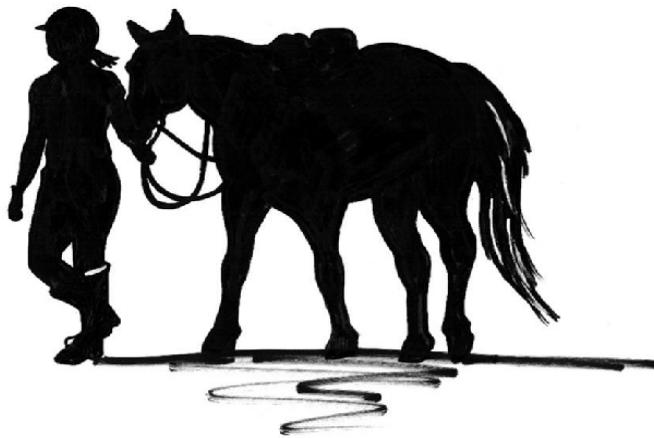


# THE RIGHT STEP at Coventry Farms

## *Therapeutic Riding* VOLUNTEER MANUAL



### Contact information:

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### WARNING

Under Colorado law, an equine professional is not liable for an injury to or the death of a participant in equine activities from the inherent risks of equine activities.

Pursuant to section 13-21-120, Colorado Revised Statutes.

## WELCOME TO THE RIGHT STEP AT COVENTRY FARMS!!

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for our therapeutic riding program! Working with people with disabilities and horses is a unique combination which often results in special bonds being formed with the riders, other volunteers, staff and of course, the horses. Our program relies on volunteers to make our lessons safe, productive and fun for everyone involved. You will watch students develop their riding skills and become physically stronger as well as achieve improved self-esteem and confidence. As a volunteer, you will learn and achieve alongside our riders. The information in this manual is designed to assist you in understanding the policies and procedures that are essential to the success of our program. Please read over it carefully and ask any questions or concerns you may have. Again, THANK YOU for joining us! We look forward to working with you!

# GENERAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES

## **SAFETY**

It is our top priority to provide a safe environment for all involved. Working with horses is a risky activity and these policies have been developed to minimize the risk. Safety is everyone's responsibility and we take it very seriously.

## **ATTENDANCE**

We are counting on you to be at every lesson that you are scheduled to work! **If you cannot come at your scheduled time, you must find a SUB and notify the Program Coordinator of the change.** If you have to drop out of the session, let the Program Coordinator know so that a permanent replacement can be found. PLEASE BE ON TIME! If you are running late, call the Instructor – this saves everyone a lot of anxiety.

## **ATTIRE**

Wear comfortable, sensible clothes and boots/shoes that you can comfortably jog and work in. Do NOT wear sandals, clog type shoes, short shorts, crop tops, spaghetti strap tops, dangling jewelry, or pants that drag on the ground. Leave any valuables at home. Weather can change quickly so be prepared for all ranges of temperatures.

## **BEHAVIOR**

*Always remember that you are a representative of the Right Step at Coventry Farms and should therefore conduct yourself in a mature and responsible manner.* This includes around the facility and at special functions. For the safety of all involved, there is to be no horseplay, running, shouting, or loud noises around the facility, especially in lesson areas. Volunteers are expected to treat riders, parents, instructors and other volunteers with respect and courtesy. Crude language or inappropriate behavior is not tolerated! (See Dismissal Policy).

## **CELL PHONES**

Cell phones are not allowed in the arena. If you are expecting a call, please leave your phone with someone who is not participating in the lesson. Answering a call takes your attention away from your most important job – the safety of our riders.

## **CLASS CANCELLATION**

Classes are rarely cancelled. If necessary, the Instructor will call you and leave a message that class is cancelled for that day.

## **COMMUNICATION**

The primary means of communication to and from all volunteers is **E-MAIL**. Please check your email regularly for important scheduling information and updates. If you do not have email or cannot check it regularly, please let the Program Coordinator know the best way to contact you.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY**

Riders and their families have a right to privacy. No information shall be shared with individuals outside of the Right Step on a rider's medical information, disability, financial status, or other sensitive factors. All volunteers and staff are bound by this policy to protect the rights of the individuals served. The Right Step will only

disclose information to outside agencies or individuals with the specific written consent of the rider or his/her parent/guardian. Individuals who breach confidentiality will be dismissed from the program.

## **DISMISSAL POLICY**

A volunteer may be dismissed from the program if he/she exhibits behavior that is unacceptable, creates an unsafe situation through careless behavior, shows a disregard for rules, ignores instruction from staff and/or instructors, displays aggressive or inappropriate behavior toward people or animals, refuses to follow directions or complete assigned tasks, is smoking, rough-housing, or is unable to get along with others. A volunteer will first receive a warning and may at that time be assigned to a different task. If another infraction occurs, the volunteer will be asked to resign and his/her name will be removed from all volunteer lists. If the infraction is of a serious nature, the volunteer will be dismissed immediately and will be reported to the appropriate authorities. **We reserve the right to conduct background checks on all personnel.**

## **FOOD, DRINKS, GUM AND CANDY**

Absolutely NO food, drinks, gum, or candy is allowed in the arena at anytime.

## **INJURIES AND OCCURRENCES**

Please inform the instructor or a staff member of any injuries or occurrences (human or horse) no matter how small. Some examples include being nipped by a horse, a rider displaying rough behavior, and behavioral issues with horse or rider. Your communication will help us address these issues. The instructor will determine if a report needs to be filed. Please be discreet in your method of reporting so as not to alarm the riders or others.

## **NAME TAGS**

Volunteers are to wear their nametags at all times and in a spot that is clearly visible (ex. Not at the bottom of your shirt.) This helps the instructors, riders, parents and other volunteers learn your name.

## **SIGNING IN/OUT**

All volunteers are to sign in and out each time they volunteer. The sign-in sheet is a record of each volunteer's service hours. It also serves insurance purposes and in case of an emergency to ensure that all persons are accounted for.

## **SUBSTITUTES**

Lesson volunteers are required to find a substitute from the list of trained volunteers. **Please find a substitute as soon as you know you are going to be out.** Let the Program Coordinator know which volunteer is filling in for you just in case we have to cancel lessons. Be sure to note the training level of the volunteer you are asking to sub for you. If you need a horse leader, please find another horse leader. Also, please do not call a Junior Volunteer to sub for you if you are a regular lesson volunteer, they will not be able to perform your duties. If you have agreed to substitute for someone, please show up! The instructor and riders need you. If an illness or emergency comes up at the last minute and you cannot get a sub, please call the instructor.

## **VISITORS**

While we encourage people to come out to see the program, **friends of volunteers cannot participate in classes or help out with barn chores until** they have been authorized to do so by the Volunteer Coordinator and **have all forms completed and on file.** This is for their safety and protection. Visitors are welcome to observe from the rider waiting area. Encourage them to come to a volunteer training session!

# **JUNIOR VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION**

*(under 14 years old)*

## **A Junior Volunteer must:**

- Attend volunteer training.
- Possess a positive attitude and willingness to work
- Listen to instructor and or lesson volunteers for instructions.
- Follow directions
- Stay on task
- Complete assigned tasks independently
- Be **willing** to do tasks as assigned
- Work quietly, without disrupting class
- Have permission from the instructor before handling horses
- Turn in required paperwork (liability release, confidentiality forms)
- Arrange to be dropped off and picked up at the scheduled times.
- Abide by the policies of The Right Step

\*Note: We highly recommend that your be up-to-date on your tetanus shot.

## **DUTIES**

- Helping to preparing horses for lessons and/or untacking horses
- Getting out/putting up tack and equipment
- Greeting students and their families and showing them where to go.
- Running errands for the instructor and other volunteers before, during, and after the lesson time.

# **LESSON VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS**

*(age 14 and up)*

## **Lesson Volunteers must:**

- Attend required volunteer trainings.
- Understand and follow the requests of the instructor without interference
- Be respectful of riders, their families, and other volunteers.
- Take care of the safety of the rider and other volunteers by following instructor's directions.
- Walk/jog intermittently for up to 30 minutes and/or walk on uneven ground.
- Lift your arm shoulder height for up to 30 minutes.
- Talk to the students appropriately for their age, and never yell.
- Use positive not negative reinforcement.
- Be patient. (Count to 30 before repeating a request, especially if the student is learning disabled.)
- Be understanding of fear. (If you can't handle a problem with a student, ask the instructor for help.)
- Call your own substitutes if you are unable to make your assigned time and notify the Program Coordinator.
- Sign a liability release, confidentiality forms and turn in all required paperwork.
- Dress weather appropriately.
- Wear your name tag.
- Provide your own transportation
- Keep track of your service hours (if applicable) and bring form to instructor for signing
- Abide by the policies of The Right Step

\*Note: We highly recommend that your be up-to-date on your tetanus shot.

## **DUTIES**

- As a lesson volunteer, you will serve as a Horse Leader and/or as a Sidewalker.

## **HORSE LEADER JOB DESCRIPTION:**

*The horse leader's responsibility is the horse (not the rider).*

### **Preparation**

- Arrive 45 minutes earlier than class time to prepare your horse.
- If appropriate, assist rider in grooming and tacking. Otherwise, totally prepare horse for class.
- Do not bridle the horse. Only Instructors are allowed to put on bridles and to fully tighten girths.
- 15 minutes prior to class time, walk your horse in the arena to warm him up. The horse should be warming up in the arena prior to the rider getting ready for mounting.

### **Mounting**

- To avoid congestion in the tacking and mounting areas, the instructor will call in the horse that she is ready to mount the rider on.
- Swing wide enough to allow the horse to enter the mounting area straight on. This avoids the horse tripping over the mounting block.
- Only the instructor mounts and dismounts the rider.
- When a rider is being mounted, the leader must hold the animal as still as possible, both at the ramp and in the ring.
- The leader should stand to the side of the horse, holding him gently by the halter, being sure not to hang on the bit or hold it too tightly. Light, firm pressure should be enough to keep him quiet and steady.

### **During the lesson**

- Once the lesson has started, it is important that the leader be alert and pay close attention.
- Constantly be aware of the rider, instructor, and any potential hazards in or around the arena.
- Pay close attention to the rider's needs as well as to where the horse is going.
- Anticipate problems and act in such a way as to avoid them.
- Hold the lead six to eight inches from the horse's head with the extra lead folded in the free hand, not wrapped around it.
- Do not hang on the lead or try to drag the animal.
- Allow the horse's head freedom of movement! The rhythmical movement of the horse from the head through the spine is what makes horseback riding therapeutic.
- The leader should walk just behind the mount's head between the head and shoulder.
- Make sure there is enough room along the rail and around obstacles for the sidewalkers.
- Maintain a steady, even pace. Avoid sharp turns or abrupt changes of gait. Follow the rail unless directed otherwise. Maintain two horse lengths between horses.
- Adjust your walk to the mounts unless it is unreasonably fast or slow. If amount is moving too fast, a stronger pull on the lead will be necessary. If the horse is moving too slowly, the leader can drop back a little and have the sidewalker give it a prod in the barrel. Short tugs rather than a steady pull will help keep a lazy horse moving. The horse can set himself against a steady pull, but tugs keep him awake.
- At the trot, the volunteer will have to speed his walk to a jog. Mounts should trot alongside the leader. The leader should avoid breaking into a run, as the mount will pick up speed accordingly.
- The leader should use voice commands (whoa, walk, trot, canter) to aid in transitions from one gait to another.

- During stationery exercises, the leader should stand in front of and slightly to the side of the mount to prevent it from moving. This is called halt position.
- Allow the horse's head to point forward, not pulled toward you.
- Bring the horse into the center of the arena for any necessary adjustments.

### Attention to the rider:

- The ultimate goal for therapeutic riding is to encourage the rider to stretch and grow to be as independent as he can possibly be.
- **Allow the rider to do as much as possible with the leader helping only when necessary.**
- Help guide, stop, and start the horse without making the rider feel he is simply a passenger.
- Leaders can help the instructor by keeping the rider's attention on the instructor.
- If possible, have the rider help keep the horse or pony walking on by pushing with his seat and/or by squeezing with his legs.
- When the rider is controlling the horse, allow a little slack in the lead, do not influence the horse.
- When halting the rider should say "whoa". If the horse does not stop, tug slight backward, then release. If he doesn't respond immediately to one tug, repeat with several short tugs.
- Many riders like to talk and ask personal questions of their volunteers. The volunteer should not be rude but should keep the rider's attention on the lesson. After the lesson, personal conversation can take place, but not during the class.
- Allow the rider time to process the information given by the Instructor and to make an effort to comply - -- BE PATIENT!
- Be aware of the rider's uncontrollable body movements, vocalizations, and behaviors. Manage the horse to avoid problems.
- NEVER discipline a horse while a rider is mounted. This could endanger or frighten the rider.

### After the lesson:

- Wait for the Instructor to dismount your rider. ***Only Instructors can do the dismount.***
- Wait until all riders are safely out of the arena.
- Take your horse back to the tacking area and untack and groom appropriately.
- Put away all tack and grooming materials in their proper locations!
- Clean up tacking area!!

## **Emergency situations:**

If an emergency occurs with your rider or horse (such as the rider falls off, the rider experiences a seizure, the horse is frightened, or any other emergency requiring an emergency dismount):

- **Keep calm!**
- Stop your horse (turn him towards the wall, if necessary, as an aid for a quick stop)
- Stand at an angle in front of the horse to keep him stopped.
- Soothe the horse while the sidewalkers assist the rider.
- If a horse bolts during a lesson, **KEEP HOLD OF THE LEAD ROPE!** Try to settle the horse with pats and calm voice. Do not leave the horse or let go of the lead rope for any reason. The leader must take care of the horse.
- Do **not** drop the lead and run to a fallen rider. The situation could easily become more dangerous if there are loose horses running around the arena.
- Listen for directions.
- The instructor will call the class to a halt and assist the rider.
- Move your horse as far from the fallen student as possible.
- **Keep calm!**

\***Note:** Completed Emergency Release forms for both volunteers and riders are in a red binder in the office above the mailboxes.

## SIDEWALKER JOB DESCRIPTION

*The sidewalker's responsibility is the rider (not the horse).*

### Preparation

- Arrive 30 minutes earlier than class time.
- Review the rider's given information.
- Prepare to give the rider your undivided attention.
- Put on your nametag!
- Ask the Instructor if you can help with anything.
- When the rider arrives, greet your rider first, then the parents/guardians.
- Review your rider's attire. Check for appropriate and safe clothing, dangling jewelry or objects, etc.
- Fit your rider with a properly sized helmet.
- Show the rider the proper way to approach the horse. (Approach the mount from the side, talk to him in a low voice, and keep a hand on his body when walking around him.)

### Mounting

- **Only the instructor mounts and dismounts the rider!**
- To avoid congestion in the tacking and mounting areas, the instructor will call in the horse that she is ready to mount the rider on.
- The rider does not put his feet in the stirrups until he is fully away from the mounting block.

### Holds

#### *“Arm-over-the-thigh”*

- The sidewalker grips the front of the saddle with the hand closest to the rider. Then the fleshy part of the forearm rests gently on the rider's thigh.
- Be careful that the elbow doesn't accidentally dig into the rider's leg. Sometimes, pressure on the thigh can increase and/or cause muscle spasticity, especially with the Cerebral Palsy population.

#### *“At the Pelvis”*

- Just above where the leg appears to break away from the body, support can be applied at the sides of the rider's pelvis. The volunteer places his/her hand on the side of the rider's pelvis and may be asked to apply an inward pressure equal to the pressure applied by the other sidewalker. This technique is done by the allowing the rider's pelvis to rock with the horse.

#### *“At the Ankle”*

- Often riders only need stabilization at their ankles. The volunteer grasps the rider's ankle from behind using the arm closest to the horse, if that arm is not being used for the “Arm Over the Thigh” hold. When “At the Ankle” hold is being used in conjunction with the “Arm Over the Thigh” hold, the volunteer can use the hand farthest from the horse to hold the rider's foot by placing his/her hand over the rider's arch.

#### *“Holding the Rider's Trunk”*

- Only when an emergency dismount is necessary should a volunteer hold a rider's trunk, unless directed to.

**NOTE:** Avoid wrapping an arm around the rider's waist. It is tempting, especially when walking beside a pony with a young or small rider, but it can offer too much and uneven support. At times, it can even pull the rider off balance and make riding more difficult. Encourage students to use their own trunk muscles to the best of their abilities.

### **During the lesson**

- Maintain a position by the rider's knee at all times. Being too far forward or back will make it very difficult to assist with instructions or provide security if the horse should trip or shy.
- Never leave your rider's side. If an object (like a glove) falls to the ground, leave it and the Instructor will pick it up.
- The degree of assistance from the sidewalker will depend on the balance of the rider.
- Sidewalkers should not pull the rider sideways or backwards.
- Avoid putting a hand on the rider's back, unless you are directed to do so.
- At a trot, the sidewalker must be able to jog alongside the rider.
- Reinforce the Instructor's directions, but be careful not to confuse the rider with too much verbal stimulation..
- Sidewalkers can also help the instructor in many other ways:
  - keeping the rider's attention on the lesson
  - assisting in right/left directionality
  - spatial orientation,
  - understanding the instructor's directions,
  - helping to keep the mount walking on.
- As with the leader, any unnecessary interference should be avoided. Otherwise, the rider may be confused as to who is teaching the lesson. Too much input from too many people is very confusing to anyone, and to riders who already have perceptual problems, it can be overwhelming.
- When the instructor gives a direction, allow your student plenty of time to process it. If the instructor says, "Turn to the right toward me," and the student seems confused, gently tap the right hand and say, "Right," to reinforce the command. You will get to know the riders and learn when they need help and when they're just not paying attention.
- Encourage the rider to do the exercises, games and reinforce the use of new skills. The sidewalker is should help the instructor to challenge the rider to the best of his ability.
- If a rider starts to fall, pushing him back into the saddle is more effective than trying to get him off the horse.
- Ask the leader and the rider to bring the horse into the center of the arena for any necessary adjustments. A stop may be needed when the rider is off balance and cannot regain balance, the saddle pad has slipped, the girth is loose, the stirrups need adjusting, the rider's helmet needs adjusting, the rider is fatigued or in pain, or if you need to change sides with the other sidewalker. ***When changing sides, one volunteer changes at a time.***

### **After the Lesson:**

- Wait for the Instructor to dismount your rider. ***Only Instructors can do the dismount.***
- Accompany your rider to the parents/guardians. Clients are your responsibility. Stay with them at all times until they are returned safely to their parents/guardians.
- Return the helmet to the school tack room. If the leader needs assistance untacking, please lend a hand!

## **Emergency situations:**

If an emergency occurs with your rider or horse (such as the rider falls off, the rider experiences a seizure, the horse is frightened, or any other emergency requiring an emergency dismount):

- **Keep calm!**
- Shout “STAFF!” to alert your Instructor and horse leader. The instructor will call the class to a halt and assist the rider.
- Stay with the rider!
- Try to stabilize the rider using the “Arm Over Thigh” hold. If the rider slides toward you, try to push him back to midline using your forearm on the rider’s thigh or, if necessary, push at the hip.
- If the rider slides away from you, encourage the other sidewalker to push the rider back toward you.
- Even in an emergency, it is always preferable, if at all possible, for the rider to remain on the horse until the Instructor can do a dismount.
- If an emergency dismount becomes necessary, the sidewalker the rider is falling away from needs to remove the stirrup and reins from the rider, while the sidewalker towards whom the rider is falling needs to remove the stirrup then hug the rider around the trunk and under the arms, pulling the rider off and away from the horse.
- If the sidewalker feels he can’t bear the full weight of the rider, a controlled fall can be initiated taking care to protect the rider and the sidewalker’s heads and roll with the fall as much as possible. It is important that the sidewalkers break the rider’s fall and does not fall on the rider!
- Listen for directions.
- **Keep calm!**

\***Note:** Completed Emergency Release forms for both volunteers and riders are in a red binder in the office above the mailboxes.

## **Interacting with a Disabled Person**

Many people may feel uncomfortable interacting with a person who has a disability. They may feel uncertain about how to act or what to say or they may have made assumptions about people with disabilities due to misinformation or a lack of misinformation. The suggestions below are meant to help you feel more comfortable in your interactions with therapeutic riders.

### **Interaction Guidelines**

- Be yourself! Use your normal voice and give support, but try not to over praise.
- Don't exaggerate the accomplishments of athletes. They will gain the most from being judged fairly and without overstatement.
- Use appropriate body language. Maintain eye contact to let the person know you are interested. Keep an open body posture, arms by your side or in your pockets.
- Incline your head toward the person. Closed arms and leaning away from a person creates a closed or unfriendly position.
- Behavior that is not appropriate for persons without disabilities (mental or physical) is also not appropriate among persons who have disabilities.
- Excessive hugging or kissing is not appropriate. Encouraging pats on the back or handshakes are ways to praise athletes for their accomplishments. Let the rider take the lead as to what type of recognition makes him/her feel comfortable. Don't be afraid to caution riders that kissing is not an acceptable behavior if that is the behavior they first offer.
- Do everything you can to respect the dignity of and be sensitive to the cultural differences of riders.
- Do not focus on a disability unless it is crucial to the matter on hand. Emphasize abilities, not limitations.
- Do not speak for persons with disabilities if they are capable of answering for themselves.
- Never talk down to a person with a disability or speak to them as if they were very young children. Talk with them and treat them according to their chronological age. This is especially important to remember when working with people with mental retardation.
- Don't make assumptions about people based on their disability (i.e., all people who are blind do not have better hearing, all people who use wheelchairs do not need help mounting...) Use words and images that create a straightforward, positive view of people with disabilities.
- Relax. Enjoy yourself and have fun!

## Language Guidelines

Words matter! Words can open doors to enable persons with disabilities to lead fuller, more independent lives. Words can also create barriers or stereotypes that are not only demeaning to persons with disabilities, but which also rob them of their individuality. The following guidelines will help ensure that you treat people who have disabilities with individuality and dignity.

### Appropriate Terminology

- Do not use the word “handicapped” to refer to people with disabilities. The word “**handicapped**” originated because with no financial income, many people who were disabled had to resort to begging. It was common when begging to hold out a cap in hand so peoples could drop in coins – they had their cap handy... or had a “handy cap.” Eventually, this term applied to all people with disabilities. **It is inappropriate to use this prejudicial term.**
- Do not say “a blind person” or “disabled people.” Say “a person who is blind” or “people with disabilities.” Always put people first, not their disability. This places the focus on the individual, not the particular functional limitation.
- Do not use generic labels for disability groups, such as “the retarded” or “the deaf.” Emphasize people, not labels. Say “people who are deaf” or “people with mental retardation.”
- Do not sensationalize disability by saying “afflicted with,” “crippled with,” “suffers from,” “victim of,” and so on. Instead, say “person who has multiple sclerosis” or “man who had polio.” Likewise, say “physically challenged” or “disabled” rather than “crippled.”
- Do not use emotional descriptors such as “unfortunate” and “pitiful” to describe people with disabilities. Disabling conditions do not have to be life defining in a negative way.
- Emphasize abilities, not limitations. Say “uses a wheelchair” rather than “confined to a wheelchair.”
- Never use the demeaning word “Mongoloid” to refer to persons with Down’s Syndrome.

## **BASIC SAFETY RULES FOR WORKING WITH HORSES**

- Horses and ponies are friendly and sensitive animals. Reward them by voice and firm pats on the neck and shoulder.
- Stay calm and quiet around mounts.
- Pet a horse or pony by placing a hand on his shoulder and neck. Don't dab at the end of his nose.
- Horses and ponies are creatures of habit. They are suspicious of anything new, unusual, or different. If the horse shies, they are alarmed at something.
- If a horse rears up, release the hand closest to the halter to avoid being pulled off the ground.
- A horse or pony may kick and squeal when close to another animal. **KEEP HORSES SEPARATED!**
- Never tie a mount by his bridle reins; he may injure his mouth or break the bridle. Put the halter over the bridle; then tie him to the lead.
- Always walk around a tied mount, **NEVER** under or over the rope.
- To avoid horses stepping on reins and lead ropes, keep reins and leads off the ground.
- If flies or other insects are present, allow the mount to keep himself comfortable with a minimum of hoof stamping or tail-swishing. Excessive movement may indicate nervousness, irritation or a possible vice.
- If the horse is not behaving as wished, evaluate the possible reasons. If his ears are pressed down, and/or if his tail is swishing rapidly, he is annoyed. If his eye is wide and dilated, he is alarmed. Is he getting mixed signals from leader, rider, or sidewalker? A horse or pony responds to voice and touch through reins and body signals. If each sense receives a different message simultaneously, he may become confused and eventually sour.
- To calm an excited mount, rub his neck and speak in a soothing voice. If handlers are calm and confident, the horse or pony will generally reflect those attitudes.
- Never approach a mount directly from the rear. Even in standing stalls, it is possible to approach from an angle at the rear. This allows the horse/pony to see the person.
- Always speak to a horse/pony before approaching or touching him. Some mounts are likely to jump and may kick when startled.
- If in doubt as to a horse's temperament, walk well back out of kicking range. When moving from one side of the animal to the other, walk around the front whenever possible.
- When tied, if a mount begins to pull back on the end of the rope, talk to him quietly while loosening the rope. Walk him forward a few steps and re-tie.

# EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN & PROCEDURES

## TELEPHONE

- A telephone is located in the office in the big arena.

## PEOPLE-RELATED

- All injuries, especially those needing first aid treatment, need to be reported to the instructor or staff person.
- Completed Emergency Release forms for both volunteers and riders are in a red binder in the office above the mailboxes.
- If an accident such as a fall, seizure, etc. happens while the students are mounted, all riding STOPS until the instructor gives further notice. If such an emergency arises during lessons, volunteers may explain the situation quietly and reassure the other students.
- Volunteers (leaders/sidewalkers) are to stay with their own student and/or horse. Leader will stand in the halt position or remove the animal if necessary.
- **NO ONE**, (including parents), is permitted in the arena if an accident occurs. Only those summoned by the instructor may enter.
- If a rider has a seizure while mounted, stop the horse. Many seizures are very mild and will not negatively affect the rider once it is over. If it is a grand mal type (major shaking, losing consciousness) support the rider on the horse with an over the thigh hold until the instructor can dismount the rider or assist you in dismounting them. Place the rider on their side on the ground away from the horse or any obstacles.
- All other horses will remain stopped until given directions by the instructor.
- The type of accident or result of any mishap will determine whether the instructor dismisses or resumes class.

## HORSE RELATED

- When removing a horse from an accident scene, back the horse away from the accident. Do not lead the horse forward or turn the horse sideways to leave. The horse could become nervous, bolt forward, jump or kick, causing further injury.
- If there is a horse emergency while it is being ridden, it may be necessary to pull the rider off. If the instructor cannot get over to dismount the rider, they will tell you to do an emergency dismount, make sure the rider's feet are clear of the stirrups, put your arm around their waist and pull them to your hip.

## **FIRE**

- If students are in the arena: bring your horses with riders to the center of the arena and await Instructor directions.
- Upon instruction from instructor, dismount students immediately and escort them to the parking lot or to their parent.
- If students are in the grooming/tacking area: Volunteers escort students to the parking area for the parents to pick up before moving horses.
- Remove reins and lead ropes. Halter the horses. Return horses to stalls. Secure gates.
- If stall area is on fire, remove horse from stall closest to fire first. Some horses may refuse to leave their stall-leave their door open and go to the next horse. Leave halters on all the horses.

**\*\*CALL 911 AS SOON AS FIRE IS DETECTED!**

**\*\*PARENTS & RIDERS NEED TO LEAVE THE FACILITY IMMEDIATELY TO MAKE ROOM FOR EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT AND VEHICLES**

**\*\*ALL VOLUNTEERS ARE TO MEET IN THE PARKING LOT FOR A HEAD COUNT. DO NOT LEAVE THE FACILITY UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO.**

**\*\*FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND WATER HOSES ARE LOCATED THROUGHOUT THE FACILITY.**

**(Fire extinguishers are to be used in a sweeping motion along the base of the fire.)**

## **THUNDERSTORM – LIGHTNING**

- Dismount riders and escort them to the parents/care providers.
- Put horses in their stalls.
- Close barn doors.
- Have everyone go to the lounge.

## **INJURIES**

- Instructor will determine if an ambulance is needed for any injury. She will designate a caller for 911 and another volunteer to pull the Emergency Form for the student (or volunteer) found in the red binder above the mailboxes in the office.
- All other students are to remain mounted with their horses and volunteers standing quietly in a location away from the injured person.
- When time allows, the Instructor will give directions to the group.