



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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“Celebrating 10 Years of Increasing the Quality of Life
for Children and Adults with Disabilities.”

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Welcome to **HORSEPOWER!**

We are so pleased that you want to become a volunteer at **HORSEPOWER**. Volunteers are the backbone of our therapeutic riding program for individuals with disabilities and the At-Risk population. Most of our students cannot ride without the physical, emotional, and psychological support of their volunteers. An instructor and a team of three volunteers may be needed for an individual with a disability to ride safely. The expense of two to three additional people, as well as the cost of the lesson itself, would put this activity out of reach for all but a very few. While the volunteer brings enthusiasm, free time, and dedication to the purpose of a therapeutic riding program, it is the volunteer's understanding, observations, and spirit of cooperation that assists in bringing the team together.

Dedicated people from all walks of life team up to give the individuals with special needs an opportunity to experience a sport that can make a difference in their physical and mental well-being. Though some volunteers find their way to **HORSEPOWER** individually, many of our volunteers can come from community organizations, area colleges, high schools as well as local corporations and businesses.

Our goal is to provide a volunteer team for each rider, so both the riders and volunteers can benefit from continuity and establish a lasting relationship of trust with one another. Moreover, volunteers will be able to share knowledge, guidance, patience, and love with the rider. A professional, safety-conscious and encouraging manner brings feelings of boundless joy and accomplishment for all those involved.

This handbook is designed as a reference for your orientation to our program. Volunteer duties, tips on working with horses and the students, and specific information about **HORSEPOWER** are included. Whether you are attending a first orientation or joining us after the session has already begun, we hope this information will be of benefit to you and that you refer back to it throughout your stay with us. Your involvement is important in maintaining our commitment to excellence. Thank you so much for your interest.

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OVERVIEW

HORSEPOWER is a non-profit organization serving the Piedmont Triad community since 1995 and affiliated with the Piedmont Saddle Club since 1998.

ACCREDITATION

HORSEPOWER was established in response to the community's dire need for a therapeutic equestrian program. We are a Premier North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) center. NARHA supports therapeutic riding programs across the country with insurance, technical assistance, and training in safety and teaching techniques. There are over 700 operating centers in North America.

OUR MISSION is to promote and enhance the welfare of individuals with disabilities by providing a program of therapeutic, educational and recreational value, and further, to empower individuals who are mentally, physically and/or emotionally challenged through the use of horses, while providing therapeutic benefits in a safe and controlled atmosphere.

PURPOSE

Horseback riding helps individuals who are mentally, emotionally, behaviorally, socially and physically challenged achieve a quality of life that is improved, enhanced, and enriched. Based on input from doctors, therapists, teachers, and parents, the student's individual goals are designed to compliment ongoing therapy and education. The benefits of horseback riding are threefold:

- 1) **Physical** - The three-dimensional motion of the horse provides the rider hip and back action that simulates natural walking. Riding relaxes and strengthens muscles and improves body tone, posture, balance, joint mobility, and coordination.
- 2) **Emotional** - Contact with horses and horsemanship training provides a non-competitive setting for learning. New abilities, self-discipline, and improved concentration, build self-confidence.

3) **Social** - Horseback riding nurtures a positive self-image. Riders may, for the first time in their lives, experience some independence and sense of being part of a team.

Why horses? The educational and physical benefits from equestrian activities are numerous. Participants learn new skills and build self-confidence through opportunities to interact with animals and other individuals. Particularly beneficial for individuals with impaired mobility, horseback riding gently and rhythmically moves the body in a similar manner to a human walking gait, thereby, increasing balance, muscle control and strength.

HORSEPOWER serves children and adults with a variety of disabilities. We have between 85 – 125 riders in our program weekly from ages 3 and up. Instructors design and monitor lesson plans for each student to address his or her needs while learning the skills of horseback riding. Individual and class goals encourage each rider to be the best he or she can be, on and off the horse.

HORSEPOWER Therapeutic Learning Center functions as a therapeutic riding center serving individuals with physical, mental, behavioral, and emotional disabilities. On occasion, **HORSEPOWER** holds summer day camps and participates in other “day camp” type activities at other facilities. The Piedmont Saddle Club is also host site to public horse shows during the appropriate season.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A GOOD VOLUNTEER

Reliability - Regular attendance, adequate notice, or the provision of a reliable substitute.

Punctuality - Late arrival is frustrating to a student who is looking forward to his or her weekly ride.

Physical Fitness - Within reason!

Be Relaxed - An anxious volunteer contributes to a nervous rider and a tense mount.

Alertness - Despite your outward relaxation, always anticipate an unexpected emergency.

Empathy - Avoid false sentimentality. It is important to have empathy and genuine regard toward riders.

Horse Knowledge - Knowledge of horses is helpful, but many excellent volunteers have little previous experience.

Patience - Endless patience is necessary to adjust to the often painfully slow movements and reactions of individuals with severe disabilities.

Sensible & Comfortable Clothing - High-heeled shoes or sandals are out. Short boots are protection from mud or the deep footing of the arena.

COMMON SENSE - Always!

VOLUNTEER GENERAL INFORMATION

WHAT TO WEAR

For safety as well as comfort, volunteers should dress in close-fitting clothing. Loose, floppy clothing can get caught and tangled with equipment. Dress in layers that you can shed as you exercise, especially during cooler months. Bring a jacket, even if you don't need it in town -- it's cooler at the barn than you may think! During the summer, be sure you dress coolly and wear a hat that will not fly off. Sunglasses are a big plus in the sunny months, and sunscreen is recommended. You will be doing a lot of walking and possibly some jogging on uneven terrain, so comfortable shoes are important. It hurts when a horse steps on your foot, so make sure your footwear is sturdy as well. Last but not least, avoid dangly earrings and bracelets that can hamper your movements, get pulled off by a rider, or distract the horse.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

If bad weather appears likely, **HORSEPOWER** staff will notify you of any cancellations, but if you have questions, please call the office at 336-931-1424 to confirm the status of your class.

SUBSTITUTES

It is very important to the riders that you make your scheduled classes. If you absolutely must cancel please let the office know as **soon as possible**. While we realize that situations can occur unexpectedly, any advance notice of absence from your scheduled session would be appreciated so we can make arrangements for a substitute. If you would like to be on a substitute list, please sign up at the volunteer orientation or in the office. **Remember, volunteers are the lifeline of HORSEPOWER!**

MINIMUM AGE REQUIREMENT & INSURANCE, LIABILITY RELEASE

No one under the age of 14 is allowed to work directly with our horses and riders due to insurance restrictions; however, underage youths are welcome to clean tack, clean the stable area, help at horse shows, etc. Additionally, working with horses can cause potentially dangerous situations, so we ask that all prospective volunteers sign the liability release on the volunteer form.

DO VOLUNTEERS RIDE HORSEPOWER HORSES?

This is a question many volunteers ask! Because we focus on the needs of our challenged riders and providing a meaningful experience for them, offering lessons or riding time to volunteers would be a strain on the horses and staff.

SIGN-IN PROCEDURES & RECORDING HOURS

Your volunteer time is important to us for funding purposes and recognizing outstanding volunteers. Please be sure to record your hours each time you come. The sign-in notebook is kept on the tack room porch (at the Volunteer Information station.) Include your travel time and round off your hours to the nearest half hour. Volunteer mileage may be tax deductible-check with your tax preparer.

SAFETY RULES

- Staff and volunteers should act in the best interest of the students in terms of safety, respect and privacy.
- No smoking is allowed in the barn area, clubhouse, covered arena or while classes are being conducted.
- All children should be supervised by an adult when on the premises.
- Teachers and volunteers should not bring their children or dogs to class.
- All visiting animals must be leashed or restrained properly.
- ALL mounted persons MUST wear helmets at all times.
- Horses must be properly tacked with all safety equipment.
- Only authorized personnel (instructors, volunteers, and staff) are allowed in the stall area and teaching ring.
- Unauthorized personnel are not allowed in the pastures.
- Observe and obey all safety signs posted.
- All gates should remain closed during classes.
- No illegal activities will be tolerated on the grounds or at any **HORSEPOWER** event, including but not limited to: smoking or drinking by minors, illegal drug use, sexual misconduct or harassment, assault, physical or verbal abuse, animal abuse etc.
- Volunteers should report anything that seems unusual about riders, horses, the facility, the equipment, etc. to the instructor or any **HORSEPOWER** staff member.

HORSEPOWER Therapeutic Learning Center's EMERGENCY ACTION GUIDE

GENERAL INFORMATION:

The keys to handling almost all emergencies are:

- 1) remain calm at all times
- 2) be prepared for action ahead of time
- 3) work as a team
- 4) maintain communication

Being familiar with HORSEPOWER's Emergency Action Guide will help personnel be prepared in an emergency situation. Participation in periodic drills of emergency procedures will also enhance an individual's ability to handle a crisis.

HORSEPOWER's main focus in providing services is to make sure everyone involved (students, volunteers, staff and horses) are afforded the safest conditions possible. Protection of the rider is always the first priority.

In the event of an incident occurring in the ring, it is left to the discretion of the instructor to decide whether or not to dismount riders. If an emergency occurs which affects an individual rider and the sidewalker feels that he/she cannot wait for the instructor's call, he/she may execute an emergency dismount.

When any emergency occurs in the ring (or during a class of mounted riders) the following procedure will be implemented:

- 1) all horses will be halted away from the incident
- 2) all leaders will position themselves in front of the horses
- 3) all sidewalkers will stabilize their riders
- 4) the instructor will appoint (if needed) someone to:
 - *telephone the emergency number and give directions to the center
 - *get the Emergency Medical Release Forms of the rider and give them to the instructor
 - *direct the emergency vehicle to the accident site, asking that **all lights and sirens be turned off to avoid frightening the horses.**

- 5) the instructor will supervise (if needed) the dismounting and evacuation of riders first, then horses from the ring area. The sidewalkers will escort the riders and their caregivers to the **CLUBHOUSE** and the leaders will be responsible for returning the horses to their stalls or other assigned area.
- 6) initial response First Aid will be administered to the injured/ill rider by the instructor or other qualified personnel until more advanced medical care arrives if needed.

If an emergency occurs in another area (i.e. the stall area), the instructor or other trained personnel will direct the uninjured parties to the **CLUBHOUSE** and appropriate action (as indicated in “emergency in the ring section”) will be taken to assist the victim. If an emergency occurs in the clubhouse, the **HORSEPOWER** staff facilitating the activity will direct volunteers, students, caregivers, etc.

When an emergency occurs, **REMAIN CALM. SURVEY THE SCENE** to assess any other potential dangers. Call 911 whenever the situation is more than you can safely handle or if you are unsure about what to do.

Telephones are located in the **HORSEPOWER** office and in the club house. Emergency information is posted near each telephone, in the feed room, in the clubhouse, on the outside door of the clubhouse and in the covered arena.

Instructors are to wear their cell phones while in the ring.

The following is a list of situations during which 911 should be called before any other action is taken:

- Cardiac arrest / chest pain / possible heart attack
- Respiratory arrest / breathing difficulty
- Unconsciousness
- Drowning
- Electrocution
- Head / Neck injury
- Severe bleeding
- Choking
- Paralysis
- Seizures of unknown origin or of a prolonged nature
- Critical burns

- Obvious fractures
- Multiple injuries
- Poisonous snake bite

When 911 is called, be prepared to give the dispatcher the following information:

- location of the emergency-**8001 Leabourne Road, Colfax, NC 27235**
- the telephone number you are calling from (**HP 931-1424**) and your name
- the nature of the emergency (i.e. heart attack, possible spinal cord injury)
- the victim's condition (i.e. conscious, breathing) and the First Aid measures which are being administered (i.e. CPR, pressure to control bleeding)

An appointed person should locate a copy of the victim's **Authorization for Emergency Treatment** form and any other pertinent health-related forms to accompany the victim to the emergency room/ hospital. The instructor will notify the parents/ caretakers indicated on the forms or will designate another staff member or volunteer to do the notification.

After appropriate action has been taken, an **Incident Report** should be filled out by the instructor or staff member who was involved. Details of the incident, actions taken and interviews with 3 witnesses should be included.

FIRE PROCEDURES

- 1) Remove everyone quickly from the area and have them assemble in the emergency meeting place for a head count. The primary emergency meeting place is the **CLUBHOUSE**. If the clubhouse is the site of the fire, then the designated meeting place will be in the covered arena.
- 2) Call 911 from a safe location.
- 3) Remove horses only if able to do so without risking injury to self or others. If possible, place halters and leads on the horses, cover their eyes and lead them out of the stalls. Assemble horses on the hill pasture at the back of the property. Be sure to shut and chain the gate after delivering horses to the pasture. If barn cats are in sight and reach, try to catch them and place them in clubhouse (do so only without risking injury to self and others.)

* Fire extinguishers are located in the tack room, in the clubhouse, in the office, in the covered arena and in the hay barn. Only attempt to extinguish a fire if it is small and you have a clear route of escape. Aim the extinguisher at the base of the flame and make a sweeping motion across the flame base.

* If an individual should become engulfed by fire, try to extinguish the flame by using the “drop and roll” method. Do not run or let the victim run. If available, use water and/or blankets to aid in extinguishing the fire.

TORNADOES, HIGH WIND, LIGHTNING, HAIL

If a tornado or bad storm is predicted, all classes and activities will be cancelled. If a storm arises somewhat unexpectedly and there is time to travel to a safe shelter, all nonessential personnel should be directed to go home or to the closest designated shelter. Other personnel should meet in the clubhouse for further instructions from the head staff member.

If a storm occurs suddenly while students are riding or are in the ring, the instructor will direct the leaders to “hold hard” to their horses and speak reassuringly to them while the students are dismounted. Everyone will seek appropriate shelter. People will be directed to the clubhouse, trying to minimize exposure in open high places and trees especially if lightning and high winds are involved. If it is necessary to use the covered area as shelter, stay in the center of the arena and away from the metal structure. Leaders will try to separate the students from the horses as well as possible when having to share the same shelter.

SITUATIONS THAT FRIGHTEN HORSES

If low flying planes, road traffic, insect bites or stings, or other events frighten horses while students are mounted, the instructor will have the leaders “hold hard” to the horses and speak reassuringly to them. Everyone should be prepared to dismount students if an emergency arises and the instructor does not have time to come and dismount the rider.

VEHICLE / EQUIPMENT ACCIDENTS

If someone is struck by a vehicle, anyone approaching the scene should assess the scene for safety before proceeding (i.e. all vehicles in the area are

in “park” with brakes set and engines off, front end loaders on tractors should be placed in lowered position, traffic in area should be stopped, etc). Victim should be assessed using standard First Aid/CPR procedures. Activate EMS if necessary.

EARTHQUAKE

If an earthquake occurs, the instructor will stop the class. The leaders will “hold hard” to their horses and speak reassuringly to them while the students are dismounted. The students will be taken to the center of the arena to wait for further instructions from the instructor.

DISEASE PRECAUTIONS

Universal precautions should be employed when contacting all blood and bodily fluids-see included procedures.

Please be familiar with the following emergency procedures:

Exposure Control Plan

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

There are some universal precautions that we suggest all individuals take. They apply to situations involving blood and blood components.

- Semen and vaginal secretions; Fluids: cerebrospinal (brain/spine), synovial (joint), peritoneal (body cavity), pericardial (heart), amniotic, body tissue, pleural (lung), saliva from a bite

Situations of less urgency include: feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, vomitus. These assume that no visible blood is present. We would still advise taking general infection control.

STANDARD UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS INCLUDE:

1. Avoid direct contact with blood or other body fluids. Use latex gloves and/or other protective clothing as a protective barrier. Use latex gloves when cleaning up blood or other body fluids. Wash hands and skin surfaces immediately and thoroughly after potential exposure incidents. Remove and launder contaminated clothing.
2. Wash hands frequently, using soap, warm water, and a fresh paper towel to dry. Lather hands with soap for 10-15 seconds before rinsing. Wash hands before eating, after visiting the restroom, and before and after donning gloves.
3. Cover open cuts, sores, or abrasions with sterile dressing or bandage, or other protective barrier.
4. Clean up spills in a timely fashion, using appropriate disinfectant solution, found under the sink in the clubhouse.
5. Decontaminate mops, brooms and towels used in cleaning up blood or body fluid spills by soaking in health code standard cleaning solution, towels should then be laundered.
6. Decontaminate bathroom facilities and other high-risk exposure areas with appropriate health code standard cleaning solution.
7. Maintain individual personal hygiene items, they should not be shared.
8. If it is necessary to perform CPR, it is advisable to use a mouthpiece or mask.

RESPONDING TO AN INCIDENT

Incidents may arise during classes that may put us at risk of possible exposure to blood and body fluids. Instructors are expected to respond to any instances that may occur and provide First Aid assistance until a more qualified individual arrives. Because of this expectation, **HORSEPOWER** recommends that we stay prepared for such occasions. We have small blue waist packs that have in them: latex gloves and tissues. It is strongly recommended that each instructor have one of these packs readily available when teaching a lesson. There are First Aid kits in the covered arena, clubhouse, and tack room. These kits have more extensive first aid supplies - make sure you know the contents and report any usage.

SIDEWALKER REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDLINES

REQUIREMENTS

A sidewalker must:

- ü Attend a volunteer orientation and training
- ü Demonstrate proper sidewalking techniques for difficult types of students
- ü Demonstrate proper technique assisting with mounting and dismounting
- ü Demonstrate proper emergency dismount
- ü Be willing to try to communicate effectively with riders
- ü Be able to walk for 45 minutes
- ü Be able to appropriately respond to the instructor's directions

GUIDELINES

*The SIDEWALKER(s) help the rider with balance and reinforce instructions in the lesson. If there are two sidewalkers, the inside sidewalker (one closest to the center of the ring) will clarify instructions. Too many people talking to the rider can be confusing.

*Different methods of support are used with individual riders, depending on their needs. The instructor will determine which method to use. For example:

1. Place your arm that is closest to the rider across the rider's thigh and grasp the front edge of the saddle.
2. Hold the rider's safety belt to assist with balance. This is done while supporting the legs.
3. Walk beside the rider's leg to assist when needed (i.e. at the trot or to reinforce directions.)

*Do not offer any more support than the rider needs.

* If a rider has a leader and one sidewalker, the sidewalker should walk on the right.

*Observe the rider with your front or side vision at all times. Never become so relaxed that you are not totally aware of the rider, horse, leader, instructor, and activities around you.

*Be sure not to lean on the horse or rider since this pressure may unbalance the rider or irritate the horse and/or rider.

*When the rider is using body and leg aids and does not need to be supported, do not touch the horse, saddle, or pad since this may interfere with the aid applied by the rider.

*You may need to reinforce the instructor's directions, assist the rider in carrying out instructions, or direct the rider's attention to the task.

*Listen to the instructor's directions so you can be ready to reinforce when necessary, BUT allow the rider plenty of time to process the information before you begin to assist. For example, if the instructor says, "Pull on the right rein towards me," and the student seems confused, gently tap the right hand and say "right."

*Talking to a rider while having a lesson is not recommended since it interferes with the communication between the rider and instructor. Many riders with disabilities have difficulty focusing on instruction. If a rider does need individual attention, the instructor will inform you of this before the lesson. Talking to the riders while on a trail ride, however, is not only allowed but recommended!

*Refrain from talking to the other sidewalker or leader during the lesson unless it has to do with the rider's position, balance, or horse. Be sure that you do not talk with other teams as they pass you unless you see a safety issue the other team does not see. Any unnecessary talking distracts the rider, shows disrespect for the riding lesson, and diverts the attention of the team.

*Riders who need moderate support, especially support to the back, will need more attention. Sidewalkers should be specifically instructed as how to support their rider during mounting. Be sure you are at ease with the method of support, both mentally and physically, before moving into the riding area.

*Little strokes and tickles on the rider's shoulders or back encourage good posture. Be careful not to startle the rider.

*Touch your finger and thumb around the safety belt to support the rider rather than holding tight. You could accidentally pull the rider off balance as your arm tires.

*Switch sides of the horse if you become tired, however, inform the leader first, allow the horse to come to a stop and switch sides one at a time. **Never leave a rider unsupported!**

YOUTH PARTNER / MENTOR

Key Responsibility:

To provide students with supervision and support during all HORSEPOWER activities.

Report promptly to scheduled activities, giving at least 24 hours notice of changes to agreed schedules.

Mentors are asked to maintain an open mind and display patience and a positive attitude towards all participants as together you explore Life Skills instruction and related equine assisted activities.

In addition to mentoring during Life Skills instruction, we ask that you choose to participate in one or more of the following areas:

1. Assist in the grooming, tacking & handling of horses prior to the horse segment.
2. Serve as a horse leader during the arena activities.
3. Serve as a sidewalker during the arena activities.

Work as a team with the student, instructor and horse to create an environment that fosters self-esteem & self-worth in the student.

Be a model of good character, integrity and professionalism, while ensuring student, personal and horse safety and encouraging student success.

Each mentor must complete the same prerequisites required of all HORSEPOWER volunteers interested in working with any therapeutic or Equine Facilitated Experiential Learning class prior to assignment:

You must attend...

HORSEPOWER Volunteer Orientation which includes:

Volunteer Sidewalker Training

Emergency Procedures

Leader Training (if working directly with the horses)

EQUINE FACILITATED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

What's Your Role as a Volunteer?

You believe that kids can be given information that will give the power to create different outcomes. You refuse to see them as helpless victims. You know that bad things happen yet some of our greatest strengths come from difficult experiences. You can display caring & empathy vs. sympathy for the kids.

You help facilitate small & large group discussions and act as a mentor or Big Brother or Big Sister. You offer clues and hints yet you understand the value of the kids coming up with their own answers and ideas.

You help riders to complete tasks and assignments when in the arena. You encourage their participation and you offer support for those anxious about being with a horse.

You embrace the concept and the need for confidentiality in what is said by everyone in the group, adults & students alike

You keep your relationships professional in terms of not sharing your phone numbers or e-mail with students. They have HORSEPOWER's phone number and address and we can forward messages to you while protecting your privacy.

Interactions should be age appropriate. Kids like to hug yet because of abuse or insecurities it may not be something we should be doing. Always check with the students' group home staff to make sure it's appropriate. A handshake is often times the most appropriate thing to do yet we do hug when it's OK with staff and then only when you are OK with it.

Treat the kids like you would your own son or daughter! Re-direct them as necessary in courteous ways.

Don't over-share personal stories as it can cause a conflict with how these kids may be working through therapy with their own psychiatrist or psychologist.

If you hear something that alarms you from one of the kids or it's perhaps too personal for our group session you can ask them to take that back to their group home staff or counselor and redirect back to what we are working on. After class let me know your concerns and I'll make sure the group home staff and the groups psychologist knows what was brought up. It often times results in some timely and effective one-on-one therapy sessions for the kids.

LEADER REQUIREMENTS & GUIDELINES

REQUIREMENTS

A leader must:

- Ü Have attended sidewalker and leader trainings
- Ü Demonstrate proper leading technique
- Ü Be able to control the horse at a standstill, walk and trot
- Ü Be able to increase/decrease the length of the horse's stride at walk and trot
- Ü Be able to walk for 45 minutes and jog around half the arena
- Ü Have the instructor's confidence in the ability to control the horse in an emergency situation
- Ü Be able to appropriately respond to the instructor's directions
- Ü Know that horses have personalities and must be treated as individuals

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Ü As a leader your responsibilities include:
- Ü Assisting in preparing the horse for class
- Ü Making sure the horse has all tack requested by the instructor
- Ü Taking the horse to the arena
- Ü Waiting with the horse while students get ready
- Ü Listening to and following the instructor's directions
- Ü Taking the horse back to the barn
- Ü Untacking & returning tack to the appropriate place
- Ü Putting the horse in the stall or pasture

GUIDELINES

*The LEADER(s) is responsible for and constantly aware of the horse.

*Hold the lead rope 3-12 inches from the snap unless otherwise instructed to allow for the natural motion of the horse's head. Hold extra rope in your left hand, doubling the excess back and forth across your palm. **Never** wrap it around your hand.

*The leader should not engage in conversation with the rider or other volunteers unless it refers to the lesson.

*Always lead on the left side of the horse, between the horse's head and shoulder, holding the lead line.

*Make sure the lead rope is between the reins, not over them.

*Keep a minimum of 2-horses length distance between your horse and the horse in front of you.

*Make turns softly. Allow space for sidewalkers when next to a fence or obstacle.

*When the horse is stopped, the leader stands directly in front of the horse, facing it, to keep the horse stationary unless otherwise instructed. Allow the horse to move his head and stretch, but keep him calm and quiet by petting him or speaking softly to him, only as needed.

*To halt, say "whoa" or "ho." If the horse does not stop, tug slightly backward on the lead, then release. If the horse does not respond immediately, repeat with several small tugs.

*Students are urged to control their horses to the maximum of their abilities. A horse leader must never take the place of the student, but should be there to assist as directed to keep the horse in control. Check with your instructor before the lesson regarding your rider's level of ability in controlling his mount.

*When the rider is controlling the horse, allow a little more slack in the lead (12 inches or as directed by the instructor) so that you will not influence the horse unless this becomes necessary for safety reasons. The horse may become confused if he feels a tug both on the lead line and the reins and may not attend to the reins as he should.

*When changing pace, have the horse follow your pace rather than you following the horse's. Move from a walk to a fast walk to a trot and from trot down to fast walk, then to walk. This will make the transition smooth and will not throw the rider off balance.

*Be sure to hold the horse's head straight, especially at the trot. This is particularly true when you are on the inside, between the horse and the center of the ring.

*Pulling the horse will distort his gait and make him move in a crooked manner; the rider will become unevenly seated and lose the rhythm of the gait. Even steps of the horse are crucial to maintain the rider's balance. Short tugs work better than a steady pull on a pokey horse.

*If your horse becomes bored during the lesson and starts nibbling or nipping at you, hold onto the side of the halter and inform the instructor after class.

*NEVER hit a horse.

*If a horse steps on your foot, count "101, 102" while leaning against his shoulder to unbalance him. This way you will not frighten the horse or rider with an "OUCH." Remember, the horse probably does not know he is on your foot.

*Always keep the horse away from any possibly dangerous obstacles such as mud holes, broken fences, trash, etc.

*If a horse should shy or suddenly pull, release the lead in your right hand, but maintain contact with your left hand on the other end of the lead to control the horse. When a rider is mounted on a horse in this situation, never totally let go of the lead in any situation.

*When a horse is frightened by an object, let him stop, face the object, look at it, and sniff it (don't let the horse spin and try to flee). Give the horse time to overcome his fear. Reassure him and help to calm him in a slow, soft voice.

DO NOT...

- Wrap the lead rope around your hand – You could lose fingers!
- Drape the lead rope over your shoulder – You will get spun like a top!
- Hang or excessively pull down on the lead rope – This can irritate and annoy the horse.
- Walk ahead of the horse – You are not an effective leader if you cannot see what the horse is doing. In addition pulling the horse corrupts their movement.
- Walk too far back – You will get in the way of the sidewalker. You may also give the horse a better chance of darting out ahead and dragging you.

PROTOCOL/METHOD/TECHNIQUE ~ DISCUSS & DEMONSTRATE

1. Halting

- The leader says “whoa.” If the horse does not stop, tug slightly backwards on the lead, then release. If the horse does not respond immediately, repeat tugs.
- When the horse stops, the leader steps in front of the horse and stands facing the horse’s head.

2. Mounting and Dismounting

- Wait for the instructor to signal for you, before you approach the block/ramp.
- Line up the horse so that it will walk straight in to the ramp/block as close to the side where the student will be mounting as possible.
- Allow the horse to move his head a little – they must not feel too restricted when mounting or dismounting.

3. Asking the horse to walk (demonstrate the method of exiting the ramp)

- Step to the leading position.
- Wait for the student to indicate walk.
- Tell the horse “walk.”
- If they hesitate begin walking forward and tug on the lead rope.

4. Turning

- Wait for the student to indicate the direction-help out as indicated by the instructor.
- Make turns wide and sweeping, not tight, unless the activity calls for it because tight turns unbalance the horse and therefore unbalance the rider
- Make room for the sidewalkers.

5. Lengthening and shortening stride
 - To lengthen stride, use “chirping/clucking,” small tugs and increasing your own stride.
 - To shorten stride slow your stride and use small tugs. Shortening the stride is not just slowing down, it is compressing the horse.
6. Trotting
 - Wait for the instructor to check the girth and for the sidewalkers to switch to a thigh hold.
 - Urge the horse forward by tugs on the lead, “chirping/clucking” and saying “trot.”
7. As the student becomes more independent
 - Allow the rider a little slack in the lead line, 12 inches at the most.
 - Make sure you are still in the proper place (between horse’s head and shoulder.)
 - Let the rider make mistakes.
 - Try not to give the horse conflicting messages.

HORSE PERSONALITIES AND MISBEHAVING ~ DISCUSS

- You need to know the horses you are leading, the only way to get to know them is to spend time with them.
- Never harshly discipline horses when the riders are mounted.
- Ask an instructor or staff member before disciplining any horse.
- Report all occurrences, or odd behaviors to the instructor or staff member.

What to do if a horse bites you?

- Alert the instructor and hold the side of the halter (making sure your fingers can not get caught.)

What to do if a horse pushes you with his nose as you come to a halt or while you are standing?

- Hold both sides of the halter, take a step away from the horse and use lead hand to keep the horse where he is. **Do not encourage “playing.”**

What to do if the horse paws?

- Alert the instructor. Pawing means the horse is frustrated about something, usually standing still, the horse may need to take an extra lap or circle.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS FOR LEADERS

In an emergency situation your job as a leader is to care for and control the horse.

SPOOKING

If the horse is spooking at something:

1. Stop.
2. Alert the instructor.
3. Reassure the horse with a gentle voice and rubs.
4. Give them a chance to observe what's scaring them.
5. Wait for directions from the instructor.

BOLTING/SPINNING

If the horse is bolting forward:

1. Stay with the horse.
2. Try to turn the horse towards you- turning the head will help stop the bolt.
3. Turn around and face the problem.
4. Alert the instructor.

If the horse spins away from something:

1. Stay with the horse.
2. Turn and face problem.
3. Alert the instructor.

PULLING BACK

If a horse pulls back when tied during grooming and tacking:

GET OUT OF THE WAY – LEAVE THE HORSE ALONE TO FIGURE IT OUT!

If a horse pulls back during class:

1. **DO NOT PULL BACK!**
2. GO with the horse and try to put some slack in the lead rope.
3. Alert the instructor.

PRACTICE

1. Walking and halting
2. Increasing and decreasing stride at the walk
3. Turning
4. Trotting
5. Mounting

MOUNTING PROCEDURES

During mounting, leaders hold the horses in the designated holding area, while sidewalkers stay with the riders and wait in the designated rider area to be called by the instructor. Mounting is conducted by the instructor, or someone trained in mounting techniques; volunteers assist as directed.

There are two types of mounting:

RAMP MOUNT

For riders using wheelchairs or otherwise not able to climb stairs.

BLOCK MOUNT

For more independent riders or small riders in order to reach the stirrup level.

When using the mounting ramp or block the LEADER should:

1. Approach ramp or block in the direction requested by the instructor, turning to face the horse just upon entering.
2. Position the horse close to the side from which the mounting will take place.
3. Do not put pressure on the lead rope; this may cause the horse to back up. If the horse should back up, tug gently to stop the horse. If he does not stop, do not pull; simply release pressure on the lead and go with him, he will stop.
4. Allow the horse to relax, holding him quietly and not restricting his head.
5. Once the rider is mounted and the cue is given by both the instructor and rider to “walk on,” guide the horse out slowly and quietly while still facing him. Once the horse is clear of the ramp or block, walk into the arena and stop and wait for the instructor for final adjustments. Sidewalkers join the rider so that support can be given while the instructor adjusts the stirrups.
6. Lead the horse slowly and quietly from the mounting area once the rider has said, “walk on.”

When using the mounting ramp or block the SIDEWALKER(S) should:

1. Position yourself at the end of the ramp or block when called by the instructor.
2. Support the rider as directed by instructor.

GUIDELINES DURING THE RIDING LESSON

WHAT ACTUALLY TAKES PLACE DURING A RIDING LESSON?

One, two, or three volunteers and an instructor can work with a group of riders in an enclosed ring, open field, or stable area for any of several purposes. The rider may learn special riding skills, care of the horse, or how to saddle a horse. The rider may play games on horseback, perform gymnastic movements on the back of a horse, learn dressage, or go for a trail ride. A physical therapist may be consulted and offer “hands-on” assistance in positioning and recommending activities for riders. Each rider will have individual goals to work toward. As a volunteer, you will be involved in every aspect of the lesson from grooming and tacking, through the class itself, and cleanup afterwards.

PREPARING FOR CLASS

It is important to arrive **30 minutes before class if you are a leader** and **15 minutes before class if you are a sidewalker** in order to assist in grooming and tacking horses and receive your volunteer assignments. Some of our riders come early to groom and tack their horses with your assistance. It is especially important that you are timely for these classes.

DO NOT FORGET TO:

1. Record your hours on the sign-in sheet and pick up your nametag.
2. Check the board for horses and tack to be used.
3. Put the horse in the grooming and tacking area.

If you are new to working around horses and are unsure about working with a horse on your own, please ask for assistance. Do what you feel comfortable and competent doing - it's ok to ask for help. If you are uncomfortable, the horses will sense your tension.

SAFETY RULES

1. Do not duck under the neck of a tied horse because he may be startled. For safety - go around.
2. When going around a horse, stay close to his tail and keep your hand on his rump.
3. Do NOT kneel around a horse. It's hard to get out of the way quickly. Bend from the waist instead.

BEFORE CLASS BEGINS

Leaders - Check to make sure your horse is properly tacked and tighten the girth as necessary. Make sure you have the appropriate lead for your horse.

Sidewalkers - Check to see that your rider is prepared to ride. All riders **must** wear a safety helmet. Helmets will be fitted to each rider the first day of class and the sizes will be recorded. Check to make sure that the rider's helmet fits properly and that the chin strap is fastened. Safety belts are also worn by some riders. If your rider wears a safety belt, make sure it fits properly on the outside of jackets. Sidewalkers are to stay with their riders while the horses are led to the mounting area.

THE RIDING LESSON

1. Leaders and sidewalkers should work together.

Keep the horse far enough away from the fence so as not to "trap" the outside sidewalker. Keep the conversation very minimal so that the rider can listen to the instructor.

2. Volunteers should aid the rider only if needed.

Riders need to develop independence, but not at the expense of good safety.

3. Keep a safe distance from other horses.

Maintain a minimum of two horses length between you and the horse in front of you. Make a circle or cut across the arena to avoid getting too close. Advise the rider and sidewalkers before making any unexpected turns.

4. Line up the horses in the arena with their tails to the rail and heads facing the middle of the arena.

5. Riders should walk in **FRONT** of their horse and leader when going from one side to the other, **not** behind the horse.

6. Always stay with your horse and rider, unless otherwise instructed.

7. Horses should stand still when asked to stop.

The leader should stand in front of the horse's head, facing the horse. Try not to hold the horse's head too tight, this is a good time for the horse to relax.

8. Horses should not make any quick movements.

Make a gradual transition to the trot and back to the walk. Avoid making a transition on a turn. Make large circles instead of small ones. Do not make quick starts or stops.

9. Horses should keep their heads level.

If the head is too high, the horse will hollow his back and unbalance the rider. If the head is too low, the horse will pull the rider forward.

10. If it is at all possible, your team should come to the center of the ring to stop so as not to create a traffic jam on the rail.

11. ASK THE LEADER TO STOP THE HORSE IF:

1. The rider is off balance and cannot regain it while the horse is moving.
2. The saddle pad has slipped or the girth is loose.
3. The stirrups need adjustment.
4. The rider's helmet needs adjustment.
5. The rider is fatigued, in pain, or needs to stop for other reasons.
6. You need to change sides or are having some difficulty and cannot carry out your job in comfort or efficiency. When changing sides, have one volunteer change at a time. Never leave the rider unsupported!

SPECIAL NOTES:

Falls off horses are rare, but they can happen. Don't panic! Leaders stop all horses, and each volunteer tends to their rider or horse. The instructor is responsible for the fallen student. Safety is important, and we need to take our jobs very seriously, but we are also here to have fun! Don't leave your horse and rider to help others. The instructor will ask for help as appropriate. Be patient with your riders. Give them time and a half to respond, to try, and to do the task. The rewards, no matter how small or large, make your volunteer work very worthwhile. Without volunteers, it would be impossible to make this program a reality. THANK YOU!

AFTER CLASS

Leader Responsibilities:

1. Return the horse to the tacking area. Put it in a crosstie or use a quick-release tie under the roof in the grooming area. If the horse is to be used for the next class, loosen the girth. **NEVER TIE A HORSE BY ITS BRIDLE or REINS.** If the horse should pull back, the bridle could be broken or the horse injured by the bit.
2. If the horse is not to be used again remove the bridle before tying. Then remove the saddle, brush the saddle area and behind the horse's ears, and pick out the hooves.
3. Return the horse to appropriate pasture or stall (be sure to only put a horse where an instructor or staff member tells you).
4. Wipe off the bit with towel and place bridle on its rack. Return saddle to the saddle rack, pads and quilts to their racks, and girth to labeled area by size. If saddle pads are wet place them on the porch rail to dry.

Sidewalker Responsibilities:

1. After dismounting, take your rider back to the helmet area to put away the helmet and safety belt.
2. Return rider to parents or responsible party.
3. Assist in un-tacking horses.

GETTING TO KNOW THE RIDER WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

GENERAL APPROACH AND INTERACTION

It is important to remember that every child or adult is an individual and wants to be treated with that understanding, regardless of having a disability or not. Each has his own learning rate, style of learning, unique personality, and temperament. One must always look beyond the disability into the person. Provide them an enriched experience with warmth and a favorable environment in which to learn and grow. All people, disabled or not, want to feel that they are not different from the rest of their fellow man.

HOW TO RELATE TO PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Being around people with disabilities may be a new experience for you. You may be overwhelmed at first with things you have never seen or do not understand. This is natural for most people. Allow yourself time to get used to being with the person with a disability. If you are uncomfortable working with someone with disabilities at first you may want to do jobs that are not in direct contact with the riders. Feel free to talk to a staff member about this. This is a common feeling. If working directly with our riders is a hardship for you, consider other volunteer opportunities with **HORSEPOWER**.

SUGGESTIONS TO HELP YOU RELATE TO A PERSON WITH A DISABILITY:

- Be yourself.
- Relax. Let the rider put you at ease if you do not know what to say.
- Explore mutual interest in a friendly way. For starters, talk about the horse and whether the person has ridden before.
- Speak directly to the person with the disability. Your attention should be on them and not on someone with them.
- Children and adults will be glad to talk about themselves. They prefer to have someone ask them about their disability instead of staring at them. They would rather discuss other topics like TV shows, sports, foods and other things we are all interested in.
- Use conversation and social behavior that you might use in any new situation.
- Offer assistance when asked or when the situation obviously requires it.

- Do not overwhelm the person with help or insist upon helping when they are managing alone.
- Do not hinder the riders' ability to expand their skills and independence, even when their movements may appear awkward to you.
- Respect the person's right to independence and their request for the kind of assistance they need.
- Be guided by the wishes of the person with the disability. Talk about the disability if it comes up naturally, but don't pry.
- Appreciate what the rider can do. Remember that the difficulties the person may be facing could stem from society's attitudes and barriers rather than from the disability itself. People with disabilities generally do not view themselves to be as handicapped as society perceives them to be.
- Be considerate of the extra time it might take a person with a disability to accomplish something or respond to something. Be patient.
- Let the person set the pace in walking and talking.
- Do not be afraid to say to either a child or an adult, "I'm sorry, I cannot understand you. Please say it again."
- Be sensitive to separating a rider from his wheelchair, crutches, or braces unless asked.
- Communicate with your heart and see each person from his/her heart.
- Acknowledge that each person's potential is found in the present moment.

CHOOSING WORDS WITH DIGNITY

When talking about a person with a disability, make reference to the person first, not the disability.

AVOID: afflicted with blindness

USE: person who is blind

AVOID: crippled

USE: person with physical disabilities, person who is physically challenged.

AVOID: Stricken with...

USE: Person who has...

AVOID: confined or restricted to a wheelchair, crutches, etc.

USE: person who uses wheelchair, crutches, etc.

The preferred terms focus attention on the uniqueness and worth of the individual rather than emphasizing the disabling condition. The connotation of “dis-ability” is very important to avoid. Words such as defective, deformed, invalid, lame, maimed, spastic, and cripples imply pity, infirmity, and a general lack of competence. People are neither invalid nor defective. People aren’t spastic, muscles are. By choosing words carefully, positive images can be conveyed about persons with disabilities.

DESCRIPTION OF DISABILITIES

The following is a brief, non-medical description of some of the disabilities and conditions of **HORSEPOWER** riders. This is not intended as a comprehensive explanation of specific disabilities but rather as a general overview, along with an explanation of the benefits of therapeutic riding.

CEREBRAL PALSY: Speech, hearing, vision, learning and/or memory deficits may be present; however, normal intelligence is generally not affected unless further brain damage has occurred. There are three main types of cerebral palsy:

1. **Spastic:** Occurs in approximately 70% of all cases. It may affect motor function in one or more limbs. The muscles stay flexed and tense and the facial muscle involvement may affect speech. Balance is poor.

2. **Athetoid:** Occurs in approximately 20% of all cases. There is constant movement in a disorganized, uncontrolled manner. Often resembles a worm-like movement. The use of arms and hands for support, grasp, and holding on are inadequate. It appears more obvious during periods of emotional tension. Speech functions are usually involved.

3. **Ataxic:** Occurs in approximately 10% of all cases. Weakness, poor coordination, and difficulty with quick and fine motor movements result in loose, “rag-doll” appearance.

BENEFITS: Riding may improve balance, posture and the ability to relax. It also strengthens weakened muscles.

DOWN SYNDROME: Also called Trisomy 21, Trisomy G. It is one of the more easily and widely identified hereditary disabilities. Down Syndrome individuals have a mean IQ of about 50 and are physically and mentally developmentally delayed.

BENEFITS: Riding improves expressive and receptive language skills, gross and fine motor skills, balance, posture, and coordination.

EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES: “ED” - congenital or acquired syndrome often compounded by learning and/or physical disabilities incorporating numerous other pathologies. In general, emotionally disturbed individuals have trouble coping with everyday life situations and interpersonal relationships. Behaviors such as short attention span, avoidance, aggression,

autism, paranoia, or schizophrenia may be exhibited.

BENEFITS: Riding can provide structure to a disorganized thought pattern, increase feelings of self-confidence and self-awareness, and provide appropriate social therapy.

HEARING IMPAIRMENT: Hearing impairment may vary from mild to severe and may be congenital or acquired. True deafness is defined as hearing loss in both ears severe enough to prevent communication through the ear even with amplification. Communication with the deaf may involve lip reading, finger spelling (the manual alphabet), or sign language.

BENEFITS: Riding may increase self-confidence, balance, posture, and coordination. It also provides appropriate social outlets and interactions.

LEARNING DISABILITIES: “LD” - Learning disabled is a catch-all phrase for individuals who have problems with processing, sequencing, and problem solving, but who appear to have otherwise normal intelligence skills. New learning generally takes time to be integrated and may need to be reviewed frequently to ensure retention.

BENEFITS: Riding may increase attention span, group activity skills, cooperation, receptive and expressive language skills, posture, and coordination.

MENTAL RETARDATION: “MR” – a genetic defect where the individual develops below normal rate in terms of intelligence. It may also involve delayed physical and emotional development.

BENEFITS: Riding helps increase group activity skills, balance, coordination, posture, gross and fine motor skills, and eye-hand coordination.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS: “MS” - slowly progressive central nervous system disease usually occurring in adults between 20-40 years of age and more frequently in women than men. Symptoms and manifestations include weakness in one or more limbs, visual impairment, minor gait disturbances, weakness on one or both sides of the body, emotional highs and lows, and inattention. MS runs a course of progression with periods of remission.

There is no known cure for MS.

BENEFITS: Riding maintains and strengthens weak muscle and provides highly recommended opportunities for emotional therapy.

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY: “MD” – a hereditary disorder usually appearing in infancy or early childhood. It is characterized by progressive skeletal and muscle deterioration. There is no known cure for this disease, which often severely shortens life. People with MD are easily fatigued, especially when it is cold or hot.

BENEFITS: Riding may slow muscle tone degeneration and maintain muscle function. Riding provides appropriate opportunities for social interactions and elevating emotional depressions.

SPINA BIFIDA: congenital defect where, at birth, there is incomplete closure of the spinal column. There are usually varying degrees of paralysis of the lower limbs; however, life expectancies are not necessarily shortened. **BENEFITS:** Riding improves balance, posture, and muscle strength in the affected limbs.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY: “TBI” - Head injuries cause more disabilities in people under the age of 50 than any other neurological cause. Injuries may be closed head (CHI), where inter-cranial bleeding causes pressure, or open penetration where profuse bleeding and open wounds ensure permanent damage. Deficits may include gross and fine motor skills, cognitive disabilities such as long and short-term memory functions, visual-limitations, speech, balance, and psychological alterations. **BENEFITS:** Riding improves balance, posture, gross and fine motor skills, and cognitive deficits such as sequencing and processing.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT: Visual deficits may range from severely limited to total, and may be caused by congenital defect, traumatic illness, or injury. If onset is from birth to five years, the person affected has no visual memory. Impairments occurring after five years are accompanied by memories of people, places, and things. A person is blind only if he has total loss of vision. If some vision is present, then the person is visually impaired. **BENEFITS:** Riding helps orient the body in space and improves balance, posture, coordination, and self-awareness. The voice of the instructor is a point of orientation in space for the rider; therefore, unnecessary sounds should be avoided, as they are a distraction.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Several opportunities are available for those volunteers wishing to do more than (or instead of) volunteering as leaders and sidewalkers. If volunteering at the Riding Center does not work out, but you want to promote our cause, consider volunteering for one of the “non-horsey” projects. All volunteers are encouraged to spread the word about **HORSEPOWER** to friends, clubs, and organizations that would be interested in providing financial support, volunteers, or riders. If you have a contact you would like us to follow up on, tell a staff member, and he or she will get you in touch with the right person.

HORSE-RELATED OPPORTUNITIES

SCHOOLING: Our horses need periodic “tune ups” to keep them interested and responsive in their work in the therapeutic setting. Experienced riders capable of performing elementary dressage movements (leg yields, turn on the forehand, etc.), getting the horse in a round frame and bending through turns, in addition to smooth gait transitions, are eligible.

INSTRUCTOR TRAINING: **HORSEPOWER** can always use NARHA certified instructors to offer more hours of therapeutic classes.

ASSORTED SERVICES/PROJECTS: Tack cleaning and repair, carpentry (building jumps, shelves, etc.), electrical or plumbing services, poster design, and taking pictures are just some of the opportunities currently available. Workdays are held periodically, generally prior to a special event or before a session, to give the Riding Center and the horses a major “sprucing up.”

“NON HORSEY” OPPORTUNITIES

FUND RAISING: Interested individuals are welcome to join any of the following committees active in meeting the financial needs of **HORSEPOWER**.

CORPORATE CHALLENGE: Identify and enlist corporations, businesses, and interested groups willing to participate in/support our Silent Auction & Gala in February, our student Ride-A-Thon in June and our Ride-A-Thon in October.

CORPORATE CAMPAIGN: Identify and solicit corporations and small

businesses for general contributions and assist in follow up and recognition of corporate donors.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS: Identify and cultivate clubs and organizations in the community willing to offer financial assistance and/or volunteers. Contact horse clubs for funding, exhibition rides, tack donations, etc. Establish relationships with large horse clubs for club-sponsored special events benefiting **HORSEPOWER**.

FOUNDATIONS & GRANTS: Help identify foundations or grants with a potential for donating to **HORSEPOWER**.

GIFTS IN KIND: Contact local businesses or individuals who are willing to donate goods or services, thereby reducing **HORSEPOWER**'s expenses. Examples include: office equipment and supplies, horse tack, food, hay and building supplies.

SPECIAL EVENTS: Help raise money, coordinate food, organize volunteers, obtain equipment, make posters, and arrange publicity or entertainment for various occasions.

LONG RANGE PLANNING: Provide your insight and expertise to promote a financially successful program for the next decade. Help identify possible successful special events and ways of balancing activity levels more evenly. Identify new rider groups and evaluate marketing and communications.

PUBLIC RELATIONS/MARKETING: Submit periodic press releases as needed. Obtain media coverage, striving for higher community visibility. Assist in writing proposals and other written materials.

RIDER RECRUITMENT: Solicit new clients, both individuals and organizations, to maximize the utilization of the program and to help create community awareness. Provide support to riders and parents to assist in the communication of our growing organization.

OFFICE HELP: Join a group of volunteers at the **HORSEPOWER** office to help assemble mass mailings to go out to our extended family, etc.



Thank you for your interest in becoming a HORSEPOWER Volunteer!

It is because of your dedication and caring that many people with disabilities are able to participate in this unique and enriching program.

We also hope that your life will be enhanced and your heart and soul warmed by your experiences here at HORSEPOWER.

Remember, at HORSEPOWER you help make miracles happen!

Thank you for your time,

HORSEPOWER Staff