

# *Whispers of Hope Horse Farm*

Enriching the lives of mentally and physically challenged individuals through equine therapy  
3549 Parkhill Road Wichita Falls, Texas 940-696-8044 [www.whispersofhopehf.org](http://www.whispersofhopehf.org)

Dear Prospective Rider,

We welcome your interest in the Whispers of Hope Farm therapeutic horseback riding program. Whispers of Hope is one of approximately 550 therapeutic riding centers across North America. Whispers of Hope, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization staffed by volunteers, is located in Wichita Falls, Texas.

In order to provide the best therapeutic benefit and the safest environment to our clients, Whispers of Hope has established minimal guidelines for acceptance into the program. Clients need to be at least three years of age. The weight of the client is taken into consideration with the size of the program horses' available determining suitability. Please review the attached list of contraindications (on the back of the medical history form). If the client has one or more of these contraindications, therapeutic riding may not be recommended. If the client meets these criteria, complete the enclosed forms. All forms must be completed and returned before you or your child can be enrolled.

Once the completed forms are received, a physical therapy screening assessment may be scheduled. This assessment is done through Whispers of Hope, utilizing a physical therapist familiar with a therapeutic horseback riding program.

Upon completion of the assessment, the client will be assigned a riding time that is appropriate, or placed on a waiting list. To increase your chances of securing a place in the riding schedule, be sure to note all times that you are available to ride. If it becomes necessary to place a client on the waiting list, you will be contacted when a riding time becomes available.

In this packet you will find other useful information about our programs, goals, fees, and location. Please call the Whispers of Hope office if you have any questions concerning this process. Please mail the completed forms to the office. We look forwards to working with you or your rider.

Whispers of Hope Horse Farm  
3545 Parkhill Road  
Wichita Falls, TX 76310  
Diane Clary, rider coordinator, 940-691-2199 or 940-642-5189

Blessings,

Mary Elizabeth Pearce

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## WHISPERS OF HOPE HORSE FARM GUIDELINES

**Regular Sessions:** Whispers of Hope offers 6-week sessions with 2 weeks off in between each session. A calendar of riding days for the current session is available upon request.

**Lessons:** Based on the needs and abilities of a client, an individualized program will consist of therapeutic riding and/or horsemanship skills. Most lessons are approximately 45 minutes in length. In some cases, lesson times may be shortened to accommodate a client's special needs. Class size is limited to six per class. Classes are held on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

**Tuition:** Services are provided free of charge, however, we ask for assistance to find sponsorships or donations of \$135 for a six week session. This covers approximately twenty-five percent of the overall cost of the session. Tuition is payable to Whispers of Hope by cash, check, or charge. Make-up classes are held on a case-by-case basis. Riders that cancel or do not show up for classes forfeit the class.

**Payments should be mailed to:**

Whispers of Hope Horse Farm  
C/o Mary Elizabeth Pearce, Executive Director  
3545 Parkhill Rd.  
Wichita Falls, TX 76310

Approximately every two sessions some clients will be scheduled for an assessment. If you have any questions, please contact the office at 940-696-8044.

**Attendance:** Upon arrival, please continue on gravel road down behind the barn to the covered arena. A volunteer will meet you and sign Rider in the Attendance Book. When the rider will be absent, notify the center within 24 hours, if possible. If a rider knows of an absence ahead of time, please advise the office. When a rider who is scheduled to ride doesn't show up for his lesson, volunteer who were assigned to work with that rider become discouraged and drop out. This jeopardizes the entire program. Three absences without notice may result in the rider being dropped from the riding schedule.

**Punctuality:** It is extremely important for a client to arrive approximately 5 to 10 minutes prior to the scheduled riding time.

**Clothing for Riders:** Long pants and totally enclosed shoes or boots with one inch heels. ASTM/SEI approved helmet will be supplied by Whispers of Hope or you can purchase your own, as these are used by all. Also, sunscreen, gloves, and jacket, as needed.

**Siblings:** If siblings are in attendance with parents of clients participating in a class, parents are responsible for supervision of these children at all times. Noise and lots of activity can distract rider from the lesson. Siblings must remain in the watch area.

**Conduct at the Center:** It is mandatory that everyone complies with all safety rules and abide by all posted off-limit areas. The Whispers of Hope Horse Farm is a no smoking facility and the use of drugs or alcohol on the property is strictly forbidden. No mistreatment or abuse of any animal will be tolerated.