

Whispers of Hope Horse Farm

Enriching the lives of mentally and physically challenged individuals utilizing equine therapy.

YCR –Youth Challenged Rider ages 3-18 or **ACR-Adult Challenged Rider 19 and over**

Dear Prospective Challenged Rider and family,

We welcome your interest in the Whispers of Hope Horse Farm therapeutic horseback riding program. Whispers of Hope, a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization staffed by 99% volunteers. We provide opportunities for challenged individuals to excel and do things that they did not think were possible.

Cost for our services have changed due to decrease of donations and grants and increased cost of Horse care such as grain and hay, utilities and supplies. We prayed over this and this what we came up with.

- ❖ Cost is \$240.00 for a 12 week session to the challenged rider, either group.
- ❖ **Application for assistance is available as well but has limited availability.** Payment plans & gathering donations for your rider are options as well. Do NOT doubt we are here for your child!
- ❖ Clients need to be at least three years of age.
- ❖ Child must not have had an active seizure within 6 months.
- ❖ YCR & ACR Classes are scheduled on Tues 2:30 to 5pm and Thursday 10:30 to 11:30am and 2:30pm - 5 pm
- ❖ Show Team Sponsorships are \$600 a year; you can pay or get a business to sponsor your child.
- ❖ Doctors RX is NOT required but acknowledgement of child's diagnosis and/or physical or mental condition is of value to providing the best therapy for your child.
- ❖ If the child has one or more contraindications, therapeutic riding may not be recommended.

- ❖ ADULT LIFE SKILLS CLASS cost is based on supplies and instructor. **\$50 per 3 hour session.**
- ❖ These classes are Friday morning 8:30am to 11:30pm on 1st and 3rd Friday (Mar-May, Sept-Dec)
- ❖ Class including feeding horses, learning to cook using a microwave, setting table, going to store, money counting, cleaning kitchen, organization, horse riding, and more!
- ❖ If you need special riding times, please call Jaclyn to schedule after completing/turning in forms
- ❖ 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** attached.
- ❖ The weight of the client is taken into consideration with the size and temperament of the program horse for determining suitability. A 180-pound weight limit is set for all individuals looking to ride, therapy sessions working with horses on the ground may be an option as well.

If the client meets our initial criteria, complete the enclosed forms. All forms must be completed and returned before you or your child can be enrolled. Deadlines are 3 weeks prior to session starting.

Once the completed forms are received, evaluation of rider needs and physical and mental condition are taken into account to schedule a riding session. An in person screening assessment may be scheduled. This assessment is done through Whispers of Hope instructors familiar with a therapeutic horseback riding program.

Upon completion of the assessment, every effort is made to assign a riding time that is good for both rider and Whispers of Hope Instructor and Volunteers based on need of child. 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.

Over please

YCR –Youth Challenged Rider ages 3-18 or **ACR-Adult Challenged Rider 19 and over**

Regular Sessions: Whispers of Hope offers two different 12-week sessions in first March – May and second September – December for all riders. A calendar of events and riding days is available online at www.whispersofhopehf.org. Our horse riding program has a weight limit of **180 lbs** for rider (depending on situation.) Weight limits for our mounted program are based on the advice of our veterinarians and our professional judgment about what is safe for each instructor/horse/rider combination. Each horse has an assigned maximum weight limit, and in addition to weight, a rider's other characteristics (such as skill level, muscle tone, balance, or behavior) are considered when making horse/rider matches. Weight limits help to ensure that our riders, volunteers, and instructors are safe during mounts, dismounts, and emergency procedures. Additionally, these limits help our horses stay fit and healthy and able to perform their jobs. Availability will depend on horse selection. If a participant is over the weight limit for the horses available, we may recommend alternative equine activities that provide safer, more effective ways of experiencing the therapeutic value of the horses.

Weather: Due to **weather issues** at different times of the year, we will post on our Facebook page [whispersofhopehf](https://www.facebook.com/whispersofhopehf) as soon as we can about cancellations or changes. Rule of thumb... if the temperature is below 50 degrees, then there is no class, as it is 20 degrees less under the covered arena. Also, lightening and heavy rain, snow, and/or high winds are not suitable times for riding. We do not always know until an hour or so prior to class. There are NO classes of any type held in the month August and No classes after Dec. 12th until Middle of February/ March due to more severe weather.

Make up classes for weather days are not available at this time but an unmounted lesson will be offered instead of a mounted lesson.

Tuition: Services are provided to **challenged children ages 3-18** or **Challenged Adult 19 and over** for 12 week session for \$240.00 at a first come basis. Assistance is available to help find sponsorships or donations. This covers approximately twenty-five percent of the overall cost of the session. Tuition is payable to Whispers of Hope by cash, check, PayPal or charge. Payment Plans are available as well. If you have any questions, please contact the office at 696-8044 or email programs@whispersofhopehf.org.

- Payment arrangements MUST be made before class starts. The rider will be dropped from classes if no payment is made after the second week of class.

Adults Challenged riders are offered a 3-hour Life Skills Class on 1st and 3rd Friday of selected months. \$50 for each session. This is a new and valuable added program as our children are growing up around us! Class must have a minimum of 3 participants to be in session.

Donations for Horse or Child Sponsorships should be mailed to:

Whispers of Hope Horse Farm 3545 Parkhill Rd. Wichita Falls, TX 76310

Clothing for Riders: Long pants, capris, tights, sweats are ok -- jeans preferred (shorts cause chapping to legs).

Totally enclosed shoes or boots (with heels, inexpensive hiking boots are ideal and required) ASTM/SEI approved helmets may be purchase locally at TSC/Atwoods or online to purchase individually. Whispers of Hope also has helmets available if a rider chooses not to purchase one of their own. Sunscreen, gloves, and jacket, as needed.

ARRIVAL/Sign in/Attendance: Upon arrival, please travel on entrance gravel road on right straight to the covered arena. Parking is along fence line opposite covered arena or along covered arena wall. Please enter the covered arena at green entryway on North East end of building. If the rider will be absent, please notify the center as soon as possible. When a rider who is scheduled to ride doesn't show up for his lesson, volunteers who were assigned to work with that rider become discouraged and drop out. This jeopardizes the entire program. We want your child to have a wonderful experience every day they are here.

Please bring your child's own helmet or proceed to the helmet room to be fitted for helmets. All children must wear helmet prior to mounting horse. A helmet waiver form is available if there is a medical, physical or emotional reason for not wearing the helmet, but will be reviewed by the Director.

Participants are not permitted to take part in classes if they have:

- Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea within the past 24 hours.
- Severe persistent coughing or a severe cold.
- An oral temperature of 100 degrees or higher. Temperature should be stable for 24 hours before attending class.
- A contagious or exposed skin rash.
- Red, watery, burning eyes with either white or yellow drainage.
- A communicable disease such as head lice, strep throat, chickenpox, etc.

Punctuality: Please arrive for class 5-10 minutes before your time slot begins. This will give the rider time to use the bathroom, fit helmet, etc., and be ready to ride. Any rider that arrives late may not be able to ride that day, depending on the schedule, volunteer availability, and horse availability.

PLEASE NOTE: Any rider that misses more than 2 unexcused classes during a session may be **dropped without a refund** and their spot offered to the next student on the waiting list. Spots are limited and a rider missing class unannounced can be discouraging to volunteers.

If a student must miss class (appointments, etc), please let Jaclyn know at least 48 hours before the day of class to be counted as an excused absence. Falling ill will count as an excused absence **ONLY WHEN** notice is given. Makeup days will not be available for missed classes.

Siblings: If siblings are in attendance with parents of child participating in 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 or on playground but with supervision.

Conduct at the Center: **DRIVE SLOW!** It is mandatory that everyone complies with all safety rules. Abide by all posted off-limit areas. 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 or child will be tolerated. You are welcome to visit anytime for a tour of the facility, but if not scheduled please be patient for volunteers' time as they have schedule activities going on all the time. Please make sure that all that are entering our area with horses must have totally enclosed shoes for protection at all times.

SAFETY IS OUR PRIORITY!!

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT ALL FORMS ARE COMPLETED AND SIGNED PRIOR TO RETURNING TO US.

The Following forms are required to be returned to WOHHF:

- Challenged Rider Registration and Release Form (yearly form) ((Form 1))
- Rider Emergency Medical Form (minimum of once a year form) ((Form 2))
- Rider Schedule Application (must be filled out and returned prior to each Session) ((Form 3))
- Assistance form if necessary

The Following forms are yours to keep! Do not return:

- Prospective rider information page
- Guidelines

Please email the completed forms.

**Whispers of Hope Horse Farm
RIDER COORDINATOR
3545 Parkhill Road
Wichita Falls, TX 76310
940-696-8044**

Please call office and leave message or email

Rider Coordinator (ridercordinator@whispersofhopehf.org) or
Program Director, (programs@whispersofhopehf.org) JACLYN LIVINGSTON, INSTRUCTOR
940-642-1417 or at the Whispers of Hope office 940-696-8044 if you have any questions concerning this process.

We look forward to working with you or your rider.

Please follow us on our face book: **Whispers of Hope Horse Farm** for information about weather/classes and upcoming events.

WRITE QUESTIONS HERE IF YOU HAVE THEM. CALL or EMAIL us FOR ANSWERS