



Overview of CKRH

Central Kentucky Riding for Hope (CKRH) was established in 1981 as a Kentucky non-profit organization whose mission is to provide equine-facilitated activities to children and adults with disabilities or special needs. Our certified instructors, licensed therapists and trained volunteers work to develop our clients' abilities so as to positively impact the quality of their daily life in the long-term.

Located at the Kentucky Horse Park, CKRH facilities include two riding rings, trails, pastures, and a converted tobacco barn which houses horse stalls, offices and a multi-purpose room. As a non-profit organization that receives no public funding, CKRH is supported by its own fundraising events, grants and the generosity of individuals, organizations, and businesses within the community.

CKRH provides four basic services: Therapeutic Riding with multiple students in class settings, and Hippotherapy and Driving with individuals in private sessions, and Equine Assisted Growth and Learning which could be private or group settings. Regardless of category, each participant interacts with a trusted, accepting horse and is supported by dedicated volunteers, experienced instructors and therapists. Why the horse? The horse's strength, warmth, soothing rhythm and three-dimensional movement pattern provides healthy exercise while improving circulation and muscle tone. The responsibility associated with horsemanship and social interactions within the program benefit our participants physically, mentally, and emotionally by raising self-confidence and encouraging independence through goal attainment. Equine partners are paramount in assisting participants to develop trust, tolerance, boundaries, attitudes and other tools that address specific life skills.

Therapeutic Riding consists of the therapy horse, volunteer(s), a rider, and the instructor – the “team”- and lessons are structured with such an approach in weekly, one-hour

sessions over a period of eight weeks. Lessons are typically held in the outdoor ring, on trail rides, or in the barn. Four to six riders with similar ages or abilities focus on developing equestrian skills while gaining therapeutic benefits such as increased muscle tone and strength, decreased spasticity, improved hand/eye coordination, balance, mobility, sequencing, sensory integration, color-number-letter identification, and task directives. Additionally, group lessons provide opportunities for riders to develop social skills with peers, including cooperation and patience. And, of course, horseback riding is just plain FUN!

Though in a group setting, goals are thoughtfully developed to address each Therapeutic Rider's specific needs. Input comes from parents, teacher, therapist as well as the riders themselves. Lesson plans include a wide variety of games and exercises designed to increase their ability to listen, learn, and communicate; additionally, riders work on improving their basic equestrian skills and openness to trying new things. Riders are also encouraged to participate in the whole horse experience such as grooming, leading, tacking, etc.

Hippotherapy sessions are conducted through a partnership with Cardinal Hill Rehabilitation Hospital. Hippotherapy is defined by the American Hippotherapy Association (AHA 2003) as "a physical, occupational and speech therapy treatment strategy that utilizes equine movement." Each respective therapist utilizes Hippotherapy in one-on-one settings with their client and are supported by a CKRH horse and volunteers. Therapists must be registered with the American Hippotherapy Association, an affiliate of North American Riding for the Handicapped Association. Patients who are successful with Hippotherapy often progress into the Therapeutic Riding program.

Driving sessions can offer students with physical, mental, sensory, or emotional conditions the rewards of interaction and control of a horse or pony while driving from a carriage seat. Using a horse and carriage gives participants an alternative or an addition to riding, opening up the world of horses to those who may be unable to ride due to weight, balance, fatigue, fear of heights, the inability to sit astride, or other issues. Therapeutic Driving is all about imparting knowledge of safety, horses, harnessing, and driving skills to children and adults using teamwork.

The CKRH Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Programs have the mission to facilitate growth and learning by bringing people and horses together in a mutually beneficial way. EFL as defined by the North American Riding for the Handicapped (NARHA) promotes exploration of feelings and behaviors in an experimental educational format. It occurs when a person is interacting with the environment, including the people, animals and situations involved. It is learning by doing and may take place during short periods of time, such as during a workshop or regularly scheduled sessions.

In addition to the four services previously offered, the summer of 2007 will include a pilot program in Equine Assisted Psychotherapy. This program will be conducted as a partnership between Hospice of the Bluegrass Bereavement and CKRH. Hospice Bereavement Counselors and clients will join forces with CKRH's program horses and

equine specialists to help facilitate the grieving process for Kentucky children and teenagers who have experienced the death of a loved one.

CKRH volunteers are truly involved in every part of our program. In fact, volunteers are our instructors, horse leaders, side-walkers and board members. Volunteers assist with horse care, grounds and maintenance, special events, and much, much more. Volunteers usually start working with us on a limited basis, only to soon find themselves at the barn every chance they get or enthusiastically participating in a committee meeting. It is often heard that their participation with CKRH is as beneficial to them as it is to our riders and horses!

A rider's ability, not disability, is what determines volunteer need. During a lesson, one to three volunteers may assist a rider. Many riders begin their riding experience at CKRH with one volunteer leading the horse and others on either side assisting with posture and balance for rider safety. Riders that consistently demonstrate improved horsemanship skills often advance to riding independently without volunteer assistance.

Central Kentucky Riding for Hope is proud to have offered equine assisted activities for the last twenty-six years. The program is in the midst of expansion as we prepare to offer our services year round at our new Therapeutic Riding Center at the Kentucky Horse Park. Increased programming opportunities and a growing clientele have been a benchmark in the last year. The family and friends of CKRH continue their mission to close the gap on the remaining \$1.2 million needed to complete our \$3.6 million facility.



Located at the Kentucky Horse Park
P.O. Box 13155 Lexington, Kentucky 40511
(850)231-7066 FAX (859)252-5016
www.ckrh.org beth@ckrh.org



CKRH Volunteer Opportunities

A. Lesson Volunteers

Horse leader/handlers

Qualifications Required:

- Commitment to attend class each week for the length of the session
- Previous horse experience
- Minimum age of sixteen
- Adequate vision and hearing to ensure safety of horses and participants
- Walk/jog with the horse for duration of the lesson time, occasionally on uneven surfaces
- Ability to “read” a horse with sufficient knowledge/confidence to calmly respond to their unexpected movements
- Ability to adapt to change and patience

Responsibilities:

- Ensure horse is groomed, tacked, and warming up in arena 10 minutes prior to lesson start time
- Primary responsibility is horse’s safety and its active engagement in lesson activities
- To listen and respond to the instructor’s directions
- To lead horse during lesson and maintain safety spacing between horses
- To help horse follow the rider’s cues
- To untack & turn-out horse after class (unless it is needed in the following class)

Sidewalkers

Qualifications Required:

- Commitment to attend class each week for the length of the session
- Minimum age of sixteen
- Previous horse experience not necessary
- Adequate vision and hearing to ensure safety of rider
- Walk/jog alongside the horse for duration of the lesson, occasionally on uneven surfaces
- Ability to hold your arm slightly raised and out to the side for up to 30 minutes thus providing rider support if necessary
- Comfortable working in physical contact with horses and children/adults with disabilities and special needs
- Ability to adapt to change and patience



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Responsibilities:

- Meet and greet riders. Remain with your rider ensuring their safety at all times.
- To physically assist the rider during lesson, mounting and dismounting processes
- “Bridge” the instructor to the rider. Repeat directions, redirect attention and assist rider with tasks as needed or directed.

Wranglers

Qualifications Required:

- Commitment to attend class each week for the length of the session
- Previous horse experience
- Minimum age of fourteen without parent supervision; twelve with parent supervision
- Adequate vision and hearing to ensure safety of horses and others
- Ability to “read” a horse with the knowledge/confidence to calmly prevent unsafe situations
- Ability to groom and tack a horse without supervision
- Ability to adapt to change and patience

Responsibilities:

- To lead horses to and from the pastures
- To assist with horse feeding and hay distribution
- To groom and tack horses prior to lessons
- To turn out horses after lessons
- To clean/pick stalls, as needed
- To maintain general barn cleanliness
- To keep tack clean, as needed

B. Hay Crew

Qualifications Required:

- Reliable attendance during assigned feeding times
- Previous horse experience
- Minimum age of sixteen; fourteen if volunteering with parent on same hay crew shift
- Ability to identify a horse in distress
- Ability to administer feed, supplements and medications as prescribed by Equine Director
- Ability to lift weight equivalent to hay bales and water buckets
- Ability to adapt to change and patience



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Responsibilities:

- To feed, hay and water each horse according to feed chart instructions
- To provide minor medical treatment prescribed by Equine Director as needed
- To evaluate each horse for injury, illness or loose shoes during your shift
- To assess status of paddock fencing for adequate horse security.
- To check water systems to ensure proper operation
- To lead horses to and from the pastures as needed
- To clean stalls
- To clean feed tubs and water buckets
- To maintain order/cleanliness of barn aisles, feed room and wash room

C. Special Events

Qualifications Required:

- Reliable attendance
- No minimum age, but requires adult supervision if under age fourteen
- Ability/willingness to follow instructions and complete assigned tasks
- Cooperative attitude, can adapt to change and patience

Responsibilities:

- Paul Frazer Horse Show
- High Hope Steeplechase
- Night of the Stars
- Trail Ride, Ride-A-Thon, Tack and Equipment Sale

Please see our new calendar feature on the web site, www.ckrh.org, and then click “CALENDAR” and then the web calendar link. This is the best way to stay informed of the latest CKRH events and class schedules.