



**Children's TherAplay**  
The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc.

# Volunteer Manual



United Way agency



The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc.  
9919 Towne Road  
Carmel, IN 46032  
Ph: 317-872-4166 Fax: 317-872-3234  
[www.childrenstheraplay.org](http://www.childrenstheraplay.org)

**Directions:** Children's TherAplay is located at 9919 Towne Road, just north of 96<sup>th</sup> Street on the east side of Towne Road. Look for a white brick entrance with a small sign that says, "Lucky Farms, Home of Children's TherAplay".

Follow the driveway past the blue house and large tan building on the left. Veer left into the gravel parking lot. Our entrance is on the NE side of the

## Welcome Volunteers!

### We are delighted to have you join us.

### What is Children's TherAplay?

The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit outpatient rehabilitation clinic for children with special needs. Children's TherAplay is unique because we incorporate the movement of horses into physical and occupational therapy sessions. Children's TherAplay was established in the fall of 2001, and from the beginning incorporated the innovative idea of using horses as a treatment tool within therapy sessions.

- Hippotherapy has been in practice in the US for more than 40 years. Horses create a dynamic, three-dimensional movement that cannot be reproduced in a traditional clinic setting. The gait or stride of the horse, coupled with the animal's warmth provides numerous benefits.
- Because our program is so effective, Children's TherAplay has grown to become one of the largest clinics of its kind in the country.
- Each child's sessions are designed to achieve individual therapeutic goals, which are determined by the Children's TherAplay treatment team in conjunction with the patient and their family. Sessions are one-on-one and utilize the treatment tools in our child-friendly clinic as well as the horse.
- Children's TherAplay's horses are carefully chosen for their temperament and the type of movement they produce. Our therapy horses are specifically trained for their unique role within therapy sessions and are guided by professional horse handlers which optimized safety and effectiveness.

**Volunteers drive the Children's TherAplay program**, are indispensable at all levels of the organization, *and need not be equine oriented*. Some do bring skills in horsemanship, others bring leadership skills, and others simply bring many new ideas and insight to the program and frequently enlist their friends! Ask any Children's TherAplay volunteer and they will state that they gain as much, or more, than they give.

As a volunteer, you will learn and achieve, as well! The information in this manual is designed to assist you in understanding some of the Children's TherAplay policies and procedures. This manual is not all-inclusive and does not include every policy or protocol relating to volunteers at Children's TherAplay. Please feel free to ask staff members or seasoned volunteers if you have further questions or concerns.

### Safety Rules and Regulations

- Drive **SLOWLY** through the parking lot. If your foot is on the gas pedal, you are going too fast!
- If you are not comfortable AT ANY TIME or feel that someone is in danger, speak up immediately (even in the middle of a session). Safety is ALWAYS first priority at Children's TherAplay.



## Volunteer Requirements

### All on premises volunteers must be able to:

- Tolerate dusty environments
- Follow a minimum of 2 step commands
- Maintain positive interaction with staff, horses, clients and other volunteers
- Have cognitive ability to have safety awareness and not disrupt sessions

### To sidewalk, a volunteer must be able to:

- Be at least 16 years of age
- Walk a minimum of 5 miles
- Lift 30 pounds overhead
- Follow 2 step commands with normal response time
- Tolerate extreme temperatures (heat and cold)
- Maintain a positive attitude even if a child is non-cooperative (biting, screaming, crying, etc)

Therapy sessions take place on the following days and times. You may work one session or all the sessions on any day.

### Hours of Operation:

Monday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM; 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Tuesday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM; 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Wednesday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM; 1:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Thursday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM; 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Friday: 8:00 AM - 12:00 PM; 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

**If you have any scheduling changes, a last-minute emergency, or are running late for your scheduled day/time call 317-872-4166. If there is no answer, please leave a message. *Of course, we appreciate as much notice as possible.***

In the event of a cancellation on our end, we will notify you as quickly as possible via a phone call or an e-mail. Please be sure that we have the best number where you can be reached at the last minute.

## What do Children's TherAplay volunteers help with?

- **Sidewalkers** – help with each therapy session. They walk beside the horse and assist the therapist and rider to ensure sessions are safe and effective. This is often the task most desired by our volunteers, which is why it has been reserved for our “tried and true” volunteers. These are volunteers that have put in the most time at Children's TherAplay, and haven proven their dedication by performing less glamorous tasks such as cleaning or stuffing envelopes. ALL volunteers are encouraged and expected to help with less glamorous tasks during their down time.
- **General Clinic Help** – volunteers can help by vacuuming the clinic and waiting room, emptying the trash, sweeping the back clinic, cleaning toys and therapy equipment, etc. There is a complete cleaning list inside the cleaning supply cabinet.
- **Barn Help** – there is an occasional need for **experienced** horse people to help groom and feed the horses, clean tack, blanket and turn out horses, etc. Barn help is usually needed early in the morning and sometimes on weekends. **To volunteer in the barn you need consent of the equine coordinator.**
- **Office Help** – answering phones, filing, scanning documents, stuff envelopes, etc.

- **Help with Special Events** – camps, fundraising, public relation events. Watch for emails and/or posting at the volunteer stand on which events we need help with.

## **Attire**

You will be working in a professional setting. It is expected that volunteers will use good judgment in selecting appropriate clothing. When choosing your clothing-consider “Safety First”—inquisitive hands can pull off your jewelry, excessively baggy clothes can get caught on things, etc.

### **What to Wear:**

- Comfortable clothes, appropriate to the season, that you don't mind getting dirty
- Sneakers or boots
- Sunscreen, bug repellent, sunglasses, hat or visor
- Long hair should be tied back
- Long pants that are not too tight or baggy
- Shorts—hem no shorter than your finger tips with arms hanging straight down at your sides
- Dress appropriately for the weather as you may spend a good deal of time outdoors or in the barn

### **What NOT to Wear:**

- Jewelry (necklace, bracelet, hoop/dangling earrings); stud earrings are okay
- Excessively tight or baggy clothing
- Perfumes
- Bare midriff or other revealing clothing
- Clothing with inappropriate slogans, decals, etc.
- Short shorts—see guide above to measure length
- Opened toe shoes, sandals, clogs, or flip flops

## **Personal items are your responsibility**

Please leave cell phones, purses and any other personal belongings in your locked vehicle. If you need a place for your keys, ask a staff person the best location. If you need to have your cell phone with you please have it on vibrate, however we would prefer you have it off while participating in sessions.

**\*Remember no cell phones are permitted while volunteering in the riding arena, unless they are turned off or on silent!**

## **Volunteer Procedures**

### **Arrival Procedures**

Upon arrival, each time you come to volunteer you want to do the following:

1. Find the volunteer sheet and record the date and number of hours you will be working. It is **very important** that you log in every time you come to volunteer. If you need verification of your volunteer hours for taxes, school, court, scholarships, Service Learning, etc., this is where we will get the information. If you do not sign in, you do not get credit.
2. Check with the volunteer coordinator or another staff member to find out what tasks need to be performed or if there are any special projects.
3. Check the riding schedule to see what sessions are taking place and at what time. At this point the therapist is in charge and will let you know what is needed.

## Closings

Anytime we have a last-minute schedule change or closing, we will make every attempt to contact everyone on the schedule who is affected via a phone call or an e-mail.

## Miscellaneous

We ask that you do not bring small children or pets with you when you come to volunteer. There is no one available to supervise them.

## Confidentiality

Names, specific conditions, or other personal details specific to the riders are to be held in confidence. Share the stories, the successes, and the warmth! -just leave out the private information.

## SPECIAL RULES FOR PHOTOS AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES:

*You cannot take a rider's picture without permission.* Children's TherAplay has permission to photograph riders and volunteers, you do not. Always ask.

If you plan on posting the photo on a social networking site; like Facebook, Twitter or any website, you must have specific permission to do this from anyone whose picture you have taken. **NEVER** identify a rider by name unless they (if an adult) or the parent gives permission.

## Inappropriate Behavior:

If you should observe any inappropriate behavior on the part of another volunteer toward a horse or rider, please report it to management. Our volunteers must be our eyes and ears to everything that is going on at the center. Never feel you are gossiping or it is wrong. We must know what is happening for the protection of everyone; the riders, horses and you, the volunteers.

## It's your first day volunteering

Simply introduce yourself to the staff member and let them know that you are new. Feel free to ask questions, we don't expect you to remember everything from one volunteer orientation!

## Things to remember

We focus on safety, courtesy, respect and kindness. Here are a few rules that help us maintain our standards:

- Do not feed the horses. Treats may be given with permission
- Do not halter a horse over the fence. Please go into the pasture to put on a halter.
- Do not share grooming tools with other horses.
- Do not turn horses out without permission from staff.
- **Never turn horses out with a halter on unless directed to do so by a staff member. (Fly mask only)**
- Leave gates the way you find them or closed.
- Please do not use your cell phone during sessions. In addition, do not have your cell phone ringer on around the horses; if you must have your phone please put it on vibrate. Ringing phones are not only a distraction to you while your attention is needed, but they could potentially spook a horse.
- Never panic, scream, or run. Stay calm and quiet and the horse will calm down with you.
- **Never leave any foreign objects in the horses' stalls.** (ex. wheel barrow, mucking fork, grooming bucket, etc.)
- **Special grooming procedures (clipping, cutting mane or tail, etc.) are not to be done.**
- Please help take care of tack. Do not drag girths, pads or bridles, etc.
- All tacking and UN-tacking should be done in the stall area.

- Exercising, lunging, schooling, or training of any kind is to be done by approved individuals only.

Throughout the barn policies are posted, please take the time to read them. Treat every person and horse with respect. Help each other have fun. We are all part of the Children's TherAplay Team.

## Side Walker

The side walker's responsibility is **the rider** (not the horse). Be prepared to give the rider your undivided attention. Get to know them!

### During Therapy Sessions

- **Only the therapist is allowed to mount/dismount the rider.** Listen for directions from the therapist if the rider is to mount in the arena, at the ramp, or at the mounting block.
- If an object falls onto the ground, such as a glove, etc. leave it unless the therapist requests that you pick it up.
- The side walker's position is typically between the rider's knee and hip facing forward.
- The therapist will instruct you on what type of handhold to use with every position change with each rider. Avoid putting a hand on the rider's back (unless told to do so).
- If the therapist requests to change sides, **one person changes at a time.**
- The therapist may ask that you participate in "games" with the rider using various toys.
- Please follow all instructions that the therapist gives you.

## Emergency Procedures

At Children's TherAplay an emergency is defined as any unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances resulting in a real or potential safety hazard demanding immediate attention. Every volunteer should be familiar with the location of the following:

- Emergency phone numbers are posted in the barn.
- A human first aid kit is located in the barn outside the tack room and on the south wall of the back therapy clinic marked "First Aid Kit".
- Animal first aid supplies are kept in the barn, please ask a staff member prior to treating any horse injuries.

### Emergency during a therapy session:

If an incident occurs during therapy, the following procedures will be followed and adhered to:

- All riding (motion) STOPS in place. Stay with your horse & rider unless instructed otherwise. If your position threatens the situation or another horse, move slowly to safety.
- The therapist is responsible for the safety of the rider. If necessary, the therapist/staff member designates a volunteer to call 911. If injury should involve a horse, the staff horse handler designates a volunteer to call the Veterinarian.
- Do not move an injured rider or horse without permission.
- If the incident is serious, the therapist will dismount the remaining riders with the assistance of volunteers, if needed.
- Remember, in an emergency during a session, the horse handler is responsible for the horse, the therapist is responsible for the rider, and the side walker is responsible for assisting the therapist.

### Emergency Dismount

- If you are side walking next to a horse that becomes involved in an emergency, alert the therapist and horse handler of the situation.

- If an emergency dismount becomes necessary, the side walker needs to push the rider toward the therapist, and then step away from the horse.
- If the therapist feels they cannot bear the full weight of the descending rider, a controlled fall can be initiated, taking care to protect the rider's head and roll with the fall as much as possible.
- It is important that the therapist breaks the rider's fall and does not fall on the rider.

### **Precautions**

Universal precautions are used to minimize contact with blood and body fluids by taking steps that may prevent non-intact skin exposures of individuals to specific organisms such as Hepatitis B and Human Immune-Deficiency Virus (HIV/AIDS).

***When you follow universal precautions, you assume that all persons are potentially infected with blood-borne pathogens.***

- Wear disposable non-latex or vinyl gloves when it is likely that hands will be in contact with bodily fluids.
- Protect clothing with an impervious material when it is likely that clothing will be soiled with bodily fluids.
- Wear masks and/or eye protection when it is likely that eye and/or mucus membranes will be splashed with bodily fluids.
- Wash hands often, before and after client care, paying attention to around and under fingernails and between the fingers, even if gloves are worn. If unanticipated contact with these body substances occurs, washing is done as soon as possible.
- Resuscitation masks should be used for CPR.

### **Benefits of Equine Assisted Activities**

Riding a horse is a beneficial activity for any person challenged with a physical, cognitive, and/or emotional disability. The uniqueness of equine assisted activities lies in the gait of the therapy horse.

The horse, having gaits with a three-dimensional swinging motion, is a living therapy tool for the rider, enabling the rider to experience up/down, forward/backward, and side-to-side motion- all the while stimulating muscle, brain, and social activity. Equestrian activities, in and out of a therapeutic setting, increase a rider's posture, balance, strength, focus, and coordination while also positively enhancing flexibility, self-awareness, confidence, and a sense of independence. Social and emotional growth is also gained from the natural bond created between horse and rider.

*The physical benefits of therapeutic riding include:*

- As the horse moves, the rider is constantly thrown off-balance. In an attempt to re-balance, the rider's muscles are required to contract and relax.
- Improved posture control and balance
- Increased muscle tone and strength
- Greater range of motion
- Decreased spasticity
- Better hand-eye coordination
- Reduction of abnormal movement patterns

*The cognitive benefits aide participants to excel in:*

- Learning repetition of patterned movements required in controlling a horse which quickens the reflexes and aids in motor planning

- Development of learned skills
- Tactile awareness and sensory integration
- Improved application of direction
- Greater skill at sequencing, patterning, and motor planning.

*The overall experience contributes to emotional gains of the rider by:*

- Providing excitement and the sense of achievement of working independently, as well as with a team.
- Nurturing independence
- Increased self-control and awareness
- Better emotional control
- Greater self-awareness and self-confidence

*The social benefits reaped by riders include:*

- Being involved as a rider creates a shared interest and experience on which to build a social foundation
- Friendship building
- Increased experiences
- Improving social skills and cooperation

## **Interacting with Persons with Disabilities**

As our society becomes more aware of the needs of persons with disabilities, it is paramount that we understand that more is involved than the removal of structural barriers and the use of assistive technology. Even more important is the removal of attitudinal barriers.

Attitudes not only define the way we view things; they also direct our actions. If we remember that people with disabilities are people first and that the disability is not who they are, we can focus on them as individuals. Interacting with persons with disabilities may be awkward at first. You may feel like you don't know what to say or do. You may be concerned that the wrong thing will be said. The important thing is to try. After all, we all have the same needs...to be loved, appreciated, respected, and productive. By projecting an attitude of openness and acceptance, we focus on the individual's ability—and that's where the progress and productivity begin.

An attitudinal barrier that we need to become more aware of is language. Language can project negative images that cause misconceptions and limit how individuals with disabilities can participate in our society.

The following are suggestions that will help in appropriate language use:

- Put people first, not their disabilities. Say "a person with a disability," not "a handicapped person," or "person with a hearing impairment," not "a deaf person."
- Don't use labels for disability groups such as "the retarded" or "the deaf." Emphasize people, not labels. Say "people who are deaf," or "people with mental impairment."
- Terms that should never be used to describe people are "crippled," "deformed," "suffers from," etc.
- Other terms to avoid: deaf and dumb; lame; defective; invalid; stricken with; victim of.
- Don't sensationalize or emphasize a "superhuman" quality to persons with disabilities who are successful. They don't want recognition because of what they have overcome, but for what they have accomplished because of who they are and the abilities they possess.
- Emphasize abilities, not limitations. For example, say "uses a wheelchair" rather than "wheelchair-bound."

The key is to remember that people HAVE disabilities; THEY are not disabilities.



When interacting with a person who has a disability, first, be yourself. If you normally extend your hand to shake hands, do it, even if he or she doesn't have a hand. Talk directly to the person in a normal voice.

When meeting a person with a visual impairment, identify yourself and introduce others who might be with you. Repeat the person's name to which you are speaking so it is clear where a comment is being directed. If you want to offer assistance, allow the person to take your arm. Don't grab someone and try to propel him or her. As you guide the person, describe the terrain—let him or her know of approaching obstacles. Be specific. Say, "There is a step approximately five steps in front of us."

For the person with a hearing impairment, you may need to get his or her attention first. Tap the person lightly on the shoulder or wave your arm. Look directly at the person and speak clearly. Try to position your face so that the individual can see your lips move. It helps someone in understanding what you are saying if he or she can see your facial expressions and body language. This is an instance where it may help to have something to write on. If someone has an interpreter, direct your conversation to the person you are communicating with, not the interpreter.

If you become aware that a person with a physical disability may need assistance, ask the person first if you can help. Don't assume! Grabbing someone's wheelchair and pushing without asking can be an invasion of his or her privacy and independence. Also, don't lean on someone's wheelchair—it's considered part of his or her body space. When talking to someone in a wheelchair, get down to his or her eye level so neither of you ends up with a stiff neck! If you are giving directions to someone using a wheelchair, make sure to consider barriers such as curbs, hills, narrow doorways, etc. that may pose a problem.

These suggestions boil down to three things: common courtesy, common sense, and respect. Interacting with persons with disabilities may seem awkward, but by focusing on who they are and what they can do you'll discover individuals just like you who want to be productive and respected. You will be encouraged by the contributions they will make to your life and how much progress can be made if we all work together!

## **Description of Disabilities**

The following is a brief, non-medical description of some of the disabilities and conditions of riders. This is not intended as a comprehensive explanation of a specific disability but rather as a general overview.

### **Autism/PDD (Pervasive Developmental Disorder)**

A disorder of unknown origin in which the individual has difficulties with communication skills, reciprocal social interaction, and handling various sensory input.

### **Cerebral Palsy (CP)**

A non-progressive disorder thought to be due in part to loss of oxygen to the brain before, during or right after birth. 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:

- **SPASTIC:** Occurs in approximately 70 percent of all cases. It may impact motor function in one or more of the limbs. The muscles stay flexed and tense and the facial muscle involvement may affect speech.
- **ATHETOID:** Occurs in approximately 20 percent of all cases. It manifests itself in slow, jerky, involuntary movements of the arms and/or legs. It appears more obvious during periods of emotional tension. Speech functions are usually involved.

- ATAXIC: Occurs in approximately 10 percent of all cases. Weakness plus poor coordination with quick and fine motor movements result in loose, “rag-doll” appearance.

### **Epilepsy**

Epileptic seizures are due to abnormal discharges of nervous energy in an injured portion of the brain. More than half of all children with epilepsy can achieve full or partial control of their seizures with medication. Many individuals with epilepsy have normal intelligence and appearance; however, epileptic seizures of some people are the result of a general brain damaged condition. These individuals may also have abnormal body movements, lower intelligence or abnormal behavior.

### **Developmental Delays (DD)**

A broad term used to describe an individual that develops at a below-normal rate in terms of physical, cognitive and emotional development.

### **Down's Syndrome- Also known as Trisomy 21**

It is one of the most widely identified genetic conditions. Individuals with Down's Syndrome often present with hypotonia (low tone), particular facial characteristics and varying degrees of cognitive deficits.

### **Hearing Impaired**

It 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.

### **Learning Disability (LD)**

Learning disabled is a “catch-all” phrase for individuals who have problems 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.

### **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 MD, which often reduces life expectancy.

### **Spina Bifida**

A congenital defect where there is incomplete closure of the spinal column at birth. There are usually varying degrees of paralysis of the lower limbs, loss of sensation, lack of bowel and bladder control, increased risk of infection and hydrocephalus; life expectancy is not necessarily shortened.

### **Stroke or Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA)**

Involves paralysis to one side of the body resulting from either a hemorrhage into the brain, a clogged artery or a rupture of an artery outside the brain. Degree of severity and recovery varies from person to person.

### **Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI)**

Injuries may be closed head (inter cranial bleeding causes pressure) or open penetration (profuse bleeding and open wounds ensure permanent damage). Deficits may include gross and fine motor skills, cognitive disabilities, speech, balance, and psychological alterations. Social skills may be affected and appear inappropriate. Amount of recovery depends on the severity of the injury.

### **Visually Impaired**

Visual deficits may range from severely limited to total and may be caused by congenital defect, traumatic illness, or injury. If the onset of impairments occurs after five years of age, they are accompanied by memories of people, places, and things.

## Understanding Horse Behavior

The beneficial interaction and relationship with the horse lies at the core of all work at Children's TherAplay. Our horses are valued partners and members of the team. Their health, safety, and welfare are a primary responsibility of the Children's TherAplay leadership. Horses are not tools or "beasts of burden"; they are valuable assets, with individual personalities, talents, and aptitudes that they bring to this difficult work.

**Communication** is the key to developing relationships and working with horses. It is critical to providing a safe environment for equine-assisted activities. Learning to understand horse senses, instincts, and body language is a step in predicting behaviors, managing risks, and positively influencing relationships.

### Sense of Smell

The horse's sense of smell is thought to be very acute and allows the animal to recognize other horses and people. Smell also enables the horse to evaluate situations and people.

- Smelling allows horses the opportunity to become familiar with new objects and their environment.
- It is recommended that treats not be carried in your pockets since horses may attempt to retrieve them. Do not feed treats without permission.
- Volunteers should not have food in the arena.

### Hearing

The horse's sense of hearing is also thought to be very acute. The horse may also combine their sense of hearing and sight to become more familiar with new or alarming sounds. The situation of a horse "hearing and not seeing" is often the cause of the *Flight response*.

The position of the horse's ears communicates attentiveness and interest, distress and aggression. Reading your horse's ears is learning his language. Your horse's ears and actions are the key to his emotions. He can tell you what he is paying attention to; by the way he uses his ears and the way he acts.

- Forward ears communicate attentiveness and interest.
- Stiffly-pricked ears indicate interest and alertness.
- Drooping ears indicate relaxation or inattentiveness, exhaustion or illness. An inattentive horse can be easily startled.
- Flattened ears indicate anger, threat, or fear.
- Ears flicking back and forth indicate attentiveness or interest.

### Implications

- Always speak to a horse before approaching them or touching them.
- Horses are wary when they hear something but do not see it. If your horse is acting nervous, talk to him in a quiet, calm, reassuring voice.
- Avoid shouting or using a loud voice. This can upset or scare the horse.
- Before entering the arena through any door, look first to make sure there is not a horse nearby. If so wait until it is on the other side of the arena before entering. When entering say "DOOR" and make sure to walk in slowly and shut the door quietly behind you...do not let the door slam.
- Dry leaves are LOUD and they tend to gather near arena doors. When you are walking through them, be conscious to do so slowly and as quietly as possible.

## **Sight**

The horse's eyes are set on either side of the head. There is good peripheral (lateral) vision, but poorer frontal vision. Horses focus on objects by raising and lowering their heads. The horse's visual memory is very accurate. Horses are thought to see quite well in the dark due to the large size of their eyes. There is still controversy as to whether horses see in color, but most believe they do see shades of red, yellow, pink and green.

### ***Implications***

- The horse may notice if something in the arena is out of place or different. Allow the horse an opportunity to look at new objects. Introduce new props that the horse may be unfamiliar with.
- Since the horse has better peripheral vision, consider two blind spots—directly in front and directly behind the horse. The best way to approach a horse is at the shoulder. It may startle a horse if you approach from behind or directly in front.
- The horse may be unable to see around the mouth area, which is a safety consideration when feeding.

## **Touch**

Touch is used as a communication between horses and people. Horses are sensitive to soft or rough touch with a person's hands and legs.

### ***Implications***

- Handlers should treat the horses gently but firmly.
- Horses have sensitive areas. It is important to be familiar with them. (I.e. flank and belly area, ears, under tail).
- Watch the rider's leg position. The rider may need appropriate assistance to reduce tightening of the legs. Ask the therapist what is the best handling technique for this situation.
- Horses will often touch or paw at unfamiliar objects. For example, a horse may paw at a bridge or ground pole before crossing over it.

## **Taste**

Taste is closely linked with the sense of smell and helps the horse to distinguish palatable foods and other objects.

- A horse may lick or nibble when becoming familiar with objects and people. Be careful—this could lead to possible biting.

## **Sixth Sense**

Horses do have a “sixth sense” when evaluating the disposition of those around them. Horses can be hypersensitive in detecting the moods of their handlers and riders. A good therapy horse is chosen for its sensitive response to the rider. At times, there may exist a personality conflict between handlers and horses. It is important for the horse handler or therapist to know if you're having a difficult time relating to or getting along with a particular horse.

### **Other Signs to Watch for**

- Tucking the tail down tightly indicates danger to the rear. The horse may bolt, buck, or kick. Especially watch out if ears are flattened too!
- Switching the tail indicates annoyance and irritation at biting flies, stinging insects, and tickling/bothersome actions of a rider, another horse, or you.
- Droopy ears and cocking one hind leg to rest on the hoof reveals a calm, resting horse that may be dozing. Don't wake him up by startling him!
- Wrinkling up the face, ears flat back against the head, and swinging the head is the threatening gesture of an angry or bossy horse. Watch out for biting or kicking.
- Being aware of horse behaviors is one of the best safety precautions that can be practiced.

- Knowing how to read your horse can prevent an accident and increase the quality of your “mutual” relationship. If you are uncomfortable working with an individual horse, please speak to a horse handler or therapist.

## **The Horse’s Lifestyle**

In addition to understanding the horse's sixth sense and how they communicate with us, we need to appreciate and increase our awareness of the horse's lifestyle. This will assist us in responding to the horse's reaction to situations.

### **Flight & Other Instincts**

Horses would rather turn and run away from danger than to face and fight it. Remember, in the wild, horses are prey animals. They run for survival.

#### ***Implications***

- At a sudden movement or noise, the horse might try to flee. Speak to the horse calmly.
- A frightened horse that is tied up or being held tightly, might try to escape by pulling back. Relax your hold or untie the horse quickly and it will usually relax. Use the cross ties when in the tacking area or ask a staff member to assist you with a quick release knot.
- Be sure not to stand directly behind the horse.
- If flight is not possible, the horse could either turn to kick out or face the problem and rear, especially in a tight area like a stall. A halter with a lead rope may assist with maintaining control while working around the horse in a stall.
- If a horse is nervous or fearful, it may be helpful to allow a more experienced horse handler to lead.
- Most horses working in a therapy setting have less of an instinct to flee. It is helpful if the volunteer remains calm and talks to the horse in a soothing voice.

### **The Herd Animal**

Horses like to stay together in a clearly defined herd or group where one or two alpha horses are “in charge” and the rest of the group lives in an established social hierarchy. It is not unusual for horses in a long, established herd to have “separation anxiety” and be barn sour.

#### ***Implications***

- Be aware that a horse may not like being alone. That is a consideration when horses are leaving the ring or a horse loses sight of the others while on a trail ride.
- If the horse in front of a line is trotting, the horse that is following may also attempt to trot.
- If one horse spooks at something, the surrounding horses may also be affected.
- For safety, it is recommended to keep at least one or two horse lengths between horses when leading and riding within a group to respect the horses' space and hierarchical order.

# THE CHILDREN'S THERAPLAY FOUNDATION, INC.

## VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Date of Volunteer Orientation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone:(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell:(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### PERSONAL INFORMATION

Do you go to school? Yes / No If yes, where do you attend? \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment: \_\_\_\_\_ Position Held \_\_\_\_\_

How did you learn about TherAplay?: \_\_\_\_\_

If under 18 years of age, give your parents' names: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone:(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell:(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell:(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

What days and times are best for you to volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

Please explain your reason/purpose for volunteering: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you comfortable working around people with special needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you comfortable working or walking around horses? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have experience with horses? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how many years \_\_\_\_\_ Please describe your experience below. \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any other skills that you are willing to share that may benefit TherAplay? \_\_\_\_\_

### HEALTH HISTORY:

Do you have any physical and/or mental limitations? Yes / No If yes, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe your current health status listing any recent hospitalizations, surgeries, or injuries: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any other information we should know about your ability to volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

**To sidewalk, a volunteer must be able to:** Tolerate dusty environments, walk a minimum of 5 miles, lift 30 pounds overhead, follow 2 step commands with normal response time, tolerate extreme temperatures (heat and cold), and maintain a positive attitude even if a child is non-cooperative (biting, screaming, crying, etc). Are you willing and able to do all the above? Yes / No Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

# **RELEASES AND SIGNATURES**

## **IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**

In case of an emergency, whom should we contact?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Your Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Hospital and City: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list any allergies to medications \_\_\_\_\_

## **PHOTO RELEASE**

I consent to and authorize the use and reproduction to Theraplay of any and all photographs and any other audio-visual materials taken of me for promotion material, educational activities, exhibitions, or for any other use for the benefit of the program.

Consent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **SCREENING FOR ADULT VOLUNTEERS (18 YEARS OR OLDER)**

1. Have you every been charged with, or convicted of, a criminal offense involving child neglect or abuse or a crime involving an actual, or attempted sex crime involving a minor? (If yes, explain below)  Yes  No
2. Have you ever been a defendant in a civil action involving an act of child abuse, neglect or a sex crime involving a minor? (If yes, explain below)  Yes  No
3. Other than the above, is there any other fact or circumstance involving you or something in your background that would call into question your volunteering for this program? (If yes, explain below)  Yes  No

I hereby release and hold harmless The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc., its employees and agents from any liability resulting from a background check, including a criminal history check on me.

I affirm that my answers above are true and correct and consent by signing below to a criminal history check, including but not limited to, a Limited Criminal History check as well as a check of the Sex and Violent Offender Registry. I understand it is my responsibility and duty to notify the Director of Operations immediately should the answers to the above questions change during the time I serve as a volunteer for The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

I understand that all information, both written and verbal, regarding clients at TherAplay and confidential business matters shall be held in strict confidence at all times except as needed within the facility for therapy and/or business purposes.

I also understand that a breach of confidentiality is grounds for dismissal and may result in legal prosecution.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Lucky Farms, LLC/The Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc.

## Waiver, Release of Liability, Indemnification and Consent to Medical Attention

In exchange for the boarding of my horse(s) with Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. and/or my participation in horse riding, horse riding lessons, horse riding clinics, hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) other equine activity sponsored by Lucky Farms, LLC/ Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc., I, and if I am not yet 18 years old (21 years old if out-of-state resident), my parent(s) or legal guardian(s) (individually and collectively referred to herein in the first person singular) agree to be bound by each of the following:

**1. Voluntary Participation.** I understand and confirm that the boarding of my horse(s) with Lucky Farms, LLC/ Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. and/or my participation in horse riding, horse-riding lessons, horse riding clinics, hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) any other equine activity is voluntary.

**2. Identification of Risks.** I understand that the boarding of my horse(s) and/or my participation in the riding of horses, horse riding lessons, horse riding clinics, hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) any other equine activity may involve risk of injury and loss, to person, horse and to property. I also understand that the risk of injury may include the possibility of permanent disability and death to both person and horse. I understand that this Waiver and Release of Liability is intended to address all of the risks of any kind associated with the boarding of horse(s) and/or participation in any aspect of horse riding, horse riding lessons, horse riding clinics, hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) other equine activity; or with my involvement in any such equine activity, including, particularly, such risks created by actions, inactions, or negligence on the part of Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. or its directors, officers, members, employees, agents, volunteers, successors or assigns, including but not limited to, risks created by the following: (a) the use of the equipment and tack, the premises and the facilities; (b) the determination of Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. of a participant's ability to safely manage a particular horse or to engage in any particular horse riding activity; (c) the lack or inadequacy of policies, rules or regulations of the boarding premises and facilities and/or the horse riding lessons or clinics; (d) the failure of Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. to foresee or protect me from actions, inactions, negligence, recklessness or intentional or criminal conduct of others; (e) the inadequacy or unavailability of medical facilities or treatment; (f) the lack or inadequacy of supervision; or (g) theft, fire, disease and other loss or damage.

**3. Assumption of Risk.** I assume all risks, known and unknown, foreseeable and unforeseeable, in any way connected with the boarding of my horse(s) and/or my participation in horse riding, horse riding lessons, horse riding clinics, hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) any other equine activity. I accept personal responsibility for any liability, injury, loss or damage in any way connected with the boarding of my horse(s) and/or my participation in horse riding, horse riding lessons, horse riding clinics, hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) any other equine activity. I assume the risk for not wearing a certified and approved riding helmet, saddles or other necessary equipment to protect my safety. I assume all risk and liability for my own injuries and damages and all injuries and damages of my horse(s). I assume all risk and liability while on the premises of Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. and also while attending activities sponsored by Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. that occur off the premises of Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. I agree that Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. is not liable for those persons that I invite as guests or as professionals to Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. who may or may not ride horses while at Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. I agree that Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. does not assume the risk for those horses or persons that come to Lucky Farms, LLC/ Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. to visit me and I agree to inform my guests that if they are going to ride at Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc., they may not ride without signing this agreement.

**4. Release and Waiver.** I release Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. and their directors, officers, members, managers, employees, agents, volunteers, successors and assigns from any and all liability for, and waive any and all claims for injury, loss or damage in any way connected with the boarding of my horse(s) and/or my participation in horse riding, horse riding lessons, horse riding clinics, hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) any other equine activity (a "Claim), whether or not caused in whole or in part by the negligence or other misconduct of Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc., or any of the individuals mentioned above.

**5. Indemnification.** I agree to indemnify and to hold harmless (in other words, to reimburse and to be responsible for) Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. and its directors, officers, members, managers, employees, agents, volunteers, successors and assigns from all claims for any liability, injury, loss, damage or expense, including attorneys' fees (including the cost of defending any claim I might make, or that might be made on my behalf, that is released or waived by this instrument), in any way connected with or arising out of the boarding of my horse(s) and/or my participation in horse riding, horse riding lessons, horse riding clinics,



hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) any other equine activity, whether or not caused in whole or in part by the negligence or other misconduct of Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. or any of the individuals mentioned above.

**6. Binding Effect.** This instrument shall be binding upon my relatives, personal representatives, heirs, beneficiaries, next of kin or assigns and shall inure to the benefit of Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. and their respective successors and assigns.

**7. Consent to Medical Treatment.**  I authorize/  do not authorize (*select one*) Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. to provide me, through medical personnel of its choice, customary medical assistance, transportation and emergency medical services. This consent does not impose a duty upon Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. to provide such assistance, transportation or service. I understand that if I do not authorize medical assistance, transportation or emergency medical services under this paragraph, neither Lucky Farms, LLC, nor Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc., shall have any duty whatsoever to provide any form of assistance in the event I may be injured in any manner contemplated by this document.

**8. Severability.** If any term or provision of this instrument or the application thereof to any persons or circumstances shall to any extent or for any reason be invalid or unenforceable, the remainder of this instrument and the application of such term or provision to persons or circumstances other than those as to which is held invalid or unenforceable shall not be affected thereby, and each term and provision of the instrument shall be valid and enforced to the fullest extent permitted by law.

**9. Applicable Law.** Because Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. is located in the State of Indiana, and in order to provide certainty in the law to be applied to the construction of this instrument, this instrument shall be governed, construed and enforced in accordance with the law of the State of Indiana.

*This is a waiver and release of liability. I have read this waiver, release of liability, indemnification and consent. I understand that I have given up substantial rights by signing it. I am signing this waiver, release of liability, indemnification and consent voluntarily.*

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Printed Name	Signature	Date
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If the person participating in the program is not yet 18 years old (21 years old if out-of-state resident), **ALL** custodial parents or legal guardians must also sign:

*In exchange for my/our child or ward being allowed to board his/her horse(s) with Lucky Farms, LLC/Children's TherAplay Foundation, Inc. and/or participate in horse riding, horse riding lessons, horse riding clinics, hippotherapy (including various positioning and tandem hippotherapy) any other equine activity, and as the custodial parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the above-named individual, I/we verify that I/we fully understand, agree to and accept all provisions of this waiver, release of liability, indemnification and consent.*

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Printed Name (Parent or Guardian)	Signature	Date
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Printed Name (Parent or Guardian)	Signature	Date
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