

Participant Handbook



HIGH HOPES
Therapeutic Riding, Inc.

**High Hopes Therapeutic Riding, Inc.
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Tel: 860-434-1974
Fax: 860-434-3723
Website: www.highhopestr.org**

High Hopes Staff Contacts:**Main Phone Number: 860-434-1974***Please leave general messages, including cancellations on extension 110.*

For questions regarding program, please contact the Program Director ext 116.

Staff:

Executive Director/Instructor – Kitty Stalsburg, ext. 113, kstalsburg@highhopestr.org

Program Director/Instructor – Liz Adams, ext. 116, ladams@highhopestr.org

Office Manager – Susan Shulman, ext. 128, sshulman@highhopestr.org

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Equine Operations Director– Holly Sundmacker, ext. 127, hsundmacker@highhopestr.org

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Volunteer Manager/Instructor – Megan Ellis, ext. 112 mellis@highhopestr.org

Volunteer Coordinator/Instructor – Courtney Bernard, ext. 121, cbernard@highhopestr.org

Special Programs Manager/Instructor – Laura Brown, ext. 118, lbrown@highhopestr.org

Special Programs Coord./Instructor – Sarah Carlson, ext. 115, scarlson@highhopestr.org

Lesson Manager/Instructor – Lauren Fitzgerald, ext. 114, lfitzgerald@highhopestr.org

Barn Assistant/Instructor – Kathryn Vine (leave message at ext. 110)

Barn Assistant – Juanita Paris (leave message at ext. 110)

Caretaker – Deborah Hansen (leave message at ext. 110)

Barbara Abrams - LPC/Instructor (leave message at ext. 110)

Carolyn Jagielski - Physical Therapist/Instructor (leave message at ext. 110)

Dawn Nelligan – Therapeutic Recreation Specialist/Instructor (leave message at ext. 110)

Donna Latella - Occupational Therapist/Instructor (leave message at ext.110)

Holly Ridgway - Instructor (leave message at ext. 110)

Jonnie Edwards – Instructor (leave message at ext. 110)

Patty Ganey – Instructor (leave message at ext. 110)

High Hopes Participant Handbook

The following information, policies and guidelines are designed to provide our participants and visitors with a safe, enjoyable and beneficial experience at High Hopes.

Programs & Schedules - High Hopes offers a variety of innovative programs that provide educational and therapeutic equestrian activities including:

Therapeutic Riding Lessons are planned with the individual's educational, physical, social, and/or recreational goals in mind. Lessons may include warm-up exercises, skill development, activities or games to reinforce goals, and trail rides. Classes may be individual (up to 30 minutes) or group (up to 60 minutes) depending on rider needs and schedule availability. High Hopes operates year round, offering four semesters per year – the Fall and Spring semesters are 12-weeks in length, while Winter and Summer semesters are 6-weeks long.

Equine Learning Program (ELP). These unmounted sessions provide a one-on-one learning experience with High Hopes staff and volunteers to develop horse care and stable management skills, and to achieve personal goals through working with and around horses. This may include grooming, tacking, feeding, bathing, and other equine-related activities. These sessions are scheduled during the same 12-week and 6-week therapeutic riding semesters.

Carriage Driving Lessons add another dimension to the overall equine experience. The stability offered by the seat in the vehicle enables individuals to be more independent without relying upon sidewalkers for support. Carriage driving sessions include a variety of activities including skill development, obstacle courses and training techniques. Carriage Driving sessions are scheduled during the same 12-week and 6-week therapeutic riding semesters.

Summer Camp This integrated program brings together children with and without special needs, ages 4–16, and teaches them horse care, riding, stable management, as well as offering participation in special equine-related projects and activities. These four-day morning sessions are offered during the summer months.

High Hopes Horse Show Days take place in the Spring with riders being given the opportunity to demonstrate their skills for family and friends. For those seeking competitive opportunities, High Hopes will notify participants of area horse shows which incorporate classes for individuals with special needs.

Specialty Field Trips are available to groups. They may include a mounted and/or unmounted component, a tour of the facility, and a lecture relative to our mission and its related topics. Field trips are scheduled on an individual basis in advance throughout the year.

Pony Power Demonstrations by a High Hopes therapy pony and trained staff and volunteers provide a great opportunity to bring the equine experience to those unable to come to High Hopes. Outreach visits are scheduled in advance. Please contact High Hopes for details.

PATH Intl. Approved Instructor Training Course is designed to prepare individuals to plan and implement safe, effective therapeutic riding classes. Candidates who successfully complete the course requirements have the option of taking an exam to become PATH Intl. Registered or Advanced Instructors. The course consists of 100 hours of lecture and more than 100 hours of practicum. Subjects taught include disabilities, anatomy, kinesiology, physiology, psychology, and the operation and management of a therapeutic riding center. This course is offered in an intensive 8-week format and a more protracted 4-month format at various times throughout the year.

High Hopes is a teaching facility. As such, there are times during the year in which instructor training candidates and interns student teach participants under the supervision of a High Hopes Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor.

Educational Workshops and Seminars covering a variety of topics such as: cognitive impairments, sensory integration and riding, seasonal horse care, maintenance of tack and special equipment, and centered riding are scheduled and offered throughout the year. Please check the High Hopes calendar for educational opportunities at www.highhopestr.org

High Hopes Policies and Procedures

Non-Discrimination Policy

High Hopes Therapeutic Riding, Inc. accepts participants and volunteers regardless of income, race, color, nationality or ethnic origin.

Fee for Services – *The actual cost for one participant to ride for a 12-week session is \$1,200. High Hopes Therapeutic Riding is able to subsidize the majority of this cost through the generosity of individual and corporate sponsors as well as foundation grants and proceeds from fundraising events. The fee participants and their families are asked to pay is \$490 per 12-week session which is slightly more than a quarter of the actual cost. Those families that need additional support can apply for scholarship assistance which is awarded based on the availability of scholarship funds and the financial need of the participants and/or their family. Questions concerning the cost of services at High Hopes can be directed to Liz Adams, Program Director, ladams@highhopestr.org, 860-434-1974 Ext. 116.*

Fees & Payment

Lessons are prepaid on a semester basis. The tuition for each semester is due by the first day of class unless a pre-arranged payment plan or scholarship has been established through individual arrangement with our business office. Currently, fees are as follows **(and are subject to change)**:

*Therapeutic Riding Lessons, Equine Learning & Carriage Driving Sessions –
12-week semester \$490
6-week semester \$245*

Please call High Hopes for Summer Camp fees

Scholarships

With our commitment to accepting participants into our program based on therapeutic need, regardless of financial means, we offer further scholarship assistance to those unable to pay the established fees. Scholarships (in the form of adjusted fees) are rewarded through a simple application process. Applications are available in the Program and Business Offices or on-line at www.highhopestr.org.

Scheduling

Participants are notified of schedule enrollment four weeks prior to the start of a session. Confirmation of intent to participate must be made to the office at least two weeks prior to each session to guarantee participation. A calendar of class dates is provided prior to the start of each semester. Please make note of any days when programs are not in session (holidays and spring break, etc.).

Attendance & Cancellation Policies

High Hopes expects consistent attendance by all participants. If you are unable to attend a regularly schedule session, notification must be made by calling High Hopes at 860-434-1974, ext. 110. Leave a message at this extension only so sufficient notice may be provided to staff and volunteers.

Make-up sessions are not available unless High Hopes needs to cancel classes due to some unforeseen circumstance such as inclement weather. At that time, all reasonable attempts will be made to notify participants at least 2 hours prior to the change and an opportunity to reschedule will be provided.

Attire, Helmets & Footwear

All participants must wear an ASTM/SEI approved riding helmet with the chin strap secured when working with or around horses, which is provided by High Hopes and are sanitized on a quarterly basis. High Hopes saddles are equipped with safety stirrups. For additional safety, participants should wear a sturdy-soled boot with a ¼ inch heel. *All riders that ride off lead at a trot or canter will be required to wear proper riding boots (smooth soled boots with a heel).* We have many pairs to borrow in the lounge!

Appropriate pants include: jeans, heavy cotton trousers or riding breeches. Nylon and loose-fitting or stretchy materials are discouraged as they are slippery on a saddle. Participants are encouraged to wear weather appropriate jackets and gloves. Please note that the indoor arena is not heated (or air-conditioned).

Participant Records

Participants are required to update their paperwork annually. This paperwork is required in order for High Hopes to maintain PATH Intl. Premier Accreditation status. Participants are not able to continue without the required updated paperwork.

Change of Health or Medication Status

Participants must inform High Hopes immediately and in writing of any changes in health status, conditions and medications. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in weight, medications and dosages, revised diagnoses, medical interventions, surgeries, etc.

Holiday Closings - The High Hopes office is closed on:

- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day

Confidentiality

Any information pertaining to the participants at High Hopes must be held in strict confidentiality. It is critical that we respect each individual. Confidentiality is considered one of the most basic responsibilities of our staff and volunteers.

Parking

The speed limit on High Hopes' grounds is 5 mph. The carport is to be used for drop-off and pick-up purposes only. Handicap accessible parking is available at designated areas in the front of the building.

Telephone

The telephone located at the front desk may be used by our participants and their families in the event of an emergency. Please see staff for assistance.

Conflict Resolution

Problems should be handled immediately, confidentially, and directly between the parties involved and High Hopes staff. Parents and participants who feel that their concerns are not being addressed may contact the Program Director.

Safety and Conduct for Participants & Visitors

High Hopes supports all efforts to promote safe conditions at its facility. Working with horses is a high risk activity. The following rules must be adhered to at all times:

- Participants are required to use gentle hands and feet while on or near any horse.
- Running, yelling, abusive or aggressive actions are not allowed.
- Appropriate attire and footwear (no sandals) are required in barn and paddock areas.
- Hand-feeding of the horses is not allowed under any circumstance.
- Photography or video are not allowed without permission from staff.
- Please do not tap on the arena windows as it may startle the horses.
- Children must be supervised by an adult at all times.
- Parents may view lessons from the lounge or arena rail just inside the stable door.
- No pets are allowed on the grounds.
- Food or beverages are not allowed in the barn or riding arena.
- Smoking, alcohol or illegal substances are not allowed on the premises.
- Visitors wishing to tour the facility or grounds must be escorted by High Hopes staff.
- Please respect any posted off-limit areas including the pond, barn, and paddock areas.

High Hopes has taken careful assessment of its facility and grounds in the development of a comprehensive Risk Management Plan. Emergency procedures are posted in the barn and are available at the Volunteer Sign-In desk for your review.

Forms of Communication

Consultation - The High Hopes staff are available for consultation throughout the application and enrollment process, as well as during the program sessions. Comment Forms are available in the lounge, or you may contact the Executive Director with any questions, concerns, suggestions or comments at: 860-434-1974, ext. 113.

Program Newsletter – a periodic newsletter for participants is sent via email, posted on the Rider Bulletin Board and available in the lounge. It includes program highlights, upcoming events and relevant program updates for participants, families, caregivers and involved professionals.

Participant and Volunteer Information Bulletin Boards – include a variety of information and are posted by High Hopes staff and fellow participants on related topics, news, updates and upcoming events. Please be sure to check it regularly and feel free to contribute.

The High Hopes Rider – is a periodic newsletter sent via email and by hard copy if requested. Copies are available at the front desk. High Hopes also sends occasional e-blasts to alert participants of special events and program updates.

Website – Please visit the High Hopes website at www.highhopestr.org for detailed information on our programs, as well as calendar items and upcoming events.

High Hopes Statement of Participant Eligibility or Dismissal

High Hopes Therapeutic Riding offers services to individuals with special needs. Prior to participation, an assessment is conducted by a therapeutic riding instructor and therapist if needed. Eligibility for participation in High Hopes' programs is based solely upon an individual's ability to participate meaningfully and safely, provided the necessary resources are available including: an instructor, horse, volunteers and a class available which meets an individual's needs. Financial consideration is not taken into account in determining the eligibility for participation.

As a Premier Accredited PATH Intl. operating center, High Hopes fully ascribes to the Precautions and Contraindications as recommended by the PATH Intl. Medical Committee as well as professional standards. Therefore, our professional staff provides initial and ongoing evaluations for all prospective and active participants.

Due to the nature of therapeutic riding and other equine related activities, there are individuals for whom High Hopes' programs are deemed inappropriate during the evaluation process, not accepted for enrollment, or eligible to continue in High Hopes' programs. This determination is made on the basis of physical, behavioral and other limitations.

Individuals accepted into High Hopes' programs are required to follow High Hopes' rules and procedures and take part in periodic progress reviews. During these reviews, or as the result of unusual occurrences during a program session, the High Hopes professional staff may find that continuance in the program for a given individual is inappropriate. For this reason, High Hopes reserves the right to discontinue participation of an individual in its programs when it is deemed that discontinuance is in the best interests of High Hopes and/or the individual concerned.

High Hopes reserves the right to decide when we are unable to serve an applicant due to unavailable resource(s) and or/safety concerns including PATH Intl. guidelines relating to contraindications for participation.

The Connecticut Equine Liability Act is Section 52-577p of the Connecticut General Statutes. That Section provides: **Assumption of risk by person engaged in recreational equestrian activities.** Each person engaged in recreational equestrian activities shall assume the risk and legal responsibility for any injury to his person or property arising out of the hazards inherent in equestrian sports, unless the injury was proximately caused by the negligence of the person providing the horse or horses to the individual engaged in

recreational equestrian activities or the failure to guard or warn against a dangerous condition, use, structure or activity by the person providing the horse or horses or his agents or employees.

Equine Code of Ethics

High Hopes will support Equine Assisted Therapy activities while providing the horses in its care with the highest ethical consideration. Horses working in programs at High Hopes are selected by the professional staff. Once a horse is in residence at High Hopes, it becomes a reflection of the program in its entirety. The care of each horse is given with professional expertise and management. The High Hopes staff considers the comfort and well-being of each rider, volunteer and horse their highest priority.

Horses are scheduled to work in a manner consistent with their physical ability. The needs of the herd are met with regard to workload, feeding and general care. Prior to work in program, each horse is inspected for injury, illness or discomfort. Horses are not asked to work when they are uncomfortable or unfit. Horses no longer able to serve in the High Hopes programs are given every consideration when placed elsewhere.

Equine Limitations – It takes a special horse to become a part of the High Hopes herd. Only a small percentage of trial horses actually end up in program, demonstrating that they have the high level of patience, tolerance and the steady rhythmic gait required to be a good therapy horse. And like people, no two horses are alike – each offers specific benefits to our riders, with their own needs and limitations. Therefore, it is critical that we do not exceed each horse's weight limit and work schedule established by equine professionals. We ask for your understanding as we try our best to serve our riders within the limits of our herd. High Hopes strives to provide alternative activities such as carriage driving and the equine learning program to those for which we may not have a suitable horse.

Additional Program Information

Volunteer Program

Volunteers have always played an important role in the programs and development of High Hopes. We encourage you to consider volunteering at High Hopes. If you are a parent with a child in our program, volunteering directly with your child may not provide the most effective riding experience for them. However we do encourage you to assist another rider or perform another volunteer role in the stable, office or assist with special events. Please see a staff member or contact the Volunteer Manager for more information.

Board of Trustees – As a nonprofit corporation with 501(c)3 tax exempt status, High Hopes is governed by a voluntary 21-member Board of Trustees.

Annual Membership Meeting and Annual Report

In October of each year, High Hopes holds its Annual Membership Meeting and publishes its Annual Report for the prior fiscal year. We invite all High Hopes participants and volunteers along with family and friends to attend. The Annual Meeting also serves as the format to present annual High Hopes awards & acknowledgements.

Thank you for taking time to review our policies and procedures which are designed to provide our participants with a safe, effective and enjoyable environment. We encourage your input and suggestions. Please feel free to forward comments to Executive Director, Kitty Stalsburg at 860-434-1974, ext. 113 or email: kstalsburg@highhopestr.org