



Dear Participant, Parent, or Caregiver,

Welcome to Grace Lake Ministries Therapeutic Horsemanship Program! We are looking forward to serving you. Please read through this handbook thoroughly. This handbook will give you an overview of Grace Lake and our program's policies and procedures.

Grace Lake adheres to the high safety standards of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH Intl.) and is a PATH Intl. Center Member. We offer several distinctive therapeutic horsemanship programs listed in this handbook and below are a couple of other unique qualities that our participants enjoy.

First, Grace Lake is a God centered program. Each of our classes begin with prayer. Our mission is to provide therapeutic horsemanship to people with disabilities and others in need of hope and healing in a Christian environment. Our goal is to facilitate the development of wholeness into the lives of the people that we serve. We believe that wholeness begins by knowing and following Jesus Christ. We trust God to lead us down the path that each individual needs to reach their full potential.

Second, our riders enjoy the beautiful trail rides offered on this historic Collin County 230-acre ranch. We are grateful to have the opportunity to work on balance, focus, and improve riding skills using natural obstacles while participants connect with their horse in a peaceful and natural setting of ponds, hills, trees, and wildlife.

As a result of our generous giving community, we are able to provide efficient, effective, and excellent therapeutic horsemanship programs since we began in 2004. Grace Lake is committed to keeping our programs affordable for all in need of hope and healing. As a 501©3 nonprofit organization, we keep our cost low through fund raising events, individual contributions, and grants and foundations. With this commitment, we need help from our participant's families to assist with our fundraising efforts throughout the year. You are an important part of our success!

Please read through this manual and let me know if you have any questions.

Blessings,

Holly Robinson

Director

director@gracelakeministries.org

(972) 837-4621



Participant Handbook

1. GETTING STARTED

First, complete the Participant Paperwork. Then either mail (Grace Lake, 9611 FM 1827, Anna, TX 75409) or email (director@gracelakeministries.org) your completed paperwork to Grace Lake. Once your paperwork has been received and processed, you will be contacted to set up a time for an evaluation. At the time of your evaluation, the instructor and / or Therapist will discuss each program with you and make a recommendation as to which program is most appropriate for the participant.

If an opening does not currently exist, then we will put your participant on a waiting list, and you will be notified as soon as an opening becomes available.

2. PROGRAMS

Therapeutic Riding Program: Participants are scheduled to ride once a week for 45 minutes. Private lessons (1 rider) and Group lessons (up to 4 riders) are offered. Classes are grouped into sessions of Spring, Summer, and Fall. All therapeutic riding classes are instructed or supervised by a PATH Int. certified riding instructor.

Physical Therapy Program (Hippotherapy): Participants in this program will participate 1-2 times per week. A licensed Physical Therapist Certified by the American Hippotherapy Association (AHA) will conduct all sessions. This program offers outpatient PT treatment with the horse being utilized as one of the treatment tools within the treatment visit. Some insurances cover this type of therapy. Hippotherapy is also grouped into sessions of Spring, Summer, and Fall and are typically 1 hour. Between sessions, Physical Therapy office visits without the use of the horse are available.

Groundwork Connection Program: Private lessons (1 participant) are offered 45 minutes weekly. These classes are taught or supervised by a PATH Intl. certified Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning with extensive knowledge in natural horsemanship. Classes are grouped into sessions of Spring, Summer, and Fall. This program increases the participants relational and communication skills. When you are on the ground with your horse, you can bond and develop a closer relationship than when riding.

Minimum Age: Therapeutic Riding: 5 years old

Groundwork Connection: 5 years old

Hippotherapy: 2 years old

Weight Maximums: Therapeutic Riding and Hippotherapy: 120-150lbs. Considerations include the availability of a suitable horse related to the height, weight, cognition, balance, and behavior of the participant. Each horse must stay fit and healthy to be able to perform their job. A rider towards the top of the weight range must be a completely balanced rider. If an appropriate horse is not available due to the participant's weight and/or physical abilities, the

Groundwork Connection program may be recommended to safely enjoy the therapeutic value of horsemanship.

3. COST

Spring Session (10-week session): Therapeutic Riding Group Class: \$400
Therapeutic Riding Private Class: \$600
Groundwork Connection Private Class: \$600

Summer Session (5-week session): Therapeutic Riding Group Class: \$200
Therapeutic Riding Private Class: \$300
Groundwork Connection Private Class: \$300

Fall Session (10-week session): Therapeutic Riding Group Class: \$400
Therapeutic Riding Private Class: \$600
Groundwork Connection Private Class: \$600

Hippotherapy is \$175 per treatment visit ~Please note that Therapeutic Riding and Groundwork Connection costs are for the full session. Hippotherapy cost is per individual visit.

Grace Lake provides financial assistance of 10% and up to 90% of the cost of tuition based on annual income. Please see the Financial Aid Application for more information.

4. SAFETY

~ Severe anxiety, aversion to the outdoors, or intolerance of heat or cold may limit participation. ~ If seizures are severe or frequent, it may not be safe to be around horses.
~ Behavior must not pose a safety threat to others or horses.
~ PATH recommendations will be reviewed to identify specific situation that make riding / horsemanship unsafe.
~ Balance: For therapeutic riding, participants must be able to maintain a steady center of balance on a moving surface with minimal assistance. For physical therapy, participants must be able to maintain a steady center of balance on a static surface with maximum assistance.

5. PARTICIPANT DISMISSAL & DISCHARGE POLICY

It is the discretion of Grace Lake's staff to accept or remove a Participant from the program. The results of a risk/benefit analysis will be considered. Participants who do not adhere to the rules and procedures or meet the guidelines for eligibility are subject to dismissal or discharge. Possible grounds for dismissal may include but are not limited to: conduct endangering another participant, volunteer, staff, or horse, conduct endangering themselves, consistent failure to follow safety procedures, a gain in weight above the Grace Lake maximum, frequent cancellations, or no shows. The development of a contraindicated condition or the deterioration of a condition to the point horseback riding / horsemanship is no longer beneficial

or could be harmful to the participant or where safety for the participant or others has become a concern.

Participants at Grace Lake shall have no history of inappropriate behavior with fire, or any tendencies or history of abuse or violence directed toward other people or animals. Grace Lake reserves the right to deny services to any individual based upon concerns for the applicant's safety and/or the safety of the horses, volunteers, staff, facility, or other reasons in accordance with PATH Intl. operating center guidelines.

6. ABSENCES AND CANCELLATIONS

Grace Lake programs are conducted outdoors and subject to weather cancellations. If Grace Lake must cancel a class due to weather or other circumstances, we will schedule a makeup class at the end of the session. Grace Lake keeps you updated via text messages in Remind. To receive texts from Remind, you must sign up by contacting Holly at director@gracelakeministries.org.

- ❖ Due to our schedule, it is not possible to schedule individual makeup classes for cancellations other than weather makeups.
- ❖ If you will be absent, please text via Remind as soon as possible (or a minimum of 3 hours in advance) so that we may alert your volunteers.
- ❖ Participants who have excessive absences (3 or more) or more than 1 no-show in a session will be ineligible for future sessions.
- ❖ There will be no refunds for cancellations other than weather cancellations.
- ❖ If you have dates that you already know you will not be attending, please let us know via Remind text messages as soon as possible.

7. ATTIRE AND EQUIPMENT

~Boots with a one (1) inch heel are recommended but not required. Closed toed shoes are required.

~All riders are required to wear a helmet while mounted. We provide a variety of sizes of helmets. We recommend that you purchase your own.

~ To ensure a safe helmet fit, please avoid beads, high ponytails, and bows. Low ponytails and close fitted braids are acceptable.

~Long pants are recommended. Please do not wear slick material pants.

~Do not wear big or priceless jewelry as it can easily get lost or caught on something.

~It is common for the temperature to feel significantly different at our barn (colder and warmer). We suggest wearing layers in cool weather. This means wear warm clothes that can be added or removed as needed.

8. OUR VOLUNTEERS

Grace Lake has an amazing group of volunteers that enable each class to take place. Please remember they are busy people who take the time out their week to be blessing to our riders. Our volunteers are the heartbeat of our program.

As participants of our program, we ask that you respect our valuable volunteers by:

- Giving as much notice as possible if cancelling a scheduled lesson. Volunteers are here for you. If you are not coming, they do not want to come either. Please cancel at least 3 hours before your scheduled lesson or as soon as possible to save volunteers and staff time planning.
- Attending your scheduled lesson. We understand that people get sick, and things happen. Please remember, when you sign up for a session there are up to 5 people working their schedule around class time each week. Because of this, there are no make-ups or refunds for non-weather-related absences.
- Showing the volunteers you appreciate their investment. They want to know that the time that they give is making a difference in the participant's life.