



# *Fieldstone Farm 2020 Student Handbook*





## **Welcome!**

Fieldstone Farm is recognized as one of the largest therapeutic riding centers in North America. Celebrating 40 years of improving the lives of those with special needs, we see horses changing lives every day.

Not only do the horses keep students strong, they motivate, soothe, challenge and reward. Volunteers become trusted extensions of the circle of support. And, everyone at the Farm embraces diversity and the gifts each person has within them.

We know you will have a wonderful experience here.  
Thank you for joining our family!

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# GENERAL INFORMATION

## **HISTORY**

Fieldstone Farm was founded in 1978 by Kevin Ellison. Our program started with eight students riding five borrowed horses. Over the years, the program operated out of loaned facilities in a variety of different locations including Lake Farmpark, Dorchester Farms, Halali Farms and Salmor Stables in 1990. By 1992, Fieldstone Farm had expanded its staff and volunteers to enable operation year round, six days per week. In 1995, Fieldstone Farm began a Capital Campaign to raise \$4.5 million to build and endow a state-of-the-art facility. The program moved into its permanent home in November of 1997. Currently, we serve more than 1,000 students a year from a six county area.

## **FACILITY LOCATION**

Fieldstone Farm is located on the east side of Snyder Road, 1.5 miles east of Route 306 (Chillicothe Road), south of Bell Street and north of East Washington Street. Our mailing address is 16497 Snyder Road, Chagrin Falls, OH, 44023.

## **ACCREDITATION**

The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) International is the national non-profit association that promotes and supports equine-assisted activities for individuals with disabilities. PATH International sets the safety guidelines and teaching standards for the industry. Fieldstone Farm is a Premier

Accredited member of PATH International, which is the highest possible accreditation. Fewer than 30 percent of other programs like ours achieve and maintain this status. All Fieldstone Farm Instructors are certified by PATH International.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

Fieldstone Farm embraces diversity and accepts students regardless of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin and economic status.

### **BENEFITS OF THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP**

Our equine programs are uniquely designed to meet the educational, behavioral, social and physical goals for people with disabilities.

***Physical Disabilities*** – The horse’s unique, three-dimensional movement replicates the movement that the human body experiences while walking. Therefore, sitting on a horse helps to strengthen and stimulate core muscles, which often improves walking ability.

***Cognitive Disabilities*** – Programming is designed to meet individual educational plans. The result is a creative, progressive, experiential learning opportunity, which directly relates to students’ goals.

***Psychosocial Disorders*** – Horses provide motivation and encouragement. The relationship that develops between participant and horse nurtures the development of skills such as responsibility, increased self-esteem, honesty and respect.



## PROGRAMS

For any of the programs listed below, please ask your Instructor or the Student Coordinator for more information.

### **THERAPEUTIC RIDING**

Each lesson incorporates the educational, physical, social and recreational goals of the individual student. The lessons are scheduled for 45 minutes, which includes 15 minutes to mount followed by a 30 minute lesson. Group lessons have 3-5 students per class.

Lessons may include some unmounted time devoted to expanding horsemanship skills. Students may groom, saddle, feed, bathe or perform other appropriate activities that develop horsemanship skills.

Continual participation in the program is suggested for maximum therapeutic benefits.

### **HIPPOTHERAPY**

Hippotherapy is available for participants with specific goals conducted with a physician's recommendation under the direction of a Physical Therapist, Speech Therapist or Occupational Therapist and a PATH certified Instructor.

### **THERAPEUTIC CARRIAGE DRIVING**

Carriage driving challenges participants physically and cognitively. Fieldstone Farm has several carriages and carts, all of which can be used by people who are ambulatory or use a wheelchair. There are no weight limit restrictions in the carriage driving program.

### **EQUICLUB**

Fieldstone Farm's EquiClub is an unmounted, equine-based program, focused on providing social and experiential learning opportunities. Participants will gain independence and achieve personal growth while learning about horses in an enjoyable, accessible and structured environment.

### **PERFORMANCE EVENTS**

Each year, Fieldstone Farm students are invited to participate in an offsite local horse show, and a show held here at the Farm. Riders are notified in advance of dates, locations and level of ability required for each class offered. There are modest participant fees associated with each show.

### **SUMMER CAMP**

Summer Camp is a fun, enriching, horse-filled day camp experience focused on improving horsemanship skills. Adventurers enjoy outdoor nature and art activities, riding or carriage driving, horse care and themed activities. Fieldstone Farm's summer camp enables students to participate in a more intense, hands-on equine experience.

### **GAITWAY HIGH SCHOOL**

Gaitway High School is a public high school located on site and administered by the Geauga County Educational Service Center. Gaitway High School offers a non-traditional setting for students who benefit from a more supportive educational environment.

### **VETERANS**

We offer specialized programming for veterans designed to support emotional and physical wellness. Veterans will learn ways to overcome the struggles of everyday civilian life and heal from the emotional and physical scars of military service.



# POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## **TUITION**

The tuition that Fieldstone Farm charges its participants represents less than half of the real cost of service. Tuition is evaluated annually towards year-end for any changes that might be made to the coming year.

Tuition varies according to the program. It is calculated based on the day of the week and prorated for holidays and Fieldstone Farm closings. Each year's tuition is communicated to all Fieldstone Farm participants prior to the start of the new year.

## **RIDERSHIP FUNDS**

It is Fieldstone Farm policy that no one will be denied an opportunity to participate because of an inability to pay for their lessons.

We have established a Ridership Program to assist with tuition for those who are unable to pay the entire cost. Because we must raise the funds from outside resources to cover these lessons, we ask that groups and individuals pay as much of their tuition as possible. Riderships are available on a limited basis and are awarded and renewed annually.

For more information on Ridership requirements and/or an application, please contact Katy Flint, Outreach Specialist, at (440) 708-0013 x145 or [kflint@fieldstonefarmtrc.com](mailto:kflint@fieldstonefarmtrc.com).

### **MAKING A PAYMENT**

Payment for lessons is due the month **before** services are performed.

Thank you for making a payment through one of four ways:

1. By automatic recurring credit card deduction:
  - Complete an authorization form found on our website under “Our Programs/Student Forms” and follow instructions on the form for submission.
2. By clicking on the link in your emailed monthly tuition statement that will allow you to pay securely online via credit card or with a bank check.
3. Securely online at [www.fieldstonefarmtrc.com](http://www.fieldstonefarmtrc.com) using a Visa or MasterCard.

4. By Check:

- Deposited in the student payment box in the mounting area;
- Mailed to: Fieldstone Farm, 16497 Snyder Road, Chagrin Falls, OH 44023; or
- Scheduled through your bank's online bill pay services.

Requests for special payment arrangements must be made prior to receiving services. Any participant with a 90-day balance or greater on their account is subject to dismissal. If you have questions, please contact Leslie Mapes, Chief Operating Officer, at (440) 708-0013 x131 or [lmapes@fieldstonefarmtrc.com](mailto:lmapes@fieldstonefarmtrc.com).

#### **ATTIRE**

All students must wear an ASTM/SEI approved riding helmet with the chin harness secured when riding, driving or working around the horses.

For student safety, appropriate footwear for horseback riding is important. This includes a sturdy-soled, ankle-high boot with a heel. The heel should be no greater than one inch. Shoes with bulky rubber soles do not move easily into and out of the stirrup and are therefore unsafe for horseback riding. Footwear for students with special physical needs will be considered on an individual basis.

Appropriate trousers/pants for horseback riding include jeans, heavy cotton trousers, riding breeches or chaps over trousers. Shorts are prohibited. Stretch pants, snow

pants, satiny leggings and other loose fitting or stretchy materials are not recommended.

In cold weather, students are encouraged to wear gloves. Hats are not permitted under helmets for safety reasons.

If not appropriately dressed, students may be offered a ground lesson if there is adequate staff/volunteer support.

### **SAFETY RULES**

Fieldstone Farm strives to provide the safest possible environment for students, volunteers, staff and visitors. Horses, however specially-trained, can react unexpectedly. Working around and riding horses is a risk activity.

The following rules **must** be followed at all times:

- No smoking anywhere on the premise.
- No food, beverages or gum in the riding arena.
- No pets allowed on the grounds.
- All minors (including siblings) must be supervised.
- Closed shoes are required in the barn area. Sandals or open-toed shoes are not permitted.
- Students, parents and visitors must be escorted by a Fieldstone Farm volunteer or staff member when visiting the working areas of the barn.
- No running, pushing, yelling or other actions that might frighten a horse.

## **POLICY FOR POSSESSING WEAPONS**

No one shall possess any object that can be classified as a weapon or dangerous instrument in any Fieldstone Farm building. Weapons or dangerous instruments include any object which is used, or may be used, to inflict physical harm or property damage or to threaten to inflict such harm or damage. This policy includes fireworks, explosives, or munitions. Any prohibited articles will be confiscated with no promise of return.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Thoughtful conduct and self-control factor into the safety and enjoyment of all participants. All persons are expected to adhere to the following code of conduct:

- Respect all persons – no abusive language or actions.
- Respect all property.
- Refrain from loud, abrupt noises, actions or behaviors which may startle horses.

## **GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL**

Students/Families who cannot adhere to the policies or the Code of Conduct set forth in this handbook will be dismissed from all program activities.

## **EQUINE LIABILITY LAW**

According to Ohio House Bill 564 which became effective March 3, 1997: Equine (Horse) Activity Sponsor, Equine And/Or Property Owner is not liable for any damages suffered during an equine activity on these premises. A

horse is a large animal and may be unpredictable and dangerous at times. Extreme caution should be taken in their presence. Participants assume the inherent risk of equine activities.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

An absence is considered excused when we receive one of the following:

- Written notice on the cancellation calendar.
- A phone call on the cancellation line, 440-708-0012, more than 60 minutes prior to the student's class time.
- A request for a Leave of Absence, which is then approved by Fieldstone's Management Team.

### Unexcused Absences

Absences without prior notification are considered unexcused absences. Participants are permitted one unexcused absence in a six month period.

## **STUDENT ILLNESS**

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

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

## **CANCELLATIONS**

We know that there are times when students will not be able to attend their class. Please let us know of the absence in one of two following ways:

### Absence/Make-Up Calendar

For planned absences, please use the calendar located in the waiting/mounting area. Please write your name, class level and lesson time on the day for which you must cancel.

A student seeking a make-up time may sign up for an opening created by a student cancellation noted on the calendar. The class level for the make-up lesson and student's usual riding time must be the same.

### Cancellation Line

As a nonprofit, Fieldstone Farm relies on volunteers to help with the many tasks involved in lessons. Therefore, notice of cancellation well in advance of class is most respectful to our volunteers' time. For unscheduled absences, please call Fieldstone Farm's cancellation line 440-708-0012. Riding and Driving sessions cancelled with less than 60 minutes notice are considered unexcused and ineligible for a make-up. Hippotherapy sessions require a 24 hour notice.

### **LATE ARRIVAL**

Participants arriving more than 15 minutes late will not be able to participate in their scheduled mounted or driving lesson. A ground lesson may be offered based on staff or volunteer availability. Lessons missed due to late arrivals are not eligible for make-up.

### **MAKE-UP RIDING LESSONS**

Scheduling make-up lessons for riding is each student's/family's responsibility. Students who have an excused absence are eligible to receive a make-up class. A maximum of four absences in a two-month period can be made up. Make-up lessons must be scheduled as soon as possible, but no longer than three months after the absence. Availability of make-up lessons is not guaranteed.

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Students who anticipate not being able to attend their regular lesson time due to a medical, health & well-being or family issue, may apply for a leave of absence no later than the 4<sup>th</sup> cancelled lesson. The request must be in writing with an attached note from a licensed healthcare or social work professional. Requests are reviewed and approved.

Students may take advantage of medical leave for a maximum of an eight week period, beginning with the first absence, during which time fees are waived. After that, students may hold their lesson spot by paying all customary fees in full or choose to return to the waiting list.

Students returning from a medical leave will need to present a note from their licensed healthcare or social work professional releasing the student to participate in their usual activities.

For students who take advantage of the Ridership Program and who require a leave of absence, any credits issued will be issued to the Ridership portion first and to the self-pay portion of an account second.

# MISCELLANEOUS

## **CLOSING POLICY**

Fieldstone Farm may close due to severe weather, a power outage or for any reason that may cause unsafe conditions. In the event of a closing, Fieldstone Farm will be posted on local TV and radio stations.

When in doubt, call the cancellation line at 440-708-0012 for the most up-to-date information.

## **HOLIDAY CLOSINGS**

There are no lessons on:

- **Easter Weekend** (Friday through Sunday)
- **Memorial Day Weekend** (Friday after 12 noon through Monday)
- **July 4<sup>th</sup> Week**
- **Labor Day Weekend** (Friday after 12 noon through Monday)
- **Thanksgiving** (Wednesday through Sunday)

Holiday break usually begins around December 20. Classes typically resume on the second Monday in January.

## **WEATHER POLICY**

Fieldstone Farm will offer ground lessons if the weather is extremely hot or extremely cold. In extreme weather, some or all of a lesson may include horsemanship education. We try to maximize riding time when the

weather is good and save the equally important grounded lessons for when the weather does not cooperate. We know that some of our students thrive on keeping to a set of structured activities and not riding or driving may be difficult for them. If you are concerned about this possibility, please talk with your instructor to make a plan. Make-up lessons cannot be scheduled in lieu of ground lessons.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

Students are required to update their registration information and medical history forms annually. This paperwork is required to maintain our PATH International accreditation. All student forms must be updated between January 1 and March 1 of every year. Students are not permitted to participate without up-to-date forms.

### **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Safety and maximizing the therapeutic benefits of equine activities are primary concerns of a successful program. Due to the capacities of volunteer sidewalkers and current program horses, insurance requirements and industry standards, Fieldstone Farm is limited to instructing students who:

For riding:

- Weigh 180 pounds or less
- Are able to be effectively supported by sidewalkers

For all Fieldstone Farm programs:

- Do not exhibit conditions that are contraindicated (as determined by Fieldstone staff)
- Have current signed and dated paperwork
- Benefit physically, emotionally, socially and/or cognitively from a Fieldstone Farm program
- Exhibit safe behaviors with other participants, horses, volunteers and staff

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Student medical histories, diagnoses and related information are used by the Instructor to develop goal-oriented lesson plans. General information, as it relates to the success of the riding experience, is shared with volunteers on a need-to-know-basis.

### **CHANGING YOUR LESSON TIME**

Fieldstone Farm makes every effort to accommodate schedule changes when necessary, however an ideal time cannot be guaranteed. Talk with your instructor or Winni Spisak, Student Coordinator, if you need to make a change. Changes are processed based on the order they are received and the availability of appropriate class groupings.

### **PROGRAM WITHDRAWAL**

A paid three week notification is required when a student plans to withdraw from any Fieldstone Farm program. After that time, any lesson fees previously paid will be

refunded. Students who decide to return to riding after a withdrawal, receive priority on the waiting list.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

Problems or complaints are best handled immediately, confidentially and directly between the parties involved. Parents and students who feel that their concerns are not being adequately addressed may contact Leslie Mapes, Chief Operating Officer, who will follow up appropriately.

### **VISITORS**

Visitors are always welcome during business hours in the observation area of the facility. Children must be supervised at all times. If visitors would like more information about Fieldstone Farm or a tour of the entire facility, please arrange this with an Instructor in advance. You are responsible for your guests. *Visitors are not permitted in the barn area unless escorted by a Fieldstone Farm volunteer or staff member. All persons entering the barn area must follow the barn rules.*

### **PARKING**

The parking spaces closest to the portico are for student parking. If you do not need to park close to the door, please leave the most accessible parking spaces for students who do need them. The portico is to be used for drop off and pick up only.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Newsletter – Bits and Paces: Each student household receives this printed publication about Fieldstone Farm happenings. Please advise your Instructor if you are not receiving our mailings.

Pony Press: A monthly e-newsletter is sent to every student household. Please share your email address with your Instructor or student coordinator.

Rider Information Bulletin Board: In the waiting areas, there are bulletin boards reserved for information of interest to students and parents.

## **VOLUNTEER PROGRAM**

Fieldstone Farm cannot operate without the dedication of our trained volunteers. Volunteers prep the horses for lessons and assist in classes. Volunteers must be at least 14 years old and meet the requirements of the job description. All volunteer applicants over the age of 18 are subject to a criminal background check before they begin their service. Fieldstone Farm reserves the right to reject applicants who have been convicted of crimes involving violence, alcohol, theft, and any other crime we feel poses a possible risk to our students, staff, other volunteers and/or horses. Fieldstone Farm has the right to dismiss volunteers who present an issue of such nature during their service.

For more information on volunteer opportunities, please contact Lisa Sentic, Manager of Volunteer Services, at 440-708-0013 x127 or [lsentic@fieldstonefarmtrc.com](mailto:lsentic@fieldstonefarmtrc.com).

**We look forward to working together and hope you enjoy your equestrian experience with Fieldstone Farm.**

## **Contact Us**

Fieldstone Farm  
16497 Snyder Road  
Chagrin Falls, OH 44023

Phone: 440-708-0013

Cancellation Line: 440-708-0012

Fax: 440-708-0029

Web: [www.fieldstonefarmtrc.com](http://www.fieldstonefarmtrc.com)