

Well Child Association:
Introduction to Volunteering

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Acknowledgment

I would like to thank my Technical Advisor, Marjorie Gilmore. Through Marjorie, I have learned how caring a person can be and should be. She has given her all for Well Child Association and without her commitment, this organization would not exist.

I hope that through this manual, many more will help Marjorie's organization and choose to volunteer.

~Elisha Procenti

Introduction:

Thank you for choosing to volunteer for Well Child Association. Volunteers are the heart of our program. We could not function without the help of kind, caring people like you. Well Child Association was founded out of love by Marjorie Gilmore. She firmly believes that horses hold the key to helping many people. Well Child Association is in its fifth year of operation. Through you and others like you, we continue to help those in need using horses.

Therapeutic Horseback Riding is any type of riding not done for recreational purposes. Therapeutic riding is true, recognized therapy. This type of riding not only helps the client gain strength and confidence, new mobility and satisfaction in life, but as volunteers, we get to witness the incredible bond between horse and rider.

If after the orientation you feel overwhelmed with the information that you learned, please read this manual. It will give you information about possible ways to help Well Child Association as well as give you a deeper understanding of what therapeutic riding is all about. The volunteer manual is arranged from the most general topics, to more specific topics. It is also set up for easy skimming to answer your questions quickly.

A note on positions: It is imperative that you work the same position every time you volunteer. Consistency is important to the rider's therapeutic benefit from the program. When you indicated you wanted to become a volunteer, a form was filled out asking what areas you would be interested in working on. If for some reason the position you requested does not work out or you would like to try another position, please contact our volunteer coordinator as soon as possible. It is important that the rider's therapy is not interrupted by staffing changes as much as can be helped.

It is important that you completely read this manual. You will be asked to sign a form at the end indicating that you have thoroughly read it.

If you have further questions on the information presented in this manual or from the Volunteer Orientation Session, do not hesitate to ask a more experienced volunteer or email Marjorie Gilmore, Founder/Director of Well Child Association at Jeanie5151@aol.com. She may also be reached at 309-378-2124. **Volunteer Coordinator:** Margaret Kelly (309) 829-0455

Well Child Association Information:

Well Child Association, a non-profit company, was founded in 2000 by Marjorie Gilmore. Marjorie decided that she would like to reach out and help all children and adults. She already ran a riding program at Wellgreen farm, but there was a real need in the community for Therapeutic Riding. Marjorie already had a barn and the capacity to help, so she began Well Child Association in order to help anyone she could.

“A group of kids came to the farm in October of 2001 from Prairieland School for a field trip. They said no one would let them come to their barn and they begged me to let them come out. I was reluctant because I had no insurance to cover them on horseback, but I let them come. It was then that I became attached to the children and saw a difference in the horses. I wanted to help.”

How Well Child Association really started -Marjorie Gilmore

Marjorie started out with just a few clients and now has between 10 and 12. Marjorie also decided to make Well Child Association a member of the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association. This is a premier organization that helps therapeutic riding centers all over country stay current on new techniques and therapies.

Marjorie received Instructor Certification from NARHA in the Fall of 2004. She had to pass grueling written and riding tests, as well as become certified in First Aid and CPR. A new therapeutic riding center can go one year without a NARHA certified instructor, but after the year term, the center will be “noncompliant” with NARHA standards. This ensures the client that they are receiving treatment from someone who was specially trained to do so.

Of course Marjorie is only one person and she cannot run this organization by herself. That is where you, the volunteer, fit in. There are many ways you can help out at Well Child Association. You can work with horses, or if you are less inclined to do so, there is also office work such as answering the phone. Cleaning stalls or grooming horses is a possibility, as well as helping out at a special event, such as a horse show. Please refer to the section on volunteer positions to see examples of other ways volunteers help out at Well Child Association.

Well Child Association began doing just Therapeutic Riding, but now we have also incorporated Hippotherapy and Equine

Assisted Psychotherapy as possible therapies. If you are asking yourself what these terms mean, please read on.

What is Therapeutic Riding?

Therapeutic riding is horseback riding with a purpose. Usually when someone thinks of horseback riding, they think of it being a recreational activity. Therapeutic riding is therapy that helps strengthen and give confidence to those who need it. Many diseases are treated through therapeutic riding.

A typical session consists of a five member team. The instructor leads the session and tells the volunteers what they need to do. There is one volunteer who leads the horse; two sidewalkers who walk next to the horse; and another volunteer who helps mount the rider. Besides the human component, there is also one horse.

A session can last either a half-hour or a full hour depending on the client's needs.

At Well Child Association, we work with three types of Therapeutic Riding.

1. Therapeutic Riding
2. Hippotherapy
3. Equine Assisted Psychotherapy

1. In **Therapeutic Riding** the rider gains added strength and mobility by riding a horse. Because the horse's pelvis works similarly to ours, the rider uses the same muscles in the saddle as they would be using walking on the ground. Therapeutic riding helps to strengthen a rider who may not be able to walk. Riding a horse also gives a rider a confidence boost. Being able to control a large animal does something for the human spirit that ordinary therapy cannot accomplish. There are many conditions and diseases that can be treated through Therapeutic Riding; however, a client cannot ride without the permission of their doctor. A NARHA Certified Instructor is present at the sessions. These instructors are specially trained and have a strong knowledge of therapeutic riding as well as how to help clients.

2. **Hippotherapy** is actual physical, occupational, or speech-language therapy in which the horse is the modality used to accomplish therapeutic goals. The main difference between Therapeutic Riding and Hippotherapy is that a Certified Physical Therapist is present at the session along with a NARHA

Certified Instructor. The activities performed are also different and are therapy goals designed by the health professional or therapist. The main goal of Hippotherapy is to get the client to use their body more and possibly many other skills, such as speaking. The Therapist uses any means necessary to help the client. They may position the client on their back lying over the horse for example and then tell the client to stand on the horse's back. The physical therapist uses a variety of movements with the rider on the horse to give their bodies maximum stimulation, and sensory integration, among other things. Hippotherapy works on giving various body parts more circulation and through this, helps to build coordination and muscle tissue. Therapeutic riding does not require that the rider move their body as much.

3. Equine Assisted Psychotherapy is a newer type of Therapeutic Riding. This therapy involves a NARHA Certified Instructor and a Psychologist. A client works with a Psychologist during these sessions. This therapy is used mainly to help children and adults through experiential learning. Experiential learning uses hands-on skills to teach children and young adults how to function in society. Clients learn to control horses from the ground in order to complete activities, working in teams in order to accomplish their goals. Horses, because they do not use verbal communication and are large thus not easily controlled by one person without equipment, make good tools to teach how to work as a team. Clients learn how to work together thus becoming more adept socially. Horses are honest communicators; therefore, they have no hidden agendas and do not manipulate - you can trust a horse. They mirror back our actions as how we function in society, and this teaches clients how to work with other people in groups.

Volunteer Guidelines:

These procedures are for the comfort and protection of our volunteers. We ask that these procedures are followed at all times.

1. The most important procedure to follow is: NO SMOKING.
Barns contain a lot of hay, straw, and other flammable objects. If you need to extinguish a cigarette, never do so in close proximity to the barn. Blowing ash could potentially cause a fire. If caught smoking in/or too close to the barn, you will not be allowed to volunteer.
2. If the weather is inclement, do not assume that no session will be held. If you have any questions regarding session cancellations, please contact Marjorie at (309) 378-2124. If there is an emergency and you cannot make a session, please call the Volunteer Coordinator, Margaret Kelly, at (309) 829-0455. Please give at least a **48-hour** notice, except in an extreme emergency. In hazardous conditions, we will cancel, and you can expect a phone call.
3. Remember you will be working in a dusty, sometimes dirty environment. Please dress accordingly. Dress for both the weather and the environment. Non-slip shoes and pants are required no matter what weather conditions are present. If the weather is nice, we will be utilizing the outdoor arena. Both the horses and riders enjoy a change of scenery and being outdoors. Loose clothing, jewelry, sandals, and shorts are not appropriate for working in the barn.
4. Please keep a professional demeanor at all times. Rudeness is not tolerated.
5. To be early (5-10 minutes) is to be on time. Please remember to be on time!! Horses require some prep work before a session. Sessions must start on time, especially if there are two back to back.

When dealing with horses, please remember safety is very important. Please read the horse manual so that you understand the safety procedures associated with being around and working with horses. If you would like a copy, it is available online at www.wellchildassoc.org or a copy can always be found in the barn office.

What position would you Volunteer for?

When you decided to volunteer, you filled out an initial form giving your personal information as well as what position you wanted to volunteer for.

This section describes job positions in detail. If you have not decided what job position you would like to volunteer for, this section will help you decide which position you would be the most comfortable in.

Some key roles for Program help are: Leaders, Sidewalkers, and Spotters. You will find definitions of these positions and what is required below.

Program Help

The following positions are needed during therapy sessions. A session has one instructor, one leader, and two sidewalkers. Depending upon the balance of the rider, sidewalkers can serve as spotters, and as directed by the NARHA Certified Instructor. Do not assume your position until directed.

Instructor:

The instructor must be North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA) certified,

The main job of the instructor is to administer therapy sessions and coordinate horses with riders; therefore, the instructor must know the horses and clients well. The instructor must also know what therapy is appropriate for the rider, and understand the client's background and condition; therefore, the instructor must have a good medical understanding of the conditions a client may have. It is important that the volunteers are quiet, can follow directions, and attend the Volunteer Orientation to learn about the organization.

Marjorie is the current Certified Instructor. Please see her if you would like to become certified as an instructor. She will be able to help you.

Leaders:

The leader leads the horse before, during, and after a session. There is one leader per session. The leader is the main person who controls the horse.

- The leader's main responsibility is to control the horse. A leader is used with riders who cannot control the horse themselves. The leader must be in control of the horse at all times so that the rider can focus their attention on the session.
- A good leader controls the horse using light, firm pressure to keep the horse calm and steady. A good leader anticipates problems and works to avoid them. The leader also must maintain the correct distance between horses (two horse lengths) and be alert at all times.
- Please refer to the Safety Rules Regarding Horses section to learn how to properly lead a horse. Pay close attention to numbers 4 and 16.
- The leader is also expected to be able to keep up with the horse by adjusting their stride to the horse's. The horse can be worked at both the walk and trot so the leader has to be able to keep up with both paces.
- When the horse is stopped, the leader must stand in front of the horse so the horse cannot move forward.

Sidewalkers:

There are usually two sidewalkers per session. A sidewalker walks on each side of the horse next to the rider.

- The sidewalker's main responsibility is keeping the rider balanced and safely on the horse, by using a thigh hold or heel hold as instructed by the NARHA Certified Instructor.
- The degree of sidewalker/rider interaction will depend on how much balance the rider has on the horse. Sidewalkers who work with poorly balanced riders can switch sides if their arms get tired.
- The sidewalker should not pull the rider sideways or backwards.

- Sidewalkers and horses should be matched according to height. Taller sidewalkers work better with taller horses.
- The sidewalker should always be positioned at the rider's leg. At a trot, a faster pace than a walk, this is very important as the rider can become unbalanced easier. If a rider is very unbalanced, the sidewalker should place one hand across the rider's lower leg and the other hand on the rider's back.
- Sidewalkers need to be in fairly good shape. A session can last either a half hour or full hour. During that time, the horse will be going around the arena in circles almost constantly. Usually the horse is at a walk; however, with more balanced riders, the horse will be allowed to trot for short periods of time.
- Some riders only need sidewalkers in case of an unexpected movement. The instructor will determine how many sidewalkers a rider needs and what the sidewalkers need to do.
- Sidewalkers can help in other ways also. The sidewalker can help keep a rider's attention on the lesson as well as help the rider with the instructor's directions. The sidewalker; however, needs to remember that the instructor is giving the lesson so do not confuse the rider or give instructions different than the instructor's.
- If the rider starts to fall, it is easier to push the rider back into the saddle rather than to take him/her off. If the rider is falling, the sidewalker(s) should try to soften the fall. After the rider has fallen, the sidewalker must step back and let the instructor take over.

Spotters:

Spotters help riders mount the horse, and they can be used as extra sidewalkers during a session for riders with poor balance. Spotters can also be used in place of a sidewalker if the rider has good balance.

The spotter helps the rider mount the horse. This is an important safety role. Although some riders may not need

spotters, the spotter must be trained by the instructor or another volunteer, before they start working, to perform 3 key roles:

- The spotter must hold down the stirrup on the opposite side of the horse for a rider who is larger in size or one who is slower at getting into the saddle. The pressure on the opposite stirrup will prevent the saddle from moving.
- The spotter assists the rider from the opposite side as he is transferred or is mounting from a wheelchair at any position along the ramp.
- The spotter receives the rider's hips as the instructor places the rider on the saddle. If the rider is wearing a safety belt, the spotter will grab the belt and assist with bringing the rider's legs over the horse. This is an important safety procedure.

These are the main positions in a therapeutic riding session. There are also many other ways that volunteers can help out, these positions are listed below:

Office Work

- Answering phones as well as writing correspondence is a large portion of what this staff does. Staying organized and contacting clients is also an important part of this position.

Facility Repair

- Repairing woodwork or other odds and ends that need work. Occasionally we have miscellaneous jobs that need to be done, other times, we do not need staff in this area.

Barn Chores

- Cleaning stalls, sweeping the stall aisles, and grooming horses. There is always work like this that needs to be done in the barn.

Fundraising

- Because Well Child Association is a non-profit organization, fundraising is important. We need staff to carry out fundraises or come up with new ideas to raise money.

Special Events

- We host horse shows, the Special Olympics, and trail rides. There are many positions that need to be filled when we host an event.

Grant Writing

- Grants are an important way for us to receive money to give scholarships and fund new programs. We are always looking into new grant opportunities as well as needing someone to help us write grant applications.

Public Relations

- The community supports our programs; therefore, we need staff who will communicate to the public on behalf of Well Child Association. Whether we are starting a new program or want to advertise, we need staff who will write up newspaper articles or speak on behalf of Well Child Association at meetings.

Newsletter

- With the help of volunteers, we would like to start a newsletter giving clients and their families, as well as the public, updates on Well Child Association and our progress both for clients and the association.

Volunteer Recruitment

- The best way to gain new staff members is by current volunteers seeking out people they think would be a great

addition to our staff. Word of mouth from a current volunteer is great for helping someone leery to volunteer.

Photographer/ Videographer

- We need a staff member who will take pictures or videos at the events we hold. Clients as well as their families enjoy seeing and watching themselves ride. Well Child Association keeps a scrapbook that needs to have updated photos in it.

Budget/Finance Work

- Just like any business, Well Child Association has a budget for yearly expenses. We need staff who are money wise and know how to create and manage a budget.

Future Planning

- We need a staff member who can help us plan for the future. Being that Well Child Association is 5 years old, we need to start thinking about our future goals and cost management.

Well Child Association does not always have openings in all of these positions; however, if you talk to Marjorie, she will find you a position you will be comfortable with.

Something else to keep in mind is that Well Child Association's needs constantly change. A volunteer may be sick, so you may fill a different position or work may be needed in an area that it was not previously. Depending on what the Association needs, new positions also get created.

If there is something you would really like to do, and it is not yet a position, talk to Marjorie. She may create it for you. Well Child Association would like to help our volunteers as much as we can.

Volunteer Application Process:

Besides learning your position, it is important that you can help other volunteers go through the application process. All volunteers must fill out and have vital forms on file. This section will tell what those forms are and also have samples of those forms.

Volunteers must fill out five important forms. The volunteer and instructor will go over forms during the official orientation. All given information will be kept secure and confidential.

- The first form has two pages and covers the volunteer's personal information, health information, and permits us to conduct a background check.
- The second form is waiver/release form. The volunteer must sign a release form when working with horses at Well Child Association.
- The third form is a list of details about the job that the volunteer will do. The volunteer and instructor will fill out this form together.
- The fourth form is the volunteer hours log. All time-ins and time-outs for a month should be recorded on this form as well as the tasks that the volunteer has done and the amount of hours for a given day. It is important to track hours so the organization knows how much manpower we need to run efficiently. At the end of the month all hours will be totaled.
- The last form is a profile on the horse(s) the volunteer will be working with. This

form will give detailed information about the horse and everything the volunteer will need to know about from what tack to use, to the horse's behavior.

After the paper work is reviewed, volunteers will be interviewed by the instructor. The instructor determines Well Child Association's staff.

FORMS

Here are descriptions and samples of the forms you filled out. It is important you look over them in case another volunteer comes to you with a question on how to fill out a form.

Form1: Volunteer/Staff Information and Health Information

This form tells Well Child Association about you and what areas you would like to volunteer with. This form must be updated if there are any changes in the information.

Form 2: Waiver and Release form

This form must be signed before you may volunteer. By signing this form you acknowledge that in case of an emergency or accident, Well Child Association and Wellgreen Farm are not responsible.

Form 3: Volunteer Job Description

This form details various jobs that you may do and also who your supervisor is. If there are any questions at any time as to what tasks you may do, consult this form.

Form 4: Volunteer Hours Log

This form is for you to keep track of your own personal hours volunteered. There is no maximum nor minimum hourly commitment. This form is for you and the Director to see how many volunteer hours are logged.

Form 5: Horse Profile

This form has the information about the various horses used in the program. This form gives general information about the horse (personality, likes/dislikes, etc.) as well as tack (equipment) used on that specific horse. This form needs to be updated as the horse may act differently at different times.



North American Riding for the Handicapped Association

Volunteer/Staff Information Form and Health History

General Information

Name: _____ Date: _____

_Address: _____

_Employer/School: _____

_WorkAddress: _____

_Date of Birth: _____ Phone: (H) _____ (W) _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Name and Address: _____

How did you learn about the program? _____

Recent medical tests: Last Tetanus Shot: _____ Tuberculosis Test + -- Date: _____

(Consult your physician or local health department if you are not up to date on these shots/tests)

Health History

Please describe your current health status, particularly regarding the physical/emotional demands of working in a therapeutic riding program. Address fitness, cardiac, respiratory, bone or joint function, recent hospitalizations/surgeries, or lifestyle changes.

Allergies: _____

Medications: _____

Circle which areas you are interested in:

Program

Horse Handling
Sidewalking with a Student
Stable Management
Facility Repairs

Special Events

Horse Show
Fundraising
Special Olympics
Trail Rides

Administration

Public Relations
Photography
Grant Writing
Newsletter
Volunteer Recruitment
Budget/Finance
Future Planning

I understand that the information provided above is accurate to the best of my knowledge. I know of no reason why I should not participate in this center's program. (*volunteer/staff; signed in presence of center*) Signature: _____ Date: _____



North American Riding for the
Handicapped Association

Volunteer/Staff Information Form and Health History Page 2

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Photo Release

-- DO
DO NOT

I consent to and authorize the use and reproduction by WELL CHILD ASSOCIATION (NARHA Center) of any and all photographs and any other audio/visual materials taken of me for promotional material, educational activities, exhibitions or for any other use for the benefit of the program.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Background Information

Have you ever been charged with or convicted of a crime? Y N - please explain

I, _____ (volunteer/staff), authorize WELL CHILD ASSOCIATION to receive information from any enforcement agency, including police departments and sheriff's departments, of this state or any other state or federal government, to the extent permitted by state and federal law, pertaining to any convictions I may have had for violations of state or federal criminal laws, including but not limited to convictions for crimes committed upon children.

I understand that such access is for the purpose of considering my application as an employee/volunteer, and that I expressly DO NOT authorize the NARHA center, its directors, officers, employees, or other volunteers to disseminate this information in any way to any other individual, group, agency, organization, or corporation.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(volunteer/staff)

CURRENT DRIVER'S LICENSE Y N LICENSE NUMBER _____
State _____

Confidentiality Agreement

I understand that all information (written and verbal) about participants at this NARHA center is confidential and will not be shared with anyone without the express written consent of the participant and their parent/guardian in the case of a minor.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(volunteer/staff)

Well Child Association & Wellgreen Farm
23274 East 800 North Road
Downs, IL 61736

WAIVER AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY FORM

The Undersigned, in consideration of the benefits to be derived, or for such other consideration, whether herein stated or not; does hereby waive, release and hold harmless [**Well Child Association & Wellgreen Farm**], the owners, officers, agents, employees, and volunteers from any and all liability and claims, regardless of the nature, for any and all damages, injury or death to themselves, their animals, or personal property, which may or does occur as a result of any act, or failure to act, on the part of [**Well Child Association & Wellgreen Farm**], and their owners, officers agents, employees or volunteers.

Further, the undersigned, for themselves, their heirs, assigns, and administrators, do hereby state that they understand that certain hazards are common around animals of all species including horses, and that they do specifically assume the risk of any and all hazards and conditions attendant to any activities or programs that they shall participate in while on the premises, whether or not they actually engage in such activities or programs as spectators, volunteers, or participants at the time; and they freely assume this risk of any injury, death, damage or other loss to themselves and their property.

Warning: Under the EQUINE ACTIVITY LIABILITY ACT, each participant who engages in an equine activity, expressly assumes the risks of engaging in and is legally responsible for injury, loss or damage to person or property resulting from the said risk of equine activities.

The Undersigned certifies that they are of legal age (18 years of age).

The terms herein are contractual and not a mere recital; and that this form has been read and freely signed and agreed to. Also, the Undersigned acknowledges that they are not an agent, or employee of [**Well Child Association & Wellgreen Farm**]. Further the undersigned certifies that they have read the foregoing and understand the contents thereof.

Dated This _____ TH day of _____ 2005.

Individual(s) Receiving Instruction

Printed Name

AUTHORIZATION, CONSENT AND RELEASE OF PARENT OR GUARDIAN:

As the parents or guardian of _____, it is hereby acknowledged that we consent to the child's participating in the activities or programs offered by [**Well Child Association & Wellgreen Farm**], for which this consent and release are sought and agree to the terms and conditions thereof.

DATED THIS _____ TH DAY OF _____ 2005.

Parent/Guardian: _____

Home and Work Phone numbers: _____

Name of Family Doctor: _____



North American Riding for the
Handicapped Association

Volunteer Job Description

Job Title: _____

Supervised by: _____

General Description of Duties: _____

Specific Job Responsibilities: _____

Conditions of Assignment: _____

Qualifications, training and preparation for assignment: _____



Volunteer Hours Form

North American Riding for the Handicapped Association

Name: _____

Month: _____

Date: _____ Time: Sign In _____ Sign

Out: _____ Hours: _____

Tasks: _____

Date: _____ Time: Sign In _____

Sign Out: _____ Hours: _____

Tasks: _____

Date: _____ Time: Sign In _____ Sign

Out: _____ Hours: _____

Tasks: _____

Date: _____ Time: Sign In _____ Sign

Out: _____ Hours: _____

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Tasks: _____

Date: _____ Time: Sign In _____ Sign Out: _____ Hours: _____

Tasks: _____

Date: _____ Time: Sign In _____ Sign Out: _____ Hours: _____

Tasks: _____

Total Hours: _____



North American Riding for the
Handicapped Association

Horse Profile

Name: _____ Age: _____
Height: _____ Weight: _____
Breed: _____ Sex: _____ Markings: _____

Personality

Likes: _____

Dislikes: _____

Body Language: Do's and Don'ts: _____

Grooming Likes and Dislikes: _____

Tack

English: Saddle(s): _____ Pads: _____

Bridle: _____ Clip-Ons: _____ Girths: _____

Western: Saddle(s): _____ Pads: _____

Bridle: _____ Clip-Ons: _____ Girths: _____

Bareback: _____ Jumps: _____

Vaulting: _____ Surcingle: _____

Lunges: _____

Mounting Procedure: _____

Stall Etiquette: _____
