



Partners for
Progress

2025

Volunteer Manual

Quality Horse, Quality Program, Quality of Life



Welcome!

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We're happy you're here!

We're so happy you've decided to volunteer at Partners for Progress Therapeutic Riding Program.

This manual has been designed to help you familiarize yourself with PFP and provide an overview of policies and practices that will give you guidance and direction. As you know, things are always changing, and so our policies, practices, and procedures might need to be modified from those outlined here. If such modifications occur, we will notify you in person or via e-mail.

Communication is extremely important to us, but as volunteers, it is your responsibility to keep your handbook up to date and keep up to date with e-mails from the Volunteer Coordinator and other staff.

Volunteering at PFP can be a very wonderful experience; however it can be a physically challenging job. Volunteer duties must be performed in a safe and competent manner. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the Volunteer Coordinator, Barn Manager, or Director of Development.



Who We Are

Partners for Progress, NFP, is a goal-based therapeutic riding center. We specialize in the delivery of safe and effective intervention, through the use of skilled therapies and equine programs. A therapeutic evaluation and/or assessment is provided to effectively determine each client's specific needs and the best programs to accommodate their needs.

Once determined, we establish goals and measure progress toward achieving those goals. Partners for Progress (PFP) provides the highest quality of care, standing behind our 3Q service delivery: Quality Horse, Quality Program, Quality Life. For information on our 3Q service delivery click on the About PFP tab above.

Client therapies involve riding our specially trained horses. Horseback riding gently and rhythmically moves the body in a manner similar to the walking gait of a human. The horse's complex series of movements uses all the rider's body muscles, increasing his or her strength, balance and muscle control.

About Us



Our History

Partners for Progress NFP, is a goal-based therapeutic riding program. We specialize in the delivery of safe and effective intervention, through the use of skilled therapies and equine programs. A therapeutic evaluation and/or assessment is provided to effectively determine each client's specific needs and best-fit program. Once determined, we establish goals and measure progress toward achieving them.

Partners For Progress (PFP) provides the highest quality of care, standing behind our 3Q service delivery - Quality Horse, Quality Program, Quality of Life. PFP believes that each one of our participants is an individual and receives individual treatment. Our overall goal is to help each participant achieve their maximum personal potential and self-achievement.

- Established in 2005
- PFP supports over 200 riders per week
- PFP uses a collaborative therapeutic approach to increasing functional skills for life improvement.
- PFP teams carefully match horse and rider for the greatest outcome possible.
- Goal oriented therapy
- Goal achievement assessment is performed 5 times annually

PFP has successfully implemented goal-oriented therapy programs and tracking processes to assist participants in overcoming fears, breaking down walls, and achieving monumental milestones. Client therapies involve riding our specially trained horses. Horseback riding gently and rhythmically moves the body in a manner similar to the walking gait of a human. The horse's complex series of movements uses all of the riders' body muscles, increasing his or her strength, balance and muscle control.

Our Philosophy

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Our program would be unable to run without the help and care of our incredible volunteers. Your time, energy, and talents provide the staff and our students with the help we need to succeed in our mission and provide quality instruction. Your perspective, diversity, and expertise bring so much to the table and allow us to fulfill our mission and stay firmly rooted in our community. You help make PFP the incredible, welcoming, and kind place it is for everyone who comes through our doors.



The Benefits of Therapeutic Riding

Therapeutic horseback riding benefits almost any disabling condition including: cerebral palsy, autism, down syndrome, head injuries, hearing impaired, visually impaired, multiple sclerosis, seizure disorders, speech & learning disabilities, and sensory integration dysfunction. The physical, mental, and emotional benefits of therapeutic horsemanship are numerous. The rhythmic motion and warmth of the horse stimulates and exercises the rider's muscles increasing mobility of the pelvis, hip, and spine. The rider experiences weight shift and trunk mobility as if he were walking on his own.

Research shows riding benefits student's: Emotional Management, Cognitive Development, Physical Wellbeing, Social Skills, Sensory Stimulation, Focus Prioritization, Responsibility & Empowerment.

As the horse and rider progress through their different gaits, the rider experiences a wide range of sensory input. At a walk, the rider benefits from the calming effort of the rhythmic, three-dimensional

movement. As the horse moves to a trot, the rider's alertness is increased, his posture aligned, and he becomes more aware of his own body. Riders respond to this movement as the lessons, activities and exercises take place. To encourage speech, identify objects, and sequence multiple tasks, students also participate in games and socialize with other students.



Programs We Offer:



Therapeutic Riding Program

Achieving the greatest independence possible is the ultimate goal of Therapeutic Sports Riding. PFP's sports riders work toward developing riding skills, stable management, horse and tack care.

Development in these areas leads to the opportunity to join one of our competitive show teams. PFP is proud to be one of the inaugural programs paving the competitive road for Equestrians with Disabilities at American Quarter Horse Association (AQHA) and National Snaffle Bit Association (NSBA) levels of competition. PFP also offers a Special Olympics team and in-house competitions.



Occupational Life Skills

In 2015, PFP piloted its newest program, Occupational Life Skills (OLS). OLS encompasses the acquisition of work and life skills outside-of-the-home. The life skills program works toward teaching foundational skills for functioning within your community, which includes learning how to engage socially, how to take care of yourself. This program targets late middle school through high school age students. This can be considered a pre-transitional program. Skills are individualized, however can include overall increase of independence, initiation and engagement of tasks, problem solving and self-advocacy.



Heroes On Horses

Our Heroes on Horses (HOH) program assists military veterans by providing equine activities, therapies, and riding programs tailored specifically to the needs of each veteran. Benefits may include increased balance, coordination, muscle strength and self-esteem as well as improved riding skills and bonding opportunities through our equine partners. Assessment for goals upon admission into the HOH program.



Therapeutic Power-Hour

Session lessons/classes are goal-based and led by a PATH International or CHA certified therapeutic riding instructor. Therapists and clients/family members collaborate on goals generated through assessments. All goals are unique to each client's area of need and focus. From postural control/alignment to confidence, the sky is the limit on the back of our equine partners! Sessions are offered throughout the week.



Direct Treatment

Occupational therapy, physical therapy and speech language services (SLP) are offered, when deemed medically necessary and prescribed through an ordering physician. Treatment plans target each client's unique deficit areas to increase functional performance and engagement in activities of daily life, mobility, and speech/communication skills. This program is delivered through licensed therapists and may be covered through primary insurance providers. Limited availability.

About Volunteering

- Individuals over the age of 13 are welcome to apply for volunteer opportunities at Partners For Progress.
- Groups:
 - We welcome one-time volunteer groups from Businesses, high school, college service projects, church groups, Scout groups, Corporate service days for employees. Minors may participate (min of 13 years old). Group leaders are responsible for getting all paperwork signed and turned in to the volunteer coordinator or supervising staff member.
- Interning/Service Project
 - We welcome interns and service projects as part of school, service group or job training. Please reach out to our Program Director for further information.



Volunteer Conduct

Volunteers of PFP Therapeutic Riding Program will always:

- Conduct themselves as role models and good citizens
- Act in a way to improve the lives of our participants
- Treat everyone with respect

Be honest, helpful, friendly, and mature.

We Promise To:

- Respond to all inquiries from current and new volunteers in a timely manner regarding their orientation and scheduling
- Foster personal growth among volunteers by volunteering skilled supervision, training, and opportunities to learn new skills
- Be purposeful with assigning meaningful tasks and abundant thanks, directly and frequently
- Work in our community to renew and reinforce our ethos and mission.



Classification of Volunteers

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Weekly Volunteers

Volunteers commit to a weekly time slot of 2 hours minimum each week.



Special Event Volunteers

Special Event volunteers are those who serve only once or occasionally in an event situation. Examples of such events are Dance Bash, student horse show, Annual Hoe Down, special events at the barn, etc.



Office Volunteers

Office volunteers are those that wish to help in the office area with filing, mailings, data entry on an as needed basis.



Professional Volunteers

Professional volunteers are those that volunteer using expertise according to their license, registration, or classification as required by the profession. These credentials must be current to provide these services.



Types of Volunteer Service



Partners for Progress can get to be a pretty busy place at times.... This means we have several types of service and positions that volunteers can fill to help us run our program. This section will list and describe designated roles and jobs volunteers may fill. Volunteers often fill several of these roles, switching between as needed.

Service Project Volunteers:

Our 10 acres take a lot of work to remain safe and functional. When things need fixing, we depend on skilled Facilities/Maintenance Volunteers. Jobs and ideas for new and exciting ideas are always coming about. If you have a specific skill you can offer us or a project idea please let us know!

Qualifications:

- Able to frequently sit, stand, kneel, bend, and lift up to 50lbs independently
- Must have prior experience with general maintenance tasks and able to use hand and power tools confidently and safely
- Must be at least 18 years old
- If licensed or bonded in a trade, must be able to present current credentials
- Must be responsible and professional

Responsibilities:

- Maintain grounds, facilities, and other areas by mowing, weeding, and clearing brush
- May be asked to paint, work with tools, pick up trash
- Other tasks assigned or appropriate to your skill level and training



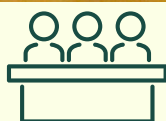
Event Volunteers

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Partners For Progress holds several fundraisers on our property and around the area with our largest one being our Annual Hoe Down! All these events are made successful by our amazing volunteers, client families and staff. Event volunteers help:

- Plan and assist with...
 - Set-up/tear-down
 - Greeting, ushering, general assisting, serving, check-out etc.
 - Decorating

If you have experience in event planning and coordination, or if you would love to be a part of this team, let us know!



Committee Volunteer

Are you a people person who is great at helping with special events? You can help us in the planning, preparation and execution of our fundraising events held throughout the year! Committee Volunteers are dedicated and contribute to the success of our organization by assisting with special events, fundraisers, and promotions.

Qualifications:

- must be 21 years of age or older
- Must be responsible and conduct yourself professionally when in public

Responsibilities:

- Participate with internal and external events, selling raffle and event tickets, developing corporate partnerships, soliciting in kind gifts, and cultivating donor relationships.
- Ambassadors are encouraged to support as many initiatives as they are able; with a minimum of one each year.
- Represent Partners For Progress, and all members should strive to exceed expectations with the highest level of professionalism, distinction, and courtesy.

Program Volunteers

Side walker

A volunteer may act as a side walker during a lesson to assist in the facilitation of that lesson. A side walker's primary job is to help the instructor ensure a rider's safety during that lesson.

Side walking volunteers might also assist in:

- Re-directing a student's attention to the instructor
- Assisting in positioning
- Helping riders understand and implement an instructor's directions.
 - Side walkers must allow a student to process and complete directions from the instructor without too much distraction. This is especially true for students who might already have processing or attention difficulties.

Qualifications:

- Be at least 13 years of age
- Be able to walk and or jog for 30 minutes while maintaining vigilance and often using upper body strength to assist the participant
- Assist the participant with the activities and follow the directions of the PATH Intl./CHA instructor in control of the lesson
- Participate in the activity for the duration of a lesson with no water or bathroom breaks
- Maintain safe control of the participant in all situations, including incidence of unexpected behavior of the equine or participant
- Able to hear, speak, and understand instructions in English
- Able to hold arm raised and out to the side for an extended period
- Must be responsible and professional

Responsibilities:

- Help prepare a horse for its lesson
- Assist with rider support during mounting and dismounting as necessary
- Walk next to the rider throughout the lesson and provide any necessary physical support
- Help the rider follow directions given by the instructor
- Be reliable and on time for your scheduled shift



Side Walker Holds

Arm Over Thigh

This hold assists a rider in maintaining a proper seat and body position on the horse.

- Hold on to the front flap of the saddle or front of the saddle pad, placing your forearm over the middle of the rider's thigh applying some pressure.
- Try to provide support at the same level as the instructor or volunteer on the other side of the horse.
- Be cautious not to involve a student's knee or hip joints in this hold.



Arm Over Thigh and Ankle Hold

This hold helps provide support to a rider's seat and prevents the leg from swinging forward or backwards.

In addition to utilizing an arm over thigh hold with your inside arm:

- Place your outside hand at the rider's lower calf, just above the ankle.
- Wrap your fingers around the front of the rider's calf, with your thumb wrapped around the back of the rider's lower calf. This hold provides maximum support to a rider's lower body, helping stabilize both the calf and the knee as well as the ankle.



Side Walker Holds

Ankle Hold

This hold helps to provide stabilization to the rider's lower leg and can prevent the leg from swinging forward or backwards and/or deter a rider from kicking the side of the horse.

- With the arm closest to the rider, cup your hand around the back of the rider's heel
- Give gentle resistance to the movement of the rider's foot



Hand Under Shoulder

This hold will only be performed by seasoned volunteers with training in the hold or staff.

- With the arm closest to the rider, place your hand in the riders underarm while wrapping that hand around the rider's bicep.
- You will use your forearm and bicep to stabilize the rider's trunk. Be cautious to not drive your elbow into the horse's back while performing this hold.

Spotting

This is not technically a hold, but is a vitally important role for a side walker. You are a spare set of eyes and hands in case of an emergency.

- Keep a hand on the back of the horse's pad so you know where the horse is at all times
- Do not get too far behind or ahead of the rider's leg
- Do not step away from the rider unless directed by the instructor

Side Walker Mounting Procedures

An instructor/Therapist will always be in charge of the mounting procedure. Details will be given by them for the sidewalkers, this will include describing the location of the mount as well as the assistance level needed during that mount. A rider will mount with assistance from the Instructor/Therapist after the rider's tack has been checked and the horse is correctly positioned in the correct location. Side-walkers will be positioned in the right "offside" of the horse.

Block Mount

Riders that mount from the Block will have the assistance of an instructor and/or therapist. The side walker is responsible for assisting the student in whatever manner the instructor asks for.

A side walker should:

- Help bring a rider's leg and foot over the back of the horse, bringing it down gently against the horse's side, and positioning in its stirrup.
- Help in stabilizing the student as the horse and rider exit the block
- Remain close to the rider during the mount
- Do not leave the Block until the instructor tells everyone to walk on.

Lift Mount

Riders who utilize the lift will have the assistance of an instructor and/or therapist will meet the horse at the ramp. 3 People are needed to safely mount a rider using the lift.

- PFP trained instructor/therapist will assist the rider to the top of the ramp
- Lift will be operated by trained PFP Instructor/Therapist, volunteers will assist with horse handling, off side support/assistance.
- Side walkers will:
 - Assist in positioning the rider on the back of the horse as they come down in the lift
 - Assist the instructor in distancing the legs and bringing it down gently against the horse's side
- Assist the instructor in removing the lift apparatus from the rider or holding the rider in position while the apparatus is removed.

Communication during a lift mount is especially paramount.



Side Walker Position During a Lesson

Please let instructor know if supporting the rider is physically challenging for side-walker in any way.

- Side walkers will walk alongside the rider, staying next to and parallel to a rider's knee while assisting when necessary.
- It is important to retain this position without getting too far ahead, behind, or far away from the rider to maintain both your and the rider's safety.
- At the halt: A side walker will remain at the rider's side unless told differently by the instructor.
- At the walk: A side walker will remain at the rider's side unless told to by the instructor while maintaining the hold assigned by the instructor.
- At the Trot: A side walker will remain at the rider's side unless told to by the instructor while maintaining, or increasing support of, the hold assigned by the instructor.



Tips & Tricks for Side Walkers During Lessons

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- A side walker may assist in helping correct a rider's body position during a lesson. This may be in the form of a verbal request to adjust position or physical assistance in re-positioning the rider. Repositioning should only occur under the supervision of an instructor/therapist to ensure riders safety.
- Though tack differs between riders, and some adaptive tack has different positioning in most cases, a rider will hold most reins "like an ice cream cone" with both hands.
- Volunteers are asked to limit conversation during a class so that a rider's attention is on the instructor.
 - Only one voice should be speaking at a time offering instruction, encouragement, or help.
 - Still, you can have fun! Your commitment and dedication allow this lesson to happen successfully. Your encouragement, praise and positive reinforcement of a rider's accomplishments means so much!!!!
- Side walkers need to always remain attentive to their students.
 - In the case of an emergency of any level, notify the leader and instructor immediately.
 - Our students often have a decreased sense of safety awareness, so your vigilance of their position on and off the horse helps ensure that they remain as safe as possible.
- Try and help your student only when it is needed.
 - Overprotection or assistance prevents a student from progressing and developing independence.
 - This is not to say that you shouldn't celebrate your student's achievements!
- Listen to an instructor/Therapist during a lesson for specific instructions and what is being taught.
 - Try to understand and be patient with the student's challenges. While a diagnosis may not be discussed for confidentiality, you are encouraged to ask your instructor for tips on how to better assist and interact with your student.

Be patient; students may process and learn at a different pace and level than you may expect.

Horse Leaders

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At PFP, leaders undergo horse handler training to learn how to lead our herd safely and effectively. Because our horses are handled by so many individuals' multiple times a day, it is important to standardize how we lead our horses. This may mean, even though you have horse experience, we ask you to attend horse handler training before we assign you as a leader.

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Qualifications:

- Be able to walk and or jog for 50 minutes while maintaining vigilance and control of the equine in the lesson
- Participate for the duration of the lesson without water or bathroom breaks
- Exercise safe control of the equine in the case of unexpected behavior from either the equine or the participant
- Always follow directions of the Instructor and/or therapist in control of the lesson
- Lead the equine in a manner that maintains the training of the equine and exhibits good ground manners
- Must be responsible and professional

Responsibilities:

- Be reliable and on time for your scheduled shift
- Assist in grooming and tacking horse for their lesson
- Lead the horse during a class, within a group including side walkers, keeping primary focus on the horse while maintaining communication with the team
- Listen to and execute the directives of the instructor
- Assist in un-tacking and putting the horse away after the class.



Leading Techniques

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ALWAYS:

- Stand at the horse's head with the horse on your right side
- Hold the lead rope in your right hand a foot from the buckle where it is attached to the horse
- Fold the extra length of the lead rope in your left hand in a figure eight or a teardrop configuration. Do not wrap the lead rope around your hand.
- Keep reins and lead ropes up off the ground.
- Stay focused on the lesson and on your team. You can occasionally check back on your student and the side walkers.
- Allow enough room from the side walkers on both sides of the horse, especially the side walker along the wall, and through the gates.
- For safety reasons, refrain from playing with the horse's nose and mouth as doing so can encourage nipping and head butting.
- Be aware of things that might spook your horse. This could include garbage, odd shapes on trails, loud noises, dark things, etc.
- Maintain proper spacing of two horse lengths between horses
- Keep a consistent pace throughout the lesson as quick changes can easily unseat the rider.

Correct Leading Position



Leader is even with horse's throat latch.

Incorrect Leading Position



Handler is too far back from horse's head. The same can happen if too far forward.

During the Mount

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#1 Rule:
Always be aware of
the instructor during
the mounting.

At the Mounting Block:

- Approach the mounting block from the rail, before entering the mounting block, STOP your horse. Position yourself in front of the horse and walk backwards to the end of the block. you should stop with your horse's girth/stirrup in the middle of the mounting block. Try to make sure the horse is standing with all 4 feet square under their body before mounting happens.
- As the rider mounts, try and keep the horse still in the chute. You can always ask the instructor how the horse prefers to be held at the mounting block. It is most important to make sure the horse does not take a step forward or back while the rider is mounting.
- Only when the instructor/therapist signals that they are ready to leave the mounting block should you walk on. The instructor/therapist will adjust the tack once more after you have left the mounting block..
- Please do not grab the nose band of the horse or the bit. It bothers them and often creates bad habits of the horse throwing their head up to avoid the contact.

At the Lift:

- Walk to the lift area to meet the rider, but do not approach the ramp until the rider is at the top and ready.
- As the instructor prepares the lift, and attaches the rider, wait patiently outside of the lift area with your horse.
- Horse handler will approach the ramp and walk up till the stirrup is positioned in the middle of the platform. Once there, stop the horse. The off-side sidewalker will help position the horse to step over to the ramp to get closer at the direction of the instructor/therapist.
- As the rider mounts, try and keep the horse still. You can always ask the instructor how the horse prefers to be held at the mounting block. It is most important to make sure the horse does not take a step forward or back while the rider is mounting.
- Only when the instructor/therapist signals that they are ready to leave the mounting block should you walk on. The instructor/therapist will adjust the tack once more after you have left the mounting block.
- Please do not grab the nose band of the horse or the bit. It bothers them and often creates bad habits of the horse throwing their head up to avoid the contact.

During the Lesson

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- The leader is responsible solely for the horse.
- Take note of the environment and anticipate any problems.
- When following another horse, keep a minimum of 2 horse lengths distance between your
- horse and other horses in the ring.
- The horse should walk next to the leader with the leader's hand just below the horse's eye and
- next to the cheek with 1 foot of lead rope slack.
- Wait for your student to cue the horse before proceeding unless the instructor tells you otherwise.
- Wait for the student to cue for the trot then you can start walking fast next to the horse, while the horse jogs. Once jogging look up and forward and be aware of your horse's focus and feet. Leaders should be walking fast alongside the horse's head.
- Always look where you are going and plan ahead.
- Adjust your step to the horse's stride, being careful not to get too far ahead, behind, or away from the horse's left eye, ear, and nostril.
- Limit interaction with the client while leading a horse as the client is the side walker's
- responsibility.
- When halting for safety and adjustments, let the instructor and other leaders know to keep from getting separated.
- It is difficult for most students to maintain balance on sharp turns, so if you must turn sharply, warn the student first.



During the Dismount

To the Ground:

- Most riders dismount to the ground
- Much like mounting, your role is to keep the horse steady and prevent them from stepping out while the instructor is dismounting the rider
- Once the rider has dismounted, the leader/sidewalker or rider will remove the reins from the horse
- Wait with the horse, not allowing them to walk forward or backwards
- Follow directions from instructor/therapist about leaving the arena

To the Ramp:

- Walking slowly, enter the ramp, making sure not to squish the sidewalker into the ramp.
- Once up to the ramp, stop with stirrup in the middle of platform.
- Left side sidewalker will exit towards horse's head, and instructor/therapist will have hands on rider. Sidewalker, do not leave ramp area.
- Right side sidewalker will assist with moving horse closer to the ramp as needed
- Keeping them steady while the rider is dismounting To the Lift
- Instructors will tell you to woah the horse before entering the lift to give any specific directions that may need to be given
- Hold the horse steady and listen closely for any directions from the instructor.
- Please do not grab the nose band of the horse. It bothers them and often creates bad habits of the horse throwing their head up to avoid the contact. If you need extra leverage, hold onto the horse's reins
- The lift will be attached to the rider, and the rider will be lifted off the horse
- Exit the lift chute when the instructor directs
- Unless otherwise indicated, bring the horse back to be untacked at the barn



Getting A Horse:

Volunteers should always go with a partner to get horses from the pasture or a stall. One volunteer will go to halter the horse, while the second opens and closes the gates to ensure no other horses get loose.

When in the pasture:

- Be aware of other horses as well as the one you are catching.
- Be sure to keep some distance between yourself and the rest of the herd.
- Be extra cautious when going through the gates for any followers.
- Call the horse's name you are going to catch so they know you are approaching and always walk
- up to them from the side so that they can see you.

When in the stalls:

- Be cautious when entering the stall, make sure your horse knows you are coming in
- For most horses, allow the gate to remain barely open in the case of an emergency so you can exit quickly
- Halter the horse as normal
- Open the gate fully before asking the horse to step out

Be sure to close all the gates after you have gotten your horse.



Putting a Horse Away:

- Confirm with PFP Staff where a horse is to be put away after their lesson.
- When turning out a horse, walk the horse into the pasture while your partner holds on to the closed gate.

Be sure to close all gates after the horse has been put away.

In the Crossties:

When leading a horse to the crossties:

- Crossties are attached to the side rings of the halter before the lead rope is unattached (Always be sure to have two points of attachment to the horse before removing the lead rope)
- Lead ropes can unclip from the halters and be hung on the hooks beside the crossties
- No more than two people should work around one horse at a time.

Aspects of Volunteer Service

Initial Volunteer Training

All new volunteers are required to complete a volunteer orientation prior to starting in any of our volunteer roles. New volunteers will learn about PFP, our history, the work we do, our students, and how our volunteers help us do the work we do every day. The initial orientation will introduce you to much of the information, locations, and resources you will need to get started. Most details you will learn on your first few shifts of volunteering.

Supervision

The Volunteer coordinator is your main point of contact throughout the application, orientation, and onboarding process as well as to support organization volunteers throughout their time at PFP.

Concerns & Grievances

PFP has an open-door policy, this means that at any point a volunteer, staff member, participant, family members, horse donors are welcome and able to voice their concerns and grievances to Program Directors and Executive Directors. If a grievance is voiced to an Instructor, Volunteer Coordinator, or Program Coordinator, that individual will take that concern to Directors and Executive Directors.

Leading Method Class

PFP conducts a leading method class at least twice a year to teach our volunteers how to lead our herd and become a horse leader. A leading method class is considered a continuing part of your volunteer education, and oftentimes several leading method classes or further experience may be necessary to lead our more challenging horses. If you are interested in becoming a horse leader, please let the Volunteer Coordinator know and we will get you signed up for a class!

Corrective Actions & Safety Violation Interventions

Corrective action may be taken following an incident or when it is deemed appropriate. Examples of corrective action include the need for additional training, re-assignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension, or dismissal from volunteer service.

Recognition

We are so grateful for the time, care, and enthusiasm of our volunteers. Without you all, our program simply could not exist, and we want to recognize you for that. Therefore, we believe strongly that recognition opportunities will occur at the organization level as well as the volunteer level.

Participation Guidelines & Policies

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Drug-Free Policy

The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of a controlled substance is not allowed at PFP.

Anyone knowingly engaged in any of the aforementioned things will be reported to law enforcement.

Volunteers may not be impaired by any substance while serving for the safety of our herd and students. Such action will result in your immediate dismissal.

Dress Code

Acceptable Attire:

- Sturdy closed-toes shoes and boots
- Hats
- Wear or bring layers, as mornings and evenings can be chilly but mid-day can be hot
- During summer months, be sure to bring/wear sun protection
- Wear a watch to help keep on schedule
- Water bottles are encouraged!

Un-Acceptable Attire:

- Clothing with excessive holes or inappropriate language/pictures/etc.
- Clothes that flap about in the wind are also discouraged as they may scare horses
- Spaghetti strap tank tops
- Crop-tops
- Short shorts
- Pants that are sagging too low/dragging on the ground

No-Smoking Policy

PFP is a smoke/vape free facility. Smoking by staff, volunteers, students, and families is strictly prohibited on the property.

Cell Phone Use

We understand today that our phones are essentially extensions of our bodies. However, while in lessons we ask you do not have your cell phone in the arena. This is to keep our riders safe and free of distraction.

Volunteers MUST ask permission to take photographs or videos of lessons prior to the start of any lesson or program PFP is conducting.

Participation Guidelines & Policies

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Confidentiality

PFP strives to protect the privacy of our clients and so follows very specific confidentiality rules. While instructors might give you information about a student that will help you safely facilitate a lesson, they will not give out specific personal details or diagnosis information for any student. We ask you respect the student's privacy by not asking about specific health information, especially while the student is present during a lesson. Please also refrain from speaking about our students, their diagnosis, or other health information outside of PFP, especially in public where you could be overheard and/or misunderstood.

Dismissal

Individuals who become disruptive, threaten the safety of others, or are no longer suited for volunteer/guest activities, will be asked to leave the property. This may include guests to the center including persons visiting the center who are not regular volunteers, participants, or staff members. Partners for Progress Therapeutic Riding Program reserves the right to dismiss individuals who threaten or are no longer considered safe around the facility.

Harassment Policy

PFP is committed to a work environment that is professional and harassment-free for all employees and volunteers.

Harassment includes:

- Verbal, physical, visual, and innuendo comments/actions
- Unwelcome advances
- Requests for sexual favors
- Sexually motivated physical contact and other verbal or physical conduct
- Visual forms of harassment of sexual nature
- Creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment for employees, volunteers, or clients

Volunteers should report any issues to their supervisor.

Center Policies:

PFP is committed to creating and maintaining a safe and positive environment for everyone who comes to our property. The Volunteer and Program Coordinators can provide volunteers with information on facility safety plans and procedures.

- Gum is not to be chewed while mounted
- No pets besides service animals are allowed on the property
- Please be mindful of your tone and volume. No screaming or loud talking.
- Please walk, don't run anywhere around the property unless there is an emergency

In an Emergency

- Dial 911
- Indicate the location of the emergency:
 - Partners for Progress Therapeutic Riding Center
 - 23525 W Milton Rd Wauconda IL 60084
 - Physical location on property
- Pay attention and respond to all questions or requests by 911
 - What happened
 - Number of victims
 - What action/help is being administered
- Ask sirens not be used in close proximity to the barn
- Remain on the line until you are told to hang up
- Make sure other people are directed to go to the bridge and open any gates needed to direct emergency staff

All staff on property are first aid certified.

Universal Precautions/Handling of Bodily Fluids

Contact with bodily fluids such as blood, drainage from scrapes and cuts, urine, vomit, respiratory secretions may present a risk of infection from any number of germs. Personal protective equipment is the best precaution and always available. It is advised all volunteers check with their Primary Care Physicians to ensure they are up to date on all their immunizations.

Horse Body Language

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Horses try to communicate with us, just as we do with them. Their body language tells us how they're feeling, what they want, what they're afraid of, and if they really do love that spot you're scratching.

Understanding some horse body language will keep you, and your equine friend safe and happy.

Every horse is different, and some horses naturally display some of the signs that in another horse may indicate a problem. Several of these signs together likely indicate the true feeling of the horse.

How a Horse Might Say:

"I'm not feeling well."

- Standoffish of the herd: doesn't want to interact with anyone
- Kicking or pawing at their abdomen
- Uncharacteristic girthy behavior
- Reduced activity level
- Repetitive mouth opening
- Intense stare
- Head tossing up and down or side to side
- Repeated tail swishing

"I don't like this."

- Tail swishing
- Shaking their head
- Gaping mouth or yanking the bit
- Pursed lips
- Raised necks
- Wide open eyes
- Stomping fit

"I'm feeling stressed out."

- Forward pointing ears
- Wide-open eyes
- Widened nostrils
- A high head
- Stiff stance
- Raised tail
- Blowing out through their nose

"I'm feeling stressed out."

- Forward pointing ears
- Wide-open eyes
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- A high head
- Stiff stance
- Raised tail
- Blowing out through their nose

Bolting

- Getting big
- Rooting for the bit
- Throwing his head up
- Straightening or stiffening neck
- Putting their head straight down

Biting

- Wrinkling nose
- Pursed lips
- Quick head movement towards you

Kicking

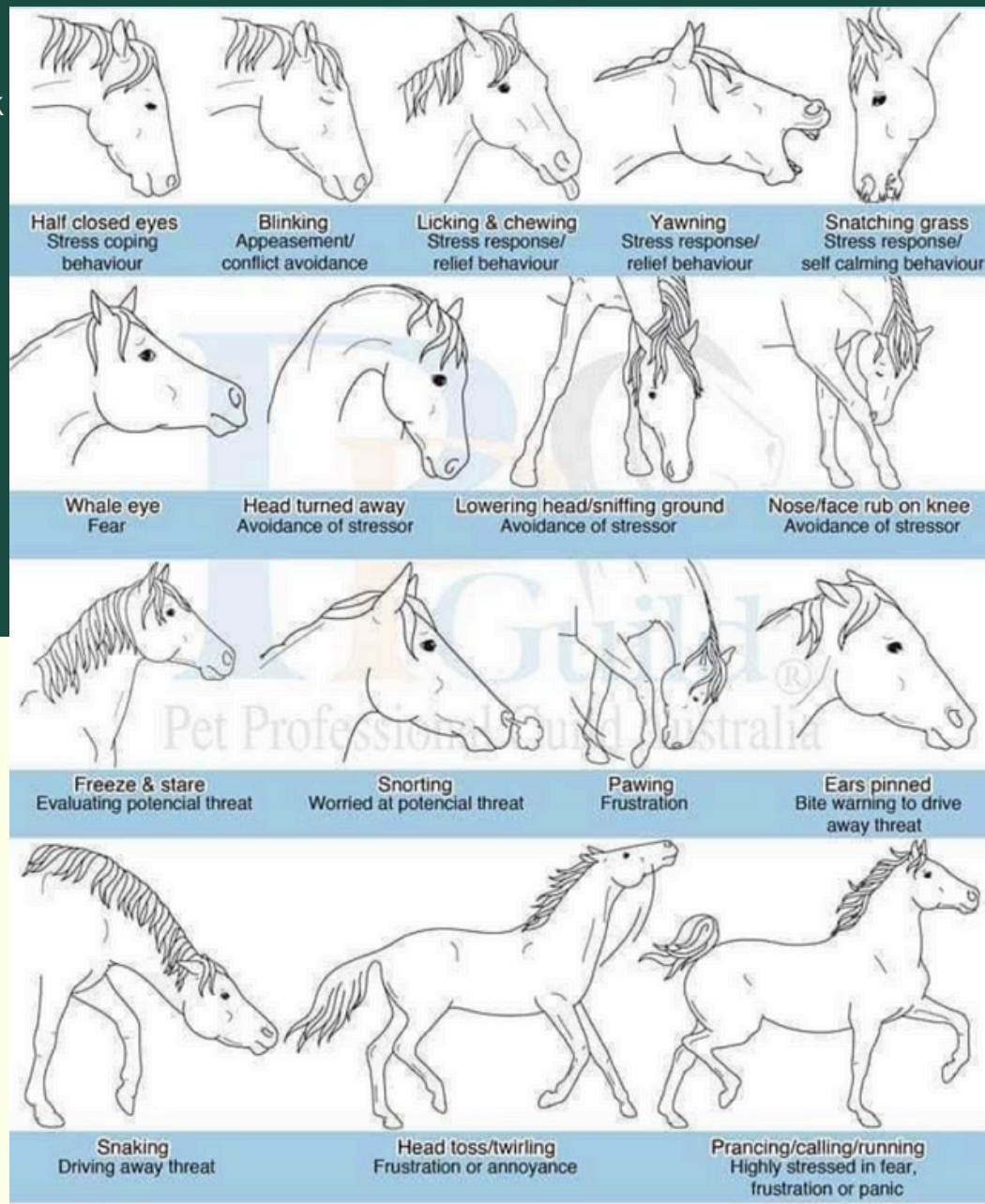
- Pinning back ears
- Picking up a back foot

Bucking

- Back humped
- Low head
- Getting big
- Braces their body
- Stiffens their forelock

"I adore this!"

- Relaxed eyes
- Calm tail
- Relaxed muscles
- Forward facing ears
- Licking and chewing



Falls in Class

While falls are rare, they can happen. In the case of a fall, the priority is ensuring that the rider, volunteers and staff are safe and the horse is safe and contained. In the event any one of these participants are injured, order and direction of this outline will change.

In the case of a fall it is extremely important you listen to the Instructor for directions. Time is often of the essence.

Horse Leaders

If the horse is still in hand, swiftly move the horse away from the fallen rider. If the horse is calm, wait some distance from the rider and instructor and wait for instructions.

Side Walkers

Depending on the situation, there are several roles a side walker fills after a fall. You may be asked to:

- Assist the horse leader
- Get help
- Call emergency services
- Assist in first aid

Emergency Dismounts

Emergency dismounts, while also rare, do happen. They are performed when it is safer for a rider to come off the horse, than to stay on. Most often, the instructor's goal is to keep the rider on the horse's back and address whatever caused the incident.

Role of the Leaders

- If a rider is on the horse's back, the number one priority of the leader is keeping a hold of the horse
- Once the rider has been dismounted, if it is unsafe to hold on and the instructor says so you may let go of the lead rope
- If you still have a hold of the horse and they have calmed after an emergency dismount, walk the two of you away from the rider and lesson team
- Please be aware of other horses in the area.

Role of the Side Walkers:

- If the horse is bolting, spooking, spinning, bucking, or rearing please quickly utilize a FIRM arm over thigh hold on the rider
- Take hold onto the rider's ankle so that you are relieving the horse of any pressure against their sides
- When the instructor indicates, remove the rider's foot from the stirrup
- The instructor will pull the rider off via the "hug and pull" method
- Assist the rider by shoving the leg sliding over the saddle
- Get a safe distance away from the incident and assist the instructor with the student as needed.

Emergency Dismounts are practiced during the Leading Method Class.



Partners for
Progress



Contact Us



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