

# A Safe Ride

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If we haven't been taught  
to do no harm, we see no  
harm in doing harm.



**YOUR PROGRAM**

# What is your mission?

- Example: XYZ's mission is to provide children and youth with disabilities the opportunity to grow and develop through recreational activities with horses.

# Evaluate Program Strengths



- Staff qualifications
- Horses
- Facilities
- Volunteers
- Equipment
- Finances
- Management

# Evaluated Program Limitations



# Assessment

- Strengths
  - What strengths does your program have that impact who you will serve?
- Weaknesses
  - What areas limit who you will serve? What areas need improvement if you will serve additional participants?

# Example: Review your center

## Strengths

- NARHA certified instructor
- Safe horses 13-15hands
- Outdoor riding ring
- Excellent volunteers that are committed to the program
- Handicapped accessible bathroom

## Limitations

- No indoor riding ring
- No large horses, no ramp
- No staff with mental health or medical background

# Other Considerations

- ADA Mandates
- NARHA standards
- Risk management and liability concerns



# Participants



**DANGER**



**Contraindications**

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# Age



# Cerebral Palsy





# Head Stability



# Mobility/Range of Motion



Photo courtesy of Hold Your Horses, LLC  
Pearl and Buddy

# Spinal Concerns



# Trunk Stability



# Cognitive Disabilities



# AUTISM

*Persons with autism may possess the following characteristics in various combinations and in varying degrees of severity.*



Inappropriate laughing or giggling



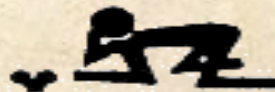
No real fear of dangers



Apparent insensitivity to pain



May not want cuddling



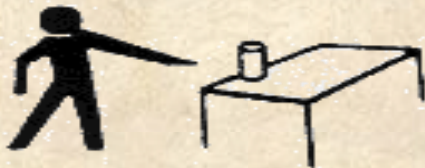
Sustained unusual or repetitive play; Uneven physical or verbal skills



May avoid eye contact



May prefer to be alone



Difficulty in expressing needs; May use gestures



Inappropriate attachments to objects



Insistence on sameness



Echoes words or phrases



Inappropriate response or no response to sound



Spins objects or self



Difficulty in interacting with others

# Behaviors



**WE HAVE THE PAPERWORK,  
NOW WHAT?**

CHOICES



# Can you serve this person?

- Does your mission include this person?
- Do you have the staff, horses and volunteers to keep this person safe?
- Does this person have a clear medical form?
- Does this person have a precaution that you can monitor?

# Can you refer this person?

- Check for NARHA centers in your state, always have a referral list available.
- Get to know other programs and what their strengths may be to provide appropriate referrals.
- Check for therapists with training in hippotherapy from the AHA website.
- Check for local traditional therapy clinical and local recreational programs for additional referral options.

# Will you need to turn them down?

- Be clear during your screening process that all applicants may not be accepted
- Have a referral list to provide
- Make the reason clearly understood
- Uphold high ethical and professional standards

# What else can you offer?

- If it is within your mission can you offer horsemanship activities?
- Do you have staff to offer driving or vaulting programs?



# **CASE STUDIES**

You are one of five therapeutic riding centers in Idaho. You have two NARHA certified riding instructors working part time. You have an outdoor arena and run riding lessons part time in good weather. Your mission is to provide therapeutic riding lessons for cognitively challenged individuals to improve their quality of life.

The applicant is a 35 year old man with Down Syndrome. He weights 176 lbs and has “behaviors” recorded on his medical form. The man rode as a child, but stopped after getting to large for the previous centers’ horses. His goal is to participate in Special Olympics.

What other information do you need to know about the NARHA center?  
What other information do you need to know about the applicant?  
What options do you have for meeting this persons needs?

Your center is one of five centers in Iowa. You employ three NARHA certified riding instructors and one certified driving instructor. You have an indoor arena and run programs year round. You have a mounting ramp and horses that range from 14hands to 16hands.

The applicant is a four year old girl with cerebral palsy. She is a power wheelchair user. Her medical form reports that she has mild hip intermittent subluxation. She has a strong extensor thrust and her parents want to improve her coordination.

What other information do you need to know about the NARHA center?

What other information do you need to know about the applicant?

What options do you have for meeting this persons needs?

What referrals might you make to this family?

Thank you for attending this presentation.

**QUESTIONS?**