



THE EQUESTRIAN THERAPY PROGRAM

CODE OF CONDUCT AND PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

1. In order to protect Equestrian Therapy Program staff, volunteers and program participants – at no time during an ETP event may ETP staff or volunteers be alone with a single child where staff or the volunteer cannot be observed by others.
2. Staff and volunteers shall never leave a child unsupervised.
3. Restroom supervision: staff and volunteers will make sure suspicious or unknown individuals do not occupy the restroom before allowing children to use the facilities. A staff member or a volunteer will stand in the doorway while a child uses the restroom, unless they are taken to the restroom by a parent or guardian.
4. Staff and volunteers should conduct or supervise private activities in pairs. When this is not feasible, staff or volunteers should be positioned so that they are visible to others.
5. Staff and volunteers should not abuse children, including:
 - Physical abuse – striking, spanking, shaking, slapping
 - Verbal abuse – humiliating, degrading, threatening
 - Mental abuse – shaming, withholding love, cruelty
 - Neglect – withholding food, water, basic care, etc.
 - Sexual abuse – inappropriate touching or verbal exchangesAny type of abuse will not be tolerated, and may be cause for immediate dismissal.
6. Staff and volunteers must use positive techniques of guidance, including redirection, positive reinforcement and encouragement rather than competition, comparison and criticism. Staff will have age-appropriate expectations, and set up guidelines and environments that minimize the need for discipline. Physical restraint is used only in pre-determined situations (necessary to protect the child or other children from harm), is only administered in a prescribed manner, and must be documented in writing.
7. Staff and volunteers will conduct a visual health check of each child, each day, as they enter the program, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, etc. Questions or comments will be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Any questionable marks or responses will be documented.
8. Staff and volunteers respond to children with respect and consideration, and treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion or culture.
9. Staff and volunteers will respect children's rights to not be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, and their right to say no.
10. Staff and volunteers will refrain from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents and staff.

11. While the ETP does not discriminate against an individual's lifestyle, it does require that in the performance of their job as staff or volunteer you will abide by the standards of conduct set forth by the Equestrian Therapy Program.
12. Staff and volunteers must appear clean, neat and follow the dress code policy.
13. Staff and volunteer identification badges must be worn during program operation.
14. Using, possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during work or volunteer hours is prohibited.
15. Smoking or the use of tobacco in the presence of children or parents during working hours is prohibited.
16. Profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate details of one's personal life and any kind of harassment in the presence of children or parents is prohibited.
17. Staff and volunteers must be free of physical and psychological conditions that might adversely affect children's physical or mental health. If in doubt, an expert should be consulted.
18. Staff and volunteers will portray a positive role model for youth by maintaining an attitude of respect, loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact and maturity.
19. Staff and volunteers may not be alone with children they meet in ETP events outside of the Equestrian Therapy Program. This includes babysitting, sleepovers and inviting children to your home. Any exceptions require a written explanation before the fact, and are subject to administrator approval.
20. Staff and volunteers are not to transport children in their own vehicles unless participating in an ETP special event.
21. Staff and volunteers may not date program participants under the age of 18 years old.
22. Under no circumstances should staff and volunteers release children to anyone other than the authorized parent, guardian or other adult authorized by the parent or guardian (written parent authorization on file with the ETP).
23. Staff and volunteers are required to read and sign all policies related to identifying , documenting and reporting child abuse and to attend trainings on the subject as instructed by a supervisor.
24. Every staff member or volunteer has an absolute duty to report any suspicion of child abuse, molestation or sexual misconduct to the proper authorities. The child protective agency will determine the accuracy of the report.
25. Volunteers or staff members may receive information regarding the participants. The staff and volunteers will treat any information regarding the participant as confidential.

I understand that any violation of this Code of Conduct may result in termination.

Employee/Volunteer Signature

Supervisor Signature

Date