

# Great and Small, Inc.

## Rider Manual

2010



Great and Small

at the Rickman Farm Horse Park

17320 Moore Road, Boyds, MD 20841

(301) 349-0075

[www.greatandsmallride.org](http://www.greatandsmallride.org)

## **Program Description**

Therapeutic riding at Great and Small is designed to teach individuals with physical and/or mental challenges the skills necessary to ride a horse, as well as how to groom and tack a horse and other basic horsemanship skills. The level of skills taught varies depending on the individual rider. Therapeutic riding lessons are offered throughout the year and are led by an instructor certified by the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (“NARHA”).

Lessons are either 30 minutes or an hour long in length, and are organized to group riders according to age, riding skills and availability.

## **Program Policies and Procedures**

### **Safety Requirements**

Safety is Great and Small’s number one priority. Unfortunately, under certain circumstances it may not be safe to allow a rider to participate in a mounted lesson. These situations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Participant’s condition is in any way exacerbated by riding activities
- Participant’s behavior poses safety concerns
- Staff does not feel capable of safely conducting a lesson with a participant

### **Age and Weight Requirements**

Individuals must be at least three (3) years old before they can participate in any of the mounted programs at Great and Small. It is also necessary for riders to disclose their weight prior to enrolling in riding lessons. Depending upon the horses we currently have in the program, we may not be able to safely accommodate riders above a certain weight.

## **Annual Update of Paperwork**

To achieve the maximum benefits of therapeutic riding, it is important that a rider's personal information, in particular his or her medical history, is updated on a regular basis. Therefore, the following forms must be completed and submitted to Great and Small annually:

- Participant's Application and Health History (with Photo/Video release)
- Participant's Release of Liability
- Participant's Authorization for Emergency Medical Treatment

\*It is required that riders with Down Syndrome have written certification from a physician that the individual has been examined for atlantoaxial instability and that the condition is not present before participating in mounted activities. The physician certification must then be resubmitted on an annual basis.

## **Confidentiality**

At Great and Small, personal information about our riders is handled with the highest degree of confidentiality possible. Any information in this regard is shared among instructors and volunteers only when it is necessary to promote the safety of the rider and to assist in reaching his or her respective goals. This means that only those volunteers and staff who work directly with a rider (and have a need to know information to properly perform their duties) will be informed about a rider's disability.

## **Attire**

All riders must wear ASTM-SEI approved headgear while mounted. Helmets are available at the barn or riders may bring their own. Long pants are preferred; shorts are permitted, but not recommended because of the potential for rub marks or other injury. Nylon pants (such as warm-up pants or ski pants) are also not recommended because they are too slippery against the saddle. Hard soled shoes or boots with a heel are ideal for riding, but sneakers are acceptable. (There are used riding boots available in the office for students to use.) Sandals or open-toed shoes are not permitted. Jewelry should also be kept to a minimum.

Riders should dress appropriately for existing weather conditions so they can be comfortable during lessons. Remember to layer clothing during cold weather and to wear warm coats, heavy socks, long underwear or tights, gloves, and ear protection that will fit under the riding helmet.

In warm weather, please remember to wear light-colored clothing and apply sunscreen before riding. Riders may also want to bring their own water bottles.

## **Fees**

The cost for a private thirty (30) minute riding lesson is \$50.00. A half-hour lesson with two to four riders is \$45.00 per rider. During a thirty (30) minute lesson, the majority of the time is dedicated to mounted activities. Depending upon the participant and his or her needs, an instructor may choose to spend a small amount of the lesson time teaching the participant to groom and care for the horse.

The cost for a private sixty (60) minute riding lesson is \$60.00. An hour lesson with two to four riders is \$55.00 per rider. During an hour-long lesson, the participant is responsible for grooming and tacking his or her horse prior to riding (with assistance as needed) and untacking the horse at the end of the lesson.

Although every effort will be made, please understand that it is not always possible to provide a student with his or her preference in terms of a private versus group lesson. During the school year, there are limited riding slots available during after school hours. Additionally, we rely on the availability and schedules of trained volunteers to assist as needed as horse leaders and/or sidewalkers.

Great and Small conducts several riding sessions per calendar year. Each session ranges from four to nine weeks of lessons. (See 2010 Schedule below.) Participants are required to sign up and pay for a full session of lessons. Letters regarding the dates of the session and the cost will be given to riders and their parents/caregivers prior to the start of a new session. Payment in full prior to or at the commencement of the session is greatly appreciated. Other payment arrangements can be discussed.

## **Cancellations and Make-ups**

**Cancellations by Riders:** Riders are eligible for a make-up lesson if a call is placed to Great and Small to cancel the rider's lesson at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance of the scheduled lesson time. To cancel a lesson, please call the office at (301) 349-0075. Make-up lessons may be scheduled based on the mutual availability of the rider and Great and Small's teaching staff.

Please understand that Great and Small has a waiting list of other individuals interested in availing themselves of our therapeutic program. As such, it is important that our current participants show up for lessons as scheduled and fully avail themselves of our program. In order for Great and Small to reach as many clients as possible, we ask that you please make every reasonable effort to arrive on time for a scheduled lesson.

**Cancellations by Great and Small:** Staff will contact parents/caretakers at the telephone numbers provided in the event lessons are cancelled. In such cases, make-up lessons may be scheduled on the mutual availability of the rider and Great and Small's teaching staff.

### **Late Arrivals**

Participants who arrive up to fifteen (15) minutes late may still have a lesson, but understand that the lesson will still have to end at the regularly scheduled time. Unfortunately, a lesson (and payment for the lesson) will have to be forfeited in the event that a participant arrives more than fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled start time for the lesson. Please understand that there are many components (instructors, volunteers and horses) involved in providing a lesson and these components are carefully arranged to operate at specific designated times.

### **Designated Waiting Area and Observation Area**

Upon arriving for a lesson, riders and family members/caregivers should go to the office (located off the indoor riding arena). Instructors will meet the rider at this location upon commencement of the lesson. Family members/caregivers interested in watching the lesson may observe from the office or in the indoor arena area immediately outside of the office. If lessons are conducted in the outdoor arena, the instructor will advise family and caregivers. Lessons in the outdoor arena can be observed in the grassy area next to the outdoor arena. For safety reasons, all children must be under the supervision of a parent/adult at all times.

### **Arriving Early for Lessons**

Of course, it is always helpful to be early rather than late for a lesson. However, if you do arrive early, out of consideration for others who may be taking a lesson, please wait in your vehicle or in the Great and Small office until your designated lesson time.

**Welcome to Great and Small!**