

Volunteer Manual



4STEP 4 Seasons
Therapeutic
Equestrian Program

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This document is the property of 4STEP. It is to be used as a guide for volunteers. It is understood that this is a general overview, and all volunteers are expected to commit to attending at least one training a year to obtain a more thorough understanding of 4STEP and its daily functions. We thank you for your commitment.

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Welcome

Welcome to 4STEP! We are glad you came to be with us. Our volunteers are an important part of the inner workings, mission, purpose, and healing that go on here within our gates. Your service to the community and the 4STEP family is invaluable and appreciated! We (and the horses) are looking forward to getting to know you better and sharing with you all the smiles from our participants as they grow and learn.

Our Mission

To help our participants discover and identify the obstacles that are in lives and how to discover how to overcome them.

What Do We Do?

4 Seasons Therapeutic Equestrian Program (4STEP) was founded in 2007 as a 501c3 non-profit corporation committed to providing quality equine assisted services for individuals, families, and groups.

We use horses in a non-traditional way to help participants discover what obstacles are in their lives and how to overcome them. Through these experiences, one can learn to develop trust; build healthy relationships; communicate feelings; solve problems; build character; and gain self worth; and strengthen their body and mind.

While Therapeutic Riding has been around for several years, Equine-Assisted Mental Health (EAMH) and Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL) is an emerging field in which human facilitators partner with horses to provide unique emotional growth and learning opportunities. EAMH/EAL, like "Ropes Courses," is experiential in nature. This means the participants learn about themselves and others during activities with horses, and then discuss feelings, behaviors, and patterns.

The focus of EAMH/EAL is not horsemanship or riding. 99% of the activities are conducted on the ground and are designed to improve life and relationship skills, not horse skills.

The focus of Therapeutic Riding is strengthening the body and mind where weaknesses may be. 99% of the activities are done while riding.

Why Horses? And how in the world can they help me?

Excellent Question!

For those of us who have spent anytime around horses, we have come to recognize and respect the power of horses and their ability to influence people in powerful ways. The process of developing relationships, training, caring for and working beside horses **naturally affects people in positive ways.**

The **benefits of this work are endless** and are able to impact the physical, psychological, social, educational and spiritual parts of the participants. In the EAL & EAMH programs development of character skills are the key focus, and include work ethic, responsibility, assertiveness, communication, healthy relationship, respect, team work and so much more (remember, we said Endless!). In the Therapeutic Riding the benefits expand into the strengthening of the physical body. These benefits occur naturally when working with the horses and have been long recognized. Different aspects of our programs highlight different focus areas. However, the wonders of the horse, all areas are impacted do to the experiential nature of all of the services. What other type of therapy can positively impact all of these different aspects of who you are in a single session?

So Why Not Other Animals?

In EAL & EAMH programs, the size and power of a horse **creates a natural opportunity to overcome fear and develop confidence.** Working with such a large animal and accomplishing a task provides the opportunity to look at how to deal with intimidating and challenging situations once they leave the farm. To draw the two situations together, metaphors are used to show similarities and differences between the session and real life situations.

Another reason horses are used is because of they are social animals with defined roles within their herd. Each horse has a distinct personality, attitude, and mood, as well as likes and dislikes. At different times they may be stubborn, defiant, comical, loving, or playful. An approach that may work with one horse, may not necessarily work with another. Using these different aspects of horses, they provide vast opportunities for metaphorical learning and is an effective technique even with the most challenging individuals or groups.

"...participants learn that delayed gratification and putting effort into building relationships have positive and lasting results. A valuable characteristic that will serve one well is all aspects of life."

In today's society we are use to immediate gratification. This creates an environment where unhealthy behaviors and actions become appealing. The "if it feels good, do it" philosophy takes over with little thought to the consequences of the behaviors. Horses require work and this requires participants to be engaged in physical and mental work to be successful. In doing so, participants learn that delayed gratification and putting effort into building relationships have positive and lasting results. A valuable characteristic that will serve one well is all aspects of life.

One of the most amazing aspects of using horses in this field of work is their ability to mirror exactly what human body language is telling them. Horses are always honest and will challenge participants to change themselves so that the horse will respond in the desired manner. Many people will complain, "The horse is

stubborn. The horse doesn't like me," etc. But the lesson to be learned is that if they change themselves, the horses respond differently (paraphrased from EAGALA)

Horses bring these and other great benefit to our Therapeutic Riding programs as well. The horse's gait is very similar to that of a human. The gaits are rhythmical and repeatable which allows the body to be moved, exercised and strengthened while riding. For those who are unable to walk or have limited motion, riding allows the hips and legs to be moved in an identical way to walking. See our Therapeutic Riding page for more benefits!

Terminology

There seem to be a lot of acronyms flying around our office. Here is a quick reference guide to help you keep them all straight.

4STEP

4STEP is the acronym for 4 Seasons Therapeutic Equestrian Program.

E.A.M.H.

Equine Assisted Mental Health is a more global term here at the farm, and often also includes EAL, due to their similarities. They are only differentiated when differences need to be made clear. It is a collaborative effort between a licensed therapist and a horse professional working with the participants and horses to address session goals. Because of its intensity and effectiveness, it is considered a short-term, or "brief" approach.

EAMH is a powerful and effective therapeutic approach that has an incredible impact on individuals, youth, families, and groups. EAMH addresses a variety of mental health and human development needs including mental, emotional, spiritual, relational, and behavioral issues. Behavioral issues may include: attention deficit disorder, substance abuse, addictions, eating disorders, abuse issues, depression, anxiety, relationship problems and communication needs.

E.A.L.

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is similar in many ways to EAP. There are still two facilitators in the arena with the participants, but in EAL the licensed therapist is replaced (or serves as) by a learning specialist. The activities are similar but the goals vastly different. EAL focuses on developing the following life skills.

EAL and EAMH focus on the following elements:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| ■ Leadership | ■ Confidence | ■ Anger |
| ■ Goal Setting | ■ Flexibility | Management |
| ■ Relationship Skills | ■ Integrity | ■ Assertiveness |
| ■ Positive Attitude | ■ Patience | ■ Communication |
| ■ Problem Solving | ■ Trust | ■ Compassion |
| ■ Contentment | ■ Respect | ■ Accountability |
| ■ Responsibility | ■ Motivation | ■ Creative Thinking |
| | | ■ Team Work |

EAGALA

EAGALA provides education, standards, innovation, and support to professionals providing services in Equine Assisted Psychotherapy.

Founded in July 1999, the Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization developed to address the need for resources, education, and professionalism in the field of Equine Assisted Psychotherapy.

Creating a more professional field and promoting it to the general public is a large task. EAGALA strives to educate the public that EAP is more than horsemanship and riding classes.

EAGALA aims to get professionals in the clinical and human development fields to accept EAP as a valid and effective approach, and to actively use it with their clientele. This benefits those in the equine fields by opening up greater possibilities for doing what they love, namely working with horses. This benefits those in the clinical and human development fields by providing a powerful, effective, interesting, and fun therapeutic alternative. Most of all, this benefits the clients and participants, because, as those of us working in the field see all the time, it works! The growth and learning of all involved is intense and rewarding.



*Towards the end of this manual you will be asked to read and sign the EAGALA code of ethics.

What We Offer

We offer Therapeutic Riding Sessions and Equine-Assisted Mental Health & Equine-Assisted Learning Programs. Below you will find a description of each – each are unique in their own way and provide hope and healing to our participants.

Therapeutic Riding

“Trail Blazers” – For Individuals (Private or group session)

“Trail Blazers” is our life-changing program for the physically and mentally challenged and disabled. Horseback riding is a uniquely beneficial form of therapy. The horse provides a movement that is similar to the human walk. The movement helps strengthen the spine and pelvic muscles, improves posture and coordination and increases joint mobility. Along with the physical benefits, horseback riding gives participants a feeling of control, a sense of accomplishment and increased self-esteem. The ability to control a horse as well as one’s own body inspires self-confidence, responsibility and teamwork. Sessions are a thoroughly enjoyable experience, which creates a special relationship between rider and horse and promotes personal challenge. Starting from the very first session, participants learn balance, coordination and self-assurance while receiving therapeutic muscle stimulation. As a result of successive lessons, poise, posture, strength and flexibility improve.

“Trail Blazers” is a metaphor for breaking new ground and trying new things. Riders will benefit physically, mentally and emotionally. As our riders grow in their horsemanship skills they will have the opportunity to participate in trail rides, horse shows and other events.

We serve individuals with physical and mental handicaps. We offer tailored programs to meet the particular needs our clients. We screen our applicants prior to acceptance into the program so that we can be sure we can safely accommodate each individual. Each participant must have a physician’s written approval and we work closely with our physical therapist to tailor just the right session. Each session is facilitated by an Equine Specialist and a physical therapist along with several trained volunteers.

Physical Benefits:

- ✓ Stretching of tight or spastic muscles
- ✓ Decreased plasticity
- ✓ Increased range of motion of the joints
- ✓ Reduction of abnormal movement patterns
- ✓ Improved respiration and circulation
- ✓ Improved appetite and digestion
- ✓ Sensory integration.

Psychological Benefits:

- ✓ Improved self-confidence
- ✓ Increased interest in the outside world
- ✓ Increased interest in one's own life
- ✓ Development of patience
- ✓ Emotional control and self-discipline
- ✓ Sense of normality
- ✓ Expansion of the focus of control

Social Benefits:

- ✓ Friendship
- ✓ Increased experiences
- ✓ Enjoyment
- ✓ Work Ethic
- ✓ Relationship building

Educational Benefits:

- ✓ Sequencing, patterning and motor planning
- ✓ Improved eye-hand coordination
- ✓ Visual spatial perception
- ✓ Differentiation

EAMH and EAL Programs

“Breakaway” – For Individuals

EAMH services for individuals (**ages 10 and up) who desire to build stronger character skills, learn to overcome life’s obstacles, working through issues such as ADHD, panic attacks, building stronger and healthier relationships, conduct disorder, anxiety, adjustment issues, impulse-control, obsessive-compulsiveness, and more. These sessions may be utilized year round and are on an ‘as-scheduled basis.’

“Breakaway” is a metaphor that refers to a safety halter that is used on horses that are going to be turned out or left unattended over a period of time. This is done so that if the halter were to become caught, with enough force, the halter will break and allow the horse to run free. In the same way, individuals in the “Breakaway” program will learn and practice skills so that when old halters (habits & destructive behaviors) start to entangle, clients will have the skills necessary to break free.

“Herd Dynamics” – For Families and Couples

EAMH services for families and couples who desire stronger relationships, enhanced communication skills, smoother interactions and more! All family members (**ages 7 and up) are encouraged to participate. These sessions may be utilized year round and are on an ‘as-scheduled basis.’

“Herd Dynamics” is a metaphor that refers to how horse herds are able to function together as a single unit for the sole purpose of survival. Horses have clear and honest communication, healthy boundaries, and effective discipline within their horse-family. This allows them to work together in an effective and efficient manner. In the same way, families in the “Herd Dynamics” program will learn and practice related skills so that when the herd dynamics of your family are changing or struggling, your herd can learn to work together as a cohesive and loving unit by learning to be more self aware and honest.

“Building FACTER” – For Families

Part of our “Herd Dynamics” program, “Building FACTER” (Building Families And Communities Together, Equines Required), is a program that focuses on serving families. This innovative and creatively structured program runs bi-annually for 8-week periods. This program brings 4-6 families together for eight, 2.5 hour consecutive sessions that focus on building community support, parent support groups and providing a safe environment for which parents and pre-teens/teens can explore difficult issues. See our Events page for more information and to see when the next “Building FACTER” is being held. You won’t want to miss it!

“Horse Whisperer” – For Individuals, Groups, Families & Couples

Serving individuals, groups, families and couples, “Horse Whisperer” is our EAMH (Equine-Assisted Mental Health) program in which we partner with outside mental health agencies to provide effective services to clients. Often, this program is selected by a licensed therapist who wishes to get their client out of the office and into a different environment. This is especially helpful with challenging clients and helps to break down the barriers that therapists are often confronted with in an office setting. The outside licensed therapist works closely with our mental health worker and equine-specialist to design a series of sessions that will benefit the client to the highest potential. If you have a client that you believe would benefit from our services, maybe you are just curious or perhaps you’d like to enter into these services and want to invite your therapist along for the ride! Give us a call! These sessions may be utilized year round on an ‘as-scheduled basis.’

“Appy Herd” – For Groups & Staff/Corporate teams

Do you want a team that functions to their highest potential? Do you want your group not only to be a group of individuals but to become a cohesive unit and work together for a common goal? Our unique “Appy Herd” program allows you to bring your group to our farm for a day or weekend of adventure and activities that will build the team atmosphere and help them to think outside of the box so that barriers and obstacles can be overcome.

This program is also a great option for church groups, youth groups, corporate/agency staff, and teams who wish to revitalize and refocus. Which ever track you choose, we build the program around your needs. This program may be utilized year round and is on an ‘as-scheduled basis.’

Like an “Appy Herd”, each horse has distinct and unique spots that make them stand out, yet they work together as a well functioning team. Like the “Appy Herd” your team or group will be given the opportunity to identify each other’s differences, strengths and weakness and take these differences and use them to the benefit of the team or group.

“Mending Fences” – For Troubled Youth

“Mending Fences” is one of our EAL programs for troubled youth and may be better known as our ‘work-to-ride’ program. Parents, therapists, parole officers and court magistrates may refer youth that have been in trouble due to their behavior. Youth will work at the farm, learning responsibility, work ethic, and communication among a variety of other important life skills. For every three (3) hours worked at the farm, the youth will be given the opportunity for one (1) EAL/riding session. This is the only program that fully utilizes the horsemanship aspect of the horse, allowing participants to ride.

“Mending Fences” uses the metaphor of a fence because all of the pieces are interdependent of one another. Like the fence all of the parts (community, family, friends, school, etc) are vital to reaching the vision of one’s goals. A fence is a structure devised to contain or restrict good and bad, much like how relationships and a person’s self concept are created. Each piece relies on another in order to form the intact structure, and when one piece changes position or is weakened, the integrity of the entire system is compromised. Likening this concept to individuals with behavior and conduct issues, addictive disorders and coping problems, the facilitators work to help restore balance to troubled youth.

VOLUNTEER POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

The position title	Morning Weekend Barn Assistant :Cleaning & Feeding
The purpose of the assignment	Clean the barn on Saturdays/Sundays
Tasks/activities	Feed, hay and water horses, Maintain clean stalls and barn area, place horses in appropriate stalls and pastures.
Qualifications	Must enjoy working outdoors and being with horses Reliable transportation, comfortable leading horses, placing halters on horses, able to lift hay bales. Ages 14 +
Time frame	4 month commitment, at least one time a month
Supervisor	Twyla Pellman & Teresa Pellman
Benefits	Spend time with horses in peaceful surroundings Build muscles and get exercise.
Where you will work	Horse barn and pastures
Additional information	Some assistance may be needed for holidays as well. Weekend morning barn work starts at 7am. Please be aware of possible allergies: animals, hay, etc.

The position title	Evening Weekend Barn Assistant :Cleaning & Feeding
The purpose of the assignment	Clean the barn on Saturday/Sunday Evening
Tasks/activities	Feed, hay and water horses, Maintain clean stalls and barn area, place horses in appropriate stalls and pastures.
Qualifications	Must enjoy working outdoors and being with horses Reliable transportation, comfortable leading horses, placing halters on horses, able to lift hay bales. Ages 14 +
Time frame	4 month commitment, at least one time a month
Supervisor	Twyla Pellman & Teresa Pellman
Benefits	Spend time with horses in peaceful surroundings; build muscles and get exercise
Where you will work	Horse barn and fields
Additional information	Some assistance may be needed for holidays as well. Weekend evening barn work starts at 3pm.

The position title	Horse Playmate
The purpose of the assignment	To keep our horses in good mental and physical shape
The results to be achieved	All horses will be happy and healthy
Suggested tasks/activities	Riding, grooming, lunging, other types of horse play. All tasks are: "as assigned" and "according to assessed skill level."
Evaluation criteria	Horses will look cleaner and more in shape.
Qualifications	Riding must be screened by Twyla or Teresa. Horsemanship experience required. Natural horsemanship- some experience <u>with</u> rope halters and training sticks; Grooming/Horse play- be comfortable around horses *All interested will be screened for approval Ages 14 +
Time frame	Weekdays
Supervisor	Twyla and Teresa Pellman
Benefits	Time with horses, having fun, exercise, spending time in peaceful surroundings.
Where you will work	Arena, pastures, paddocks, trails

The position title	Side Walker
The purpose of the assignment	To ensure the safety of our Therapeutic Riding participants.
The results to be achieved	To provide safe and beneficial therapeutic riding sessions.
Tasks/activities	Attend one training session a year. Walk beside horse at participants leg. Hold leg if necessary, watch for proper and improper body positioning and balance issues. Limited talking with participants to ensure their focus on instructor.
Qualifications	Able to walk/job for 1 hour time slots. Enjoy working with mentally/physically challenged kids, youth, and/or adults. Have reliable transportation Able to volunteer in 2hr time blocks Ages 14+
Time frame	School year hours: Week day evening hours: varied – 4-7:30pm Summer hours: Weekday hours varied TBA
Supervisor	Identified Instructor for session: Twyla Pellman, Teresa Pellman, Laurel Patton
Benefits	Ensuring participant safety and impacting their life for the better. Helping others overcome obstacles in their lives. Hugs and smiles from the participants. Being part of something great!
Where you will work	Arena, outside, barn

The position title	Horse Handler/Leader
The purpose of the assignment	To ensure the safety of our Therapeutic Riding participants by ensuring proper movement of horse.
The results to be achieved	To provide safe and beneficial therapeutic riding sessions.
Suggested tasks/activities	Aid in grooming and saddling prior to session. To lead horse and follow all of instructors instructions. Stand in front of horse when stopped and lead at different gates throughout session. Limited/no talking with participants to ensure their focus on instructor. Communicate with sidewalkers about upcoming obstacles/stops/changes, etc.
Qualifications	Able to walk and jog for at least 1 hour. Enjoy working with mentally/physically challenged clients. Have reliable transportation Able to volunteer in 2 hour time blocks Ages 14+
Time frame	School year hours: Week day evening hours: varied – 4-7:30pm Summer hours: Weekday hours varied
Supervisor	Identified Instructor: Twyla Pellman, Teresa Pellman, Laurel Patton
Benefits	Ensuring participant safety and impacting their life for the better. Hugs and smiles from participants. Being part of something great!
Where you will work	Arena, outside, barn

The position title	Property Management Assistant
The purpose of the assignment	Help with property upkeep and outward appearance
The results to be achieved	More attractive curb appeal, well maintained facility, professional appearance.
Suggested tasks/activities	Mowing, landscaping/landscape upkeep, building/fence repair, painting, fertilizing fields, barn cleaning, cleaning buckets, de-cobbwebing, putting hay in hayloft
Qualifications	Enjoy working outdoors Enjoy working with your hands Able to carry hay bales and 5 gallon water buckets Depending on assignments: experience working with mowers/tools, etc. Ages 14+
Benefits	Working outdoors, working with horses, building muscles, getting exercise
Time frame	Needed all year
Supervisor	Tony Pellman and Greg Pellman
Where you will work	All over the farm, mostly outside

The position title	Community Promoter/Liaison
The purpose of the assignment	To assist the Marketing & Community Relations Director with events in the community and making new contacts around the local area.
The results to be achieved	Make new contacts (individuals, organizations, agencies, etc.) for potential participants and volunteers at 4STEP; Assist staff members at local events such as booths, marketing events, meetings, etc. in the community. Spreading the word about 4STEP
Suggested tasks/activities	Assist in the creation of promotional items for fair tables and other marketing events. Aid in running marketing events. Keep table materials organized and up to date; prepare items for booth set-up at upcoming events. Talking to people in the community whenever the opportunity arises. Delivering information packets to organizations. Computer skills.
Qualifications	Good people and communication skills . Outgoing. Professional appearance and good hygiene. Good working knowledge of what we do at 4STEP Ages 18+
Time frame	Year round
Supervisor	Laurel Patton
Where you will work	At the farm, in the community (local schools, agencies, outdoor events, etc.)

The position title	Fundraiser Event Planner
The purpose of the assignment	Organize and implement a special event to raise funds for 4STEP programs
The results to be achieved	Fund programs and be able to offer more scholarships and provide continued care of horses.
Suggested tasks/activities	Research types of events, select one that is appropriate for 4STEP that holds true to our mission Events should include community involvement Organize and implement event
Qualifications	Enthusiasm, experience planning a large event, time commitment Ages 18+
Time frame	We strive to have one event per season.
Supervisor	Greg Pellman
Where you will work	From home and in the community and possibly on the farm
Additional information	It does not need to be a huge event

The position title	Journalist
The purpose of the assignment	Write articles for local newspaper for special events being held. Write short radio announcements. Write newsletter 4-6 times a year.
The results to be achieved	To broaden the scope of who is aware of 4STEP in the local communities.
Suggested tasks/activities	Contact local newspapers and radio stations about upcoming events. Produce and follow through with task. Write newsletters and send out to all 4STEP contacts.
Qualifications	Enthusiasm, good writing skills, creativity, working knowledge of 4STEP, time commitment Ages 18+
Time frame	As events arrive. 1 newsletter every other month
Supervisor	Laurel Patton
Where you will work	From home and in the community, at Fundraiser event locations.

PROCEDURES

Feeding the horses:

- Each horse belongs in their individual stall (stalls are labeled) and an up-to-date chart is provided on the inside of the feed freezer lid.
- Following the chart in the feed room is imperative; this insures each horse gets the correct amount of feed and supplements. Each bucket has the horses name labeled on it.
- On arrival, feed the horses that are in their stalls.
- Water all water buckets in barn. All water buckets need be to filled and cleaned as needed.
 - To clean, take water bucket out of stall, dump extra water outside. Place some water in the bucket. To clean, use a horse brush and water only. No chemicals. Scrub bucket well, rinse, and place bucket back in stall. Refill.
- Bring horses that are in the pastures in to their appropriate stall.
 - Feed may likely already be in their feed buckets. Check, so that horses are never double fed.
- Following chart, take appropriate horses out to pastures. Place two slices of alfalfa hay per horse in each pasture and occupied stall.
- Clean all soiled stalls. Put 1 wheel barrow full of sawdust in stalls that need.
 - Stalls should be cleaned with the thought, “would I want to sleep in here tonight?” Look for hidden piles and wet spots.
- Check water buckets again, and fill as needed.

- Check that all stall doors and pasture gates are secured.
- Refill feed bucks (w/ supplements as directed) and place in feed freezer.
- Sweep isles, turn off lights. In winter, close all doors securely.

Cleaning the stalls:

- All manure, and soiled bedding gets pitched into the wheelbarrow.
- When cleaning: remove all manure and urine spots. Take pick along sides of stall to push sawdust into center. Clean any missed manure.
- 1 Wheelbarrow of sawdust should be applied to clean stalls as needed. Sawdust is found in the corner of the indoor arena.
- Take the wheelbarrow through the indoor, exit through the right side of the indoor and head towards the back pastures. Dump wheelbarrow on manure pile.
- Double check – did you miss any stalls? Are they clean enough for you to sleep in? Are all the doors securely latched?

Full Value Commitment

At 4STEP we strive to keep the following commitments:

■ SAFETY

- I will make physical and emotional safety a priority.
- I will actively pursue more knowledge about equines.
- I will learn the locations of all human and equine first-aid kits.
- I will review the 4STEP Policy Handbook, especially the sections on incidents, accidents, and emergencies.

■ RESPECT

- I will respect others, the horses, the facility and myself.
- I will encourage others to do the same.

■ DEPENDABILITY

- I will be here when scheduled to help.
- I will call to cancel at least 24 hours in advance.

■ PARTICIPATION

- I will seek service opportunities at and for 4STEP.
- I will serve with a positive attitude and with good effort.
- I will serve in a professional manner – actions, words, and dress.

■ FOLLOW THROUGH

- I will do what I say I will do.
- I will let someone know if I am unable to do what I said I would do.

■ OUTREACH

- I will strive to understand and practice 4STEP's mission.
- I will share the vision of 4STEP with others.

My signature below reflects that I, _____ have read the Full Value Commitment. I understand it and agree to adhere to it to the best of my ability.

Signature **Date**

Parent Signature **Date**
(if the above named is a minor)

