

New Volunteer Training & Orientation



Therapeutic Riding Institute, Inc
Dayton, Ohio

Thank you to Amanda Bubb of Reins of Life, Inc. for creating and sharing this slideshow.

Greetings & Thank You!

Thank you for your interest in becoming
a TRI Volunteer!

TRI relies on the manpower of over 200 volunteers each year.

Without the **dedication** of these **wonderful people**,
TRI could not provide their **life changing** services
to the families in our community.

You are about to become a part of an integral team that is vital
to many families and individuals.

[Want to see TRI in action? Click here!](#)

What is Therapeutic Horseback Riding?

Physical

- Riding strengthens core muscles
- Horses' gaits simulate muscles similar to natural human ambulation
- Coordination, balance, and muscle tone improvements

Mental

- Riding can improve self confidence and image
- Riders must exhibit focusing, sequencing, and self control

Social

- Relationships between rider and horse
- Relationships between riders, instructors, and volunteers



- Horses are prey animals and live together for **protection**.
- They have very strong FLIGHT instincts: react first, think later.
- All herd members look to the alpha mare for safety and direction.
- Horses communicate through body language and are able to understand human body language as well.

Our horses go through an extensive training process so are generally mild mannered but please keep in mind their natural instincts.



A good therapy horse must be **gentle, agreeable, healthy, sound, solid, and nearly “bomb-proof”**. They have to be able to work with **unbalanced, fidgety riders, volunteers with no horse experience**, and must remain **calm, cool, and collected** in very **chaotic situations**.



TRI only accepts a small percentage of all potential program horses.

What it takes to be a TRI Volunteer

- 14 years of age
- Able to commit to 1-2 hours each week for an 8 week session
- Follow all TRI's policies and rules. This includes following the Dress Code & Confidentiality Code
- Be **punctual, courteous, and kind**
- Be responsible
- Must be able to walk/jog for up to 45 minutes and provide physical support to their rider

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Class Volunteers are scheduled to work in one or more classes for an entire eight week session.



Sidehelpers assist the ride by walking alongside the horse to provide physical and/or emotional support before during and after the lesson.

Horse Leaders assist the rider by safely controlling the horse before, during and after the lesson.

Ring Assistants assist during the lesson with tasks assigned by instructors.

Sidehelper Responsibilities

- You are directly responsible for the safety of the rider at ALL times!
- **NEVER LEAVE YOUR RIDER!**
- Arrive punctually for every class
 - (SH:15min; HL: 30 min before class).
- Be positive and cheerful.
- Assist the rider before, during, and after the lesson.
- **Always listen to the instructor!**
- Follow all rules and policies at all times.
- Complete and sign Volunteer Annual Update Forms each year.
- Log your hours in the binder at the check in table

We All Make Mistakes!



Becoming a seasoned volunteer takes time!

If someone corrects you, or if an instructor gives you specific directions during a class, please don't be offended.

Often times it is critical that instruction is given quickly for the safety of everyone involved.

Side Helper 10 1

Before the Lesson:

- Arrive **EARLY!** (SH:15min; HL: 30 min before class).
- Sign in!
- Check the schedule for changes
- Look through your student notes to remind yourself of goals to work on during your class
- Wait for your rider to arrive
- Assist your rider in putting on helmet & nametag

Side Helper 10 1

During the Lesson:

- Remain with your rider **AT ALL TIMES!**
- **Never leave your rider's side!** If you or your rider drop something, notify the instructor and she will pick it up for you.
- Mounting and dismounting must be done by the instructor or specifically trained volunteer.
- Be prepared to keep your rider occupied during times when they need to wait.
- Use appropriate hold & support for rider's ability
- Don't put unnecessary pressure on the rider or horse
- Keep conversations to minimum
- Help reinforce instructor's cues
- Keep rider focused and on task
- Use appropriate language and positive tones.

The Thigh Hold



- Fingers tucked between the saddle and horse
- Forearm rest across riders thigh
- Apply only enough pressure to provide proper support
- Be careful not to cause the rider to become unbalanced
- Do not hang onto saddle or pull on the rider.

Ankle Hold



- Helps rider maintain correct position and balance
- Provides a sense of support for rider.
- Help promote heels down

The Floating Side Helper



- Walk alongside the rider and provide support only when needed.
- Listen to the instructor for directions on when to provide more support.
- Stay next to your rider at all times!
NEVER LEAVE YOUR RIDER'S SIDE UNLESS YOU HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED TO DO SO.
- Stay at the horse's girth. Do not fall behind!

Side Helper 10 1

After the Lesson

- **Remain with your rider at all times!**
- Assist your rider from the arena back through to the helmet area
- Help rider remove nametag, helmet, and wipe helmet out with disinfectant wipe
- See your rider off to their parent or guardian

Attendance & Cancellation Policy

- Volunteers are expected to commit to one class period for an entire eight week session. All volunteers are to arrive **30-15 minutes** prior to the lesson and remain with their rider until the lesson is over.
- Please consider this time commitment before signing up for an eight week session. If circumstances will cause you to miss multiple classes, please consider waiting for the next session or asking to be placed on the sub list.
- Volunteers canceling at the last minute makes it difficult or impossible to find subs. This can cause a rider to miss their opportunity to ride. This can be extremely upsetting.

Confidentiality Code

- Information regarding rider's health and diagnosis will be given on an as-needed basis.
- All personal and private information about riders and their families is to remain confidential.
- Events and occurrences that happen shall remain confidential.
- Do not take **ANY** photos of riders

Emergencies!

- All instructors will be carrying their phone on silent in their pocket. There is a sheet located in the red bag on the arena door with emergency information.
- For all emergencies call 9-1-1 and ask responders to turn off their sirens when they reach the property.
- In the event of an emergency dismount, sidehelpers should remain with their assigned riders. Do not leave your rider to attend to another rider unless you have been instructed to do so.
- Human and Horse First Aid Kits are located in the cabinets by the check in tables.
- Please follow all emergency procedures as explained during the first week of class.
- **All** incidents should be reported to the instructor or a staff member.

Medical Consent Forms and Health Concerns

- Make sure your Medical Forms are up to date. All registration forms and consent forms must be updated on an annual basis.
- Make sure you **notify** the instructor of **any health issues** such as an allergy to bee stings or any other information that may be critical in the event of an emergency and be sure to note these issues on your medical consent forms.



For Your Own Safety!



- Remember there is always an inherent risk when working around horses. While our horses are very well trained and mild-mannered, anything can happen.
Horses can spook and startle at any moment.
Always remain aware of your surroundings and keep in mind that the average horse weighs 1000 lbs.
- Pay attention to horse behavior and learn the signs of an agitated and distressed horse.
- Never approach a horse from behind or attempt to startle or scare it!
- **Always listen and follow the directions of the instructors.**

Thank You for Your Time!

To set up a time to start volunteering:

All volunteers are **required** to attend a one-time training with TRI to become eligible to work in classes. To learn more about upcoming trainings, please contact Sam at Slape@TRIOhio.org!

We look forward to working with you!

