

Walkabout Farm Therapeutic Riding Academy

Equine therapeutic support promoting the physical, neurological and emotional well-being of all by way of human/animal interactions.

Walkabout Farm Therapeutic Riding Academy offers therapeutic riding, non-riding and horsemanship programs for youth and adults in need, by way of an individualized riding program, volunteerism or work placement. We at Walkabout Farm aspire to be a non-profit charitable organization. To operate as such, we are relying on financial contributions to develop and sustain a foundation for a specialized community service needed in the Haliburton Highlands at little or no cost to its participants.



Walkabout Farm Therapeutic Riding Academy is temporarily operating out of Briarwinds Farm, Ingoldsby Road (between Minden and Haliburton).

We are pleased to announce that we are currently accepting intake applications for therapeutic riding, adaptive beginner riding instruction, non-riding and horsemanship programs. Eligible participants include people of all ages with physical disabilities, developmental delay, trauma, challenges surrounding mental health, problems with substance abuse, and those seeking emotional support.

About Therapeutic Riding

Therapeutic riding uses horses for the purpose of providing physical, emotional, social and cognitive support to people with various challenges and disabilities. Although therapeutic riding has yet to be formally recognized as 'therapy' in the clinical sense, the benefits of human/horse interactions are well documented and include:

- Emotional and mental support in a non-judgmental and inclusive environment
- Learning to recognize nonverbal communication
- Enhanced social development
- Increased independence, self-esteem, confidence and resiliency
- Improved physical health
- Increased attention span, leading to better academic outcomes



Through controlled and assisted movements between the horse and its rider, therapeutic riding supports participants in their physical development, improving their range of motion, balance, muscle tone and strengthening underused or underdeveloped muscles. It also addresses poor posture and improves both gross and fine motor skills for greater body awareness. As these skills improve and develop, so does participants' ability to stay on task for a longer duration of time.

An important component of horses as emotional support animals is the bond that participants establish with their equine partner, creating an environment of respect, teamwork and trust, and contributing to personal growth. Commonly, the simple act of being up close and personal with a horse, engaging all of one's available senses, opens a pathway to greater self-awareness and enhanced social development.

Therapeutic Riding Program

Walkabout Farm does not use a traditional clinical approach to therapeutic riding, but instead tailors its sessions for participants to achieve their physical, occupational and emotional goals. Participants would typically be walking with assistance, trail riding, some trotting and possibly jumping. An individualized treatment plan will be developed with lead instructor and business owner, Jennifer Semach, and the participant's health care team. Participants will be evaluated on the progress of their goals at intake, mid-session, and upon program completion. Occupational and physiotherapists are most welcome to participate with their clients and the lead instructor in a collaborative session.



Youth Outreach Program

The Youth Outreach Program reaches out to marginalized youth in our community. The program models life skills through stable management and horsemanship, and provides an opportunity to collect mandatory volunteer hours for high school graduation. Walkabout Farm will also be offering a Work to Ride program for students who demonstrate a strong work ethic, maintain good grades, and who have a desire to improve the quality of life for themselves and others in the community.



Whole Families Program

The First Responder & Canadian Armed Forces Whole Family Program is offered in a supportive and PTSD aware environment. Pack a picnic and enjoy an afternoon at a working horse farm. Eligible participants include police officers, firefighters, Emergency Medical Services, and Canadian Armed Forces members and their families.

ASIST and Mental Health First Aid certified crisis intervention worker, Jennifer Semach, is available for counselling and support at no cost.



Hike with Horses

“Hike with Horses” promotes an active lifestyle, and is the perfect opportunity for “horse shy” people to ease into a more comfortable relationship with horses. Sessions are Monday and Thursday mornings April-December, from 10am-11am. Fees are \$5/person (a minimum of 6 people need to sign up to run this exercise class).



Cost of Academy Enrolment

Any profit from lesson fees are currently rolled back into organizational costs. Our hope is that government funding, corporate sponsorships and donations will further reduce or eliminate the cost of sessions for the participants once charitable status is achieved.

Until the programming is fully sustainable, the following fee schedule applies:

- **Group riding lessons: \$25 each/hour (includes grooming and tack up)**
- **Private riding lessons: \$25/half hour**
- **Semi-private riding lessons: \$18/half hour**
- **One hour serenity trail ride: \$50 each person (maximum of three trail riders at one time; lead line and side walker available)**
- **One hour group, non-riding, equine interactions: \$8 per person (support workers, guardians, Educational Assistants are always free of charge)**
- **Pony Rides: \$20/half hour (basic instruction only).**
- **Hike with Horses: \$5/person for 1 hour (minimum 6 people needed to run this class)**

Please Note: Sorry, but we do not rent out our horses.

**Passport funding recipients and participants with benefits coverage will be provided a business receipt for reimbursement.*

***Community volunteers are a blessing to our operations. Every volunteer will need to provide criminal background and vulnerable sector checks.*

Important Considerations

- All sessions are BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. Because of confidentiality considerations, property owner's privacy and staffing availability, we must request NO DROP-IN VISITORS PLEASE.
- All participants must be accompanied by an Educational Assistant, guardian, parent or direct care worker at all times. Drop offs are not permitted.
- An Equine Assisted Activities and Therapies Liability Release Form must be submitted prior to the first session.
- A Medical release may also be required.

What's Next for Walkabout Farm

One of our future goals is to build capacity to offer more employment opportunities to the uniquely abled members of our community. Our fully inclusive business model strives to empower people with intellectual and developmental disabilities by offering traditional farm work and equine management experience. Teaching life skills, modeling appropriate work place relationships and strengthening positive social interactions, all the while benefiting from connections made with emotional support animals, makes for an educational and emotionally fulfilling experience with long lasting benefits.

Walkabout Farms also plans to offer private horse boarding in the near future.



How You Can Help

Please consider donating to this unique community service. Contributions by way of private donations, corporate sponsorships and government grants are welcome and very much needed at this time. Every dollar makes a difference! Through supporting a program that helps individuals achieve their personal goals and reduce their social isolation, your donation can make a positive difference in their lives. By creating and promoting an environment of acceptance and inclusion, your support has a positive impact our entire community as well.

Your contribution will go toward one or more of the following:

- A bursary program for enrolment into our therapeutic riding academy for eligible participants
- Program-related costs (e.g. horse boarding fees, adaptive equipment)
- Operating costs



You may donate through our Go Fund Me Page (www.gofundme.com/walkaboutfarm), e-transfer to walkaboutpps@hotmail.ca, or directly through TD Bank in Minden to 'Walkabout Therapeutic Riding Academy.'

If you require a tax receipt, please contact Jennifer Semach directly. Walkabout Farm Therapeutic Riding Academy has partnered with Community Living Central Highlands (charity number 107627366RR0001) to ensure that donations, grants and sponsorships are eligible for tax deductions.

Contact Us

Walkabout Farm Therapeutic Riding Academy

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