



## Riding & Hippotherapy Guidelines

We Can Ride abides by the following riding guidelines in order to provide a safe environment for all individuals involved in our programs. It is We Can Ride's goal to be able to offer services to all those in need. If necessary, exceptions to some of the precautions listed based on diagnoses, age, height and weight may be possible.

### **Physical Precautions:**

In order for a client to participate in mounted programming, the following requirements in his/her weight category are required:

#### **Weighs 100 pounds or less:**

- A. The ability to safely mount/dismount the horse with moderate-maximum support (client required to do a minimum of 25% of the work).
- B. An appropriate horse is available for the client.

#### **Weighs 101-130 pounds:**

- A. The ability to safely mount/dismount the horse with moderate support provided. (client required to do a minimum of 50% of the work).
- B. Client is able to assist with repositioning while mounted and will not resist physical assistance.
- C. An appropriate horse is available for the client.

#### **Weighs 131-190 pounds:**

- A. The ability to safely assist with the mount/dismount with minimal physical assistance of 1 staff. (Client required to do a minimum of 75% of the work)
- B. An appropriate horse is available for the client.
- C. Client is able to self-adjust while mounted 100% of the time.

#### **Neck Control:**

- A. Ability to independently turn their head.
- B. The ability to hold their head in an upright position with a helmet on, without uncontrolled falling, snapping, or tilting of the head forward or backward with the movement of the horse.
- C. See neck control guidelines for more information.



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### Weight Bearing:

- a. The ability to stand on one foot with moderate assistance or both feet with minimal assistance; and, the ability to take steps backwards.
- b. Exceptions may be made if the client has a strong upper body and can help with transfers.

### Trunk Control:

- a. The ability to physically and independently bench sit for 2 minutes without assistance.
- b. The ability to sit balanced while astride the horse for the majority of the session, ie. without using the tack to support self.

### Behavior/Cognitive:

- a. Does not have strong or violent emotional outbursts.
- b. Does not pursue movement to the point of interfering with safety.
- c. Does not take excessive risk that puts self or others in danger.
- d. Does not have behavior that injures the horse, volunteers, instructor or self. Behaviors include hitting, kicking, spitting, hair pulling, scratching, screaming, pushing, removing helmet, self-dismounting, bouncing, rocking, leaning back/to the side and excessive movement.

\*If the client does not meet the above requirements, they will not be able to participate in mounted therapeutic riding or hippotherapy, but may be appropriate for **UNMOUNTED** lessons.

\*If a client exhibits any of the aforementioned precautions and is currently participating, a re-screening by a therapist will take place. The client may be required to change type of programming or discontinue participation.

\*If the client is not new to the program, they will be re-screened for all precautions previously mentioned.

It is our intention that We Can Ride programming will be as adaptable as possible and will have the ability to serve a wide range of disabilities and special needs. If you believe you/the client fits into one of the above mentioned categories, please contact the Program Director to discuss further.