

In this manual you will learn about:

- The mission of Turning Point – a PATH Premier Accredited Therapeutic Riding Center
- What to expect as a volunteer at Turning Point.
- The rules and policies from safety to confidentiality that volunteers must follow

The Mission of Turning Point Ranch

Enriching the lives of people facing physical, mental or emotional challenges through therapeutic horsemanship

Turning Point Ranch's Team

Turning Point Ranch is a 501c-3 non profit organization dedicated to serving those with special needs in the Stillwater area. Turning Point is also a Premier Accredited PATH International Center. PATH International sets standards and best practices for therapeutic riding and horsemanship worldwide. As a Premier Accredited center, Turning Point holds to the highest standards in the field of equine assisted activities and therapies. The Board is certified under the Standards of Excellence by the Oklahoma Center for NonProfits.

Board of Directors

John Dorman: President
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Rachel Royston: Executive Director
Kenzie Hindman: Senior Instructor
Sue Haley: Instructor
Kallie Westbrook: Instructor
Losco Hunter: Facility Coordinator

Volunteers

You are key members of the Turning Point Team. We both need and appreciate you! And we guarantee your efforts will make a difference in the life of a rider facing physical, emotional or mental challenges. When you become part of our team, you are making a semester-long commitment to one particular client and to the horses we call “therapists in horseshoes.” We understand that’s not always easy, but we are eternally grateful for the skills, interest and time you bring to our program. The rewards are priceless. Thank You!

Each person at Turning Point Ranch is a unique and valuable human being who deserves respect, courtesy, compassion and an opportunity to grow. Your actions as a volunteer bring those values to life for yourself, our clients and even our horses. The policies and procedures that govern our programs are designed to protect each member of the team and to promote an enhanced experience for all.

Expectations

As a volunteer, you are both the face and the heart of Turning Point. What you do, how you do it, what you say, and how you say it defines Turning Point Ranch. Here are our expectations of you:

- Be at work on time and for the total time of your shift
- Commit to a regular day and time for the entire semester in order to provide consistency to an individual client unless you volunteer as a floater/substitute
- Arrive physically and mentally ready to perform your assigned duties – someone's life and future is in your hands
- Always defer to the authority of the Instructor during sessions to insure the safety of all the riders. After a session, your feedback and suggestions are welcome to improve the quality of the program
- Take a professional approach to training so that you are aware of and prepared for the responsibilities given to you and the performance expected
- Ask for help if you do not understand something
- Dress appropriately for your assignment (See section on Dress)
- Complete all required release forms prior to the start of sessions (i.e. Commitment, Emergency Medical, Background Check, Liability, Photo and Confidentiality)
- Maintain confidentiality and respect the privacy of all other volunteers, staff and clients. Understand that your instructor is not able to tell you your rider's diagnosis, but they can share what is pertinent to your responsibility and the goals of your rider.
- Be courteous and patient. You should never be in a position to discipline either horses or clients. Bring problems to the immediate attention of an instructor or staff member.
- Understand that you are irreplaceable to a rider who has come to trust you. If something prevents you from attending a session, e-mail or text your instructor as far in advance as possible so that a replacement can be found. Written notice is key...not just a mention.

Cell phones

No Phone Zone

Cell phones are an important part of life today but can be a distraction at best and a safety hazard at worst in an equine program. Turning Point is a "no phone zone."

- Place your phone and keys in a pocket provided in the Volunteer Area.
- OR leave your cell phone in your car when you report for your shift at Turning Point
- You **MUST** turn the phone OFF (not just to vibrate) once riders and horses are present.
- If your cell phone rings during a session, it is grounds for dismissal-with-cause from the program and no credit for hours worked will be awarded.

ICE

Because cell phones can be valuable devices in emergencies, Turning Point urges you to create an ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact(s) in your cell phone's directory to supplement the information we keep on file for you and to serve you should an accident occur when you are not involved in our program.

Prohibited Personal Behavior

Profanity

- Because the majority of our clients are children or youth and because modeling verbal skills is part of the job description of our volunteers, use of profanity is strictly prohibited at Turning Point

Tobacco Use

- Because of the dire consequences of fire related to hay, horses, wooden structures and pastures, smoking is strictly prohibited at Turning Point.
- Volunteers are asked to refrain from the use of smokeless tobacco products in the presence of clients

Substance Abuse

- A volunteer attempting to operate under the influence of alcohol or other illegal substances poses a danger to our clients, our horses and other volunteers. Use of controlled substances before or during sessions is strictly prohibited

Procedure for Removal of a Volunteer from the Program

Turning Point is so grateful for the time and talents our volunteers share with the program that we would like to keep them with us forever. However, there are several reasons that a volunteer would be asked to leave the program. They include:

- Violation of one of the policies included in Orientation Training and this manual, particularly:
 - Violation of the confidentiality of client records
 - Disrespecting a client or attempting to discipline a client or one of our horses
 - Violation of safety procedures
 - Absence from a shift without procuring a replacement or notification.
 - Presence at Turning Point under the influence of alcohol or an illegal substance.
- Conviction of a crime or being charged with sexual abuse
- Causing a conflict or arguing with an instructor during a session
- Unauthorized use of Turning Point tack or horses

Should a volunteer be accused of one of the above offenses or face removal from the program for another reason, the volunteer shall receive written or verbal notice of termination. The volunteer may request a review hearing by a 3 person review committee from the Board of Directors. Otherwise, any professional staff member, instructor or the Herd Manager may remove a volunteer from the program pending a board committee review if requested.

Parking

The formal address of Turning Point is 385 S Country Club Rd. There is only one entrance gate at the far south end of our property, immediately behind the car dealership that faces 6th Street/Highway 51. Generally our gate will be open an hour before and after class times on days we have sessions but will be locked all other times.

When you enter the drive, angled parking will be along the driveway. There is ADA parking near the Education Center Barn that is reserved for buses and rider's parents who bring students with mobility issues. Volunteers should park carefully along the drive as we have a limited number of spaces.

The Turning Point Program

Program Goals

Turning Point offers developmental and age-appropriate horsemanship and equine assisted activities and therapies that also promote:

- physical
- social
- language
- emotional growth

Volunteers are encouraged to interact with the riders as a part of the program (as long as those conversations don't distract from directions from the instructor.) However, it is important to remember that some riders have physical or emotional problems that require special handling. The instructor will inform you of any special "do's and don'ts" regarding your rider prior to each session. For instance, the recent separation of parents or the death of a family member can have a profound effect on a young person with limited verbal skills. Knowledge of such a major life disruption becomes a proactive safety measure when 1200 pound horses are involved.

Personal Space and Behavior

It is critical that all volunteers respect the personal space and behavior of each rider. All volunteers who interact with clients are required to undergo criminal background checks mandated by federal statute for agencies who deal with vulnerable clients.

In addition, Turning Point has policies designed to protect both the clients and volunteers:

- At least two volunteers must be with any one client at any given time---NO one-on-one time away from the group.
- All personal needs or situations such as toileting or clothes changes must be conducted by a parent/guardian or teaching assistant --NEVER a volunteer.
- Volunteers are NEVER allowed to discipline a client. Only the instructor may offer "guidance" to a client whose behavior is becoming a safety issue.

Examples:

- The instructor might tell the leader to bring a particular horse to the center of the arena to remove the potential disruption from the other horses.
- The instructor might dismount the rider to allow the individual a moment to regain calm.
- Volunteers should proactively direct the Instructor's attention to potentially disruptive situations, but
- ONLY the instructor should make decisions and take actions to guide a rider's behavior.

Safety

Horseback riding has an inherent quality of risk which Turning Point Ranch addresses by:

- Selecting and training gentle horses handled only by our trained volunteer horse team.
- Prohibiting hand-feeding, giving treats or running anywhere on our facilities as well as running or shouting near sessions in progress
- Using quality, well-maintained tack that is inspected for any damage prior to and after every session (including ASTM/SEI equestrian helmets) and ALWAYS safety stirrups.
- Requiring all dogs to remain inside a vehicle...NEVER on the property -- even on leash.
- Providing an observation area for friends and family that is OUTSIDE the arena and requiring all children to be supervised while at Turning Point
- Banning smoking, and the use of alcohol or other controlled substances on our facilities.
- Encouraging feedback, questions and suggestions from clients and volunteers to address concerns before they become issues.

Dress Code

Appropriate dress is an important safety issue. Footwear and clothing will be exposed to mud, manure and other substances which will stain. Layers are recommended as the weather changes quickly and Turning Point does not have extra gloves, jackets, socks or boots.

- Closed toe footwear is required. Horses may accidentally step on your feet.
 - No flip flops or ballet shoes allowed.
 - No Steel toed boots as they are more damaging to feet if stepped on than any other type of footwear.
- No low cut shirts
- No short shorts
- No leggings unless they are paired with shorts or you wear a LONG shirt over them.
- Loose jewelry and perfume are also discouraged.

Please do not forget that though our riders are dealing with physical, emotional and cognitive issues, most of our riders are of the age where they are learning to control physical changes taking place such as hormones. We, as staff and volunteers, need to commit to not adding to this challenge.

Classes / Sessions

Conducting the Session:

The Instructor

All sessions run under the control of the instructor who is usually stationed in the center of the arena. Sessions are usually limited to five riders with up to three volunteers each.

The instructor's duties and responsibilities include:

- Preparing the Lesson Plan
- Making decisions regarding equipment and how to conduct the class
- Briefing volunteers prior to the session

- Giving all instructions to both volunteers and riders during the session.
- Matching the rider with the horse and tack and checking tack at least 3 times
- Mounting and dismounting all riders
- Assigning volunteers to horses and riders
- Taking charge of all emergency situations

Granting the instructor absolute authority during sessions insures the safety of everyone involved in the program.

Assisting the Session:

The Volunteer

There are six distinct parts of a session from the volunteer perspective:

1. Grooming and Tacking/Arena Set Up
2. Opening Procedures
3. Leading
4. Sidewalking
5. Un-tacking
6. Closing Procedures

Note: This section of the manual deals with volunteer roles surrounding riding sessions. Medical attention for horses, schooling horses or feeding horses are covered separately.

Those jobs fall under the purview of the Program Coordinator, Herd Manager and Schooling Manager. If you are interested in volunteering in those areas, give your name to a staff member or instructor. Acceptance to the Feed Team (through training) or Schooling Team (through testing) requires selection by the team manager.

If you have extensive experience with horses, you may have learned different methods of working with horses than Turning Point requires. We recognize the value of many other methods; however consistency in technique and procedures are very important both for our horses and the array of volunteers who serve their needs. We ask all volunteers to follow our "Turning Point Way" exactly when helping with our horses.

Opening Procedures

- Arrive 30 minutes before sessions in order to help with grooming or tacking or arena set up as directed by the instructor and posted on the lesson plan.
- Report to Instructor for briefing and assignments, sign in and put on nametag.

Sidewalkers:

- Set up cones, barrels, ground poles or other equipment in the arena at the direction of the Instructor
- Turn on music if requested by the Instructor and help set up sound system
- Place games required for session in the arena.
- Check games for wear & tear before and after session
- Make sure helmets are where students can find them when they arrive and that name labels are visible. Check helmet inside and out for dust, spiders, wear and tear on straps.

Horse Leader:

- Assist instructors in bringing up horses if asked
- Groom horse – checking for any injuries or sensitivities
- Inspect tack, Tack-up horse and safety tie to indoor arena rail. Ready for session.
- Inform instructor of any unusual behavior, mood changes or injuries to horse.

Note: In some cases, clients will be assigned to participate in the grooming and tacking process in order to address fine-motor skills and hand-eye coordination. In those cases, the Leader and generally one sidewalker will provide supervision to keep the client safe while participating in grooming and tacking. Always stay between rider and rear of horse.

Side Walking

The side walker is responsible for the safety of the rider, both on and off the horse. Horse skills are not required to perform this duty. BUT sidewalkers are in close contact with the horse at all times. If you are nervous about horses but would like to volunteer in this capacity, please talk with a staff member and they will show you the safest places to walk beside a horse.

The side walkers are to be ever present for their riders, but “invisible” to the horse. Our horses have a lot of input during a class, so as sidewalkers, you need to be aware of your effect on the horse and try to minimize it.

- Do not pet the horse while it is working
- Do not lean on the horse
- Do not pull on tack
- DO NOT nudge, poke, slap or touch the horse in any way to help cue it to trot or walk on. THIS IS A SAFETY ISSUE. The instructor will give you assistance if necessary.

There may be two side walkers for each rider:

- The **Interactive** sidewalker
 - Responsible in supporting the instructor by reinforcing what is being taught by giving prompts & instructions AFTER the instructor.
 - Responsible for pulling the rider off in an emergency dismount if requested by the instructor
- The **Supportive** sidewalker
 - Responsible for added physical support/presence
 - Responsible for rebounding and handling activity props during games
- NEVER release your hold on the rider unless instructed to do so by the Instructor!

You will develop relationships with your rider and fellow volunteers. We LOVE that! But please make sure that social time is before and after class so that your rider receives the full effect of the lesson. Three things to avoid:

- Rider is not engaged and is ignored because conversation is happening between volunteers and not focused on their responsibilities - and rider!
- Rider does not hear instruction of what to be doing in class (as well as volunteers).
- Conversation/Chatter gets too loud for the instructor to be heard throughout the arena, diminishing effectiveness of the class for the other riders.

General Duties - Prior To Mounting

- Arrive 30 minutes before class, check sign-in sheet, get name tag and check for assigned rider and duties. Help with arena set up if asked.
- Greet rider upon arrival. Take care of any concerns or questions prior to riding.
- Encourage family or caregivers to watch classes from bleachers.
- Fit rider with ASTM/SEI equestrian helmet bearing their name.
Helmet should fit snugly at level of eyebrows without restricting vision. Loosen Velcro straps on sides of helmet that control length of strap that fits under the chin. Place helmet on rider coming from straight down, not from the back and down, and adjust chin strap to fit firmly under chin. With helmet in proper position, adjust Velcro straps or dial so that strap at base of neck fits snugly.

Interactive Sidewalker – Mounting

- Responsible for rider safety on ground while in arena. Hold rider's hand if appropriate and always stand between rider and rear of horse.
- Take rider up to instructor for mounting the rider on the horse. You should walk on the open side of the ramp nearest the horse. If a wheelchair or other mobility aid is used take directions from the instructor regarding your role.
- Once the rider is securely mounted, you move into position for a walk-on.

Supportive Sidewalker -- Mounting

- Stand on the off-side block to create an alley for the horse to enter for mounting.
- Assist from the block with the rider mount – face the horse's side, feet astride, hands raised in readiness to receive rider. Method and amount of assistance needed will vary with the rider.
- When rider is securely mounted, instructor approves, both sidewalkers are in position and leader is ready, rider will give the "walk-on" command.
- Stay with your rider in the required hold as you go down the steps.

Interactive and Supportive Sidewalkers – Supporting Mounted Rider

- **Emergency Dismount**
 - Interactive sidewalker will do an emergency dismount of the rider in an emergency situation.
 - Hold safety belt or grab rider around chest or waist, attempting to protect the head as you pull the rider off and slightly backward.
 - A small child may be held, but a larger child or adult should be lowered to the arena floor.
 - Instructor will give further directions related to the situation
- **General Riding**
 - ***Keep the rider centered on the horse!***
 - If shifting occurs, ask the rider to shift their weight. If they don't or are unable to do so, ***MAKE SURE THE INSTRUCTOR KNOWS*** and is able to guide in the procedure. Some riders are more fragile than others, so you do not want to cause harm. After instruction, the instructor will tell you if you are allowed to help the rider adjust on your own.

- o Always use flat hands, no grabbing. Do not touch in the swimsuit areas.
- o Major corrections of rider position are done by the instructor and may require a halt in the center of the arena, unless continued movement will cause the rider to come off the horse. Then you may stop on the rail to wait for the instructor.
- o Cue to leader to whoa, if necessary to shift the rider.
- o Repositioning is most easily done using the hips or shoulders as control points.
- o The instructor will provide guidance, as needed, in positioning riders.
- **Changing Sides**
 - o *This is to be done ONLY at a halt!*
 - o If either sidewalker needs to make a change, first alert the instructor, then go to the center of the arena.
 - o The sidewalker who calls for the change releases hold on the rider, walks in front of the horse then replaces the other sidewalker.
 - o Once the changing sidewalker has a hold on the rider, the other sidewalker walks in front of the horse to the other side and takes hold.
 - o Make sure a conversation is taking place so that the rider is securely held by at least one sidewalker at all times during the switch.
- **Games**
 - o Sidewalkers should participate in games as directed by the instructor.
 - o If you have not been instructed to participate, it is imperative that you remain with your rider using the support hold required. Be creative and interact with the rider.
 - o DO NOT reach for stray balls, beanbags or other objects unless the instructor tells you to or they are about to injure your rider and you are in a position where you can continue to support your rider while deflecting the object.

Support Holds

Take cues from the Instructor for the required hold from the following list:

- **Spotter** - No physical touch required for rider.
 - o Stay no further than 12-18 inches away from your rider's leg.
 - o Do not fall behind or walk in front of your rider's leg because you will not be in position if sudden movement occurs.
 - o It is imperative that you stay in position with your rider.
- **Ankle Hold** - used if the rider has better balance.
 - o With "near" hand, cup the back of the rider's inside ankle/heel with no grip
 - o Instructor may request "human stirrup" which requires the sidewalker to use the "far" hand under the forefoot to prevent foot drop.
- **Thigh Hold** – used to keep riders centered or on the horse
 - o Place the "near" arm over rider's thigh applying light pressure.
 - o Hold surcingle handle or swell of saddle.
 - o Do not hang on saddle or rider.
 - o Do not dig elbow into rider or horse.

There are many other "touch" points on the body to align posture or create a rider's awareness of their position. The instructor will apply these techniques or demonstrate their use on an as needed basis, but one of the most important jobs of the sidewalker is to keep the rider centered on the horse and to cue to leader, if necessary, to whoa, to shift the rider.

LEADING

Experience with horses is mandatory for volunteers selected as horse leaders. Horse Leader Training to learn “The Turning Point Way” is required before a volunteer is assigned to perform this duty in a session to ensure consistency for the horses and riders.

Leading the Horse – General Principles

- Keep both hands on the lead rope. Position the “near hand” 12 to 24 inches from the snap while the “far” hand carries the folded rope. NEVER coil the lead rope around your hand! Never “walk” backwards when leading. You may face your horse at a halt.
- Walk beside the horse’s head, watching eye and ears for expressions of disposition
- Use voice, body language and pressure, in that order, to cue the horse;
- Do not let the horse crowd you with his feet, face or body or pass your shoulder;
- Inform the instructor promptly if there is an issue with a horse.
- Follow any decision by the instructor regarding how to proceed.

NEVER hit or jerk the lead rope of a Turning Point horse to discipline them!!!!

Leading in a Class Setting – In the Arena

- Always handle the horse in a manner that creates a safe environment for your team of rider and sidewalkers.
- Never release the horse unless instructed to do so.
- Follow the direction of the instructor regarding patterns, games, mounts and dismounts
- Leave a minimum of one elephant space between you and the horses in front of and behind you when walking.
- To create space between you and another horse, there are three options:
 1. **Circle** – make a large circle to the inside of the arena ending in an area that has enough space in front of and behind the horse you are leading.
 2. **Pass on the Inside** – if the horse in front of you is going at a slower pace, pass on the inside (leaving one horse width between the sidewalkers) and saying “passing on the inside” as you do so. Pass the slower horse until you have one horse length between you and then fall back into the pattern.
 3. **Halt** – perform a short halt to create additional space between you and the horse in front of you. This should only be performed if there is more than ample space behind you and won’t create a short space situation for a horse that’s following you.
- At halt, turn to face your horse, maintaining position by his head. Maintain 6 to 12 inches slack in the lead.
- ALWAYS WAIT for the rider to indicate they are ready to “walk on” - not all will verbalize it, but all can cue in their own way.
- If it is necessary to relax the horse, Speak calmly, breathe deep and show the energy you want your horse to reflect. No touching is necessary.
- Stand on the side of the horse nearest games when they are being played so you can screen the horse from the action as needed.
- Halt to walk – Rider cues with “walk on”, then and only then begin walking.
- Walk to halt – Rider cues with “whoa!” and leader gradually slows walking speed to a halt.
- Techniques will be taught at Horse Leader Training for all transitions.

Leading into Mounting Area

Note: The instructor is responsible for checking that the rider is appropriately wearing an ASTM- SEI approved helmet and that other riding apparel is appropriate to the individual's safety and particular health or structural issues.

- Instructor will check girth and stirrups before assisting rider to mount the horse
- Rider should be *on the mounting ramp with the instructor or a sidewalker*.
- Leader will bring horse to mount area but halt approximately 10 feet from it.
- Leader waits until instructor asks for the horse.
- Leader then SLOWLY leads the horse close to the ramp listening to instructor positioning cues.
- Leader will then make sure the horse is square, facing the horse at the halt, but not standing directly in front of the horse's face. This is a safety issue for the leader and the horse cannot see the leader.
- Instructor will then assist rider on the horse.
- Leader will remain in position until instructor has done all safety checks.
- Instructor will ask rider to give walk on and leader will move horse from mounting area.

During a session, if there is a need for a tack adjustment or the instructor must focus on a particular rider, the instructor will ask the rider, horse and volunteer team to come to the center of the arena. At this time, the leader will lead the rider to the center of the arena and have a halt. This will get the team out of the way of the other riders.

Possible Instructions from the Instructor:

- Walk On
- Halt
- Half Halt
- Change of Direction
- Circle
- Weave Cones/Poles
- Come to Center
- Back
- Trot
- Daisy Chain Lead Rope
- Emergency Dismount

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

Rider Falling

- If the rider is falling and cannot be supported, tell the leader "Rider Falling" and pull the rider off toward the back of the horse while attempting to protect the rider's head.
- ALL LEADERS STOP HORSES! and move into halt position.
- All sidewalkers stay with your riders.
- DO NOT MOVE THE STUDENT.
- The instructor will assess the situation before proceeding.

Rider Seizure

- You will be informed by the instructor if your rider has a history of seizures.
- In the unlikely event of a rider having a Grand Mal seizure, call to the instructor and pull the rider from the horse in the same manner as above. Horse Leader will remove the horse a safe distance away.
- Not all seizures look the same. Most seizures will not require being removed from the horse.
- Do NOT attempt to intervene during the seizure.
- ALL LEADERS STOP HORSES! All sidewalkers stay with your riders.
- The instructor will assess the situation before proceeding.

Horse Spooks

- If a horse is startled but does nothing more than move its feet a bit, the **sidewalkers** need to tighten their hold on the rider and stay with the horse – attempting to keep the rider mounted unless the situation escalates.
- The **leader** will lead the horse in the direction of the spook, attempting to regain control of the animal by talking calmly and touching the horse's neck gently.
- DO NOT turn the horse's back to the object that caused the spook as it could stimulate the flight response and cause the horse to run.

Fire or Tornado Emergency

- Evacuate the arena and follow the Instructor to the Squires Landing Apartment for a head count
- Dismount riders first. Sidewalkers escort them out. Instructor decides about horses.
- Instructor will decide whether to remain in shelter or board busses/cars to leave site

Medical Emergency or Occurrence with Injury

- Alert the instructor, give details and follow instructor's direction
- If requested, go to the session phone in the phone basket and call 911 – reading the directions to the arena on the back of the phone. Stay on the line with 911.

Accident/Occurrence Report Forms

Rider Incidents

In the case of an incident involving the fall of a rider from a horse or any mishap with a rider involving a bruise or cut, an Occurrence Report Form must be completed by the Instructor of the session involving that rider whether the session has ended or has not yet begun.

Volunteers may be asked to provide additional information to aid in the completion of the form, but responsibility for completing the form lies with the instructor.

Staff/Volunteer Incidents

In the case of an incident involving a volunteer or staff member, whether due to a horse-related event or a fall or accident, an Occurrence Report Form must be signed by the individual who was hurt. Another volunteer or an available instructor may complete the form, but a completed form with the signature of the hurt individual is required unless that person is left unconscious or taken by ambulance from the property.

Occurrence report forms are available in the file slots on the table in the office.

CLOSING PROCEDURES

Sidewalkers:

- Clear arena of games, cones and ground poles.
- Return all equipment to storage area neatly. Spray helmets and return to correct bin.
- Note any damaged equipment on the dry erase board in the game room/office.
- View the arena...Is equipment including ramp and bleachers stowed away?

Horse Leaders:

- Remove and put away tack. **Fork horse apples from arena.**
- Groom horse – noting any injuries that might have occurred in the session
- Tell the horse what a great therapist he or she is!
- Check with the instructor regarding where the horse needs to go:
 - o If there is a session later that day, put the horse in its assigned run.
 - o If there is a session immediately following, tie the horse to a rail in the indoor arena.
 - o If yours is the last session of the day, put the horse in the pasture.
- If yours is the last session of the day, turn off indoor and outdoor arena lights.
- Close all gates and make sure locks are fastened.

All Volunteers: Log hours in book before leaving and hang up your nametag.

OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS

Fundraiser

Turning Point hosts an annual fundraiser every Fall in order to purchase special equipment and provide rider scholarships. There are opportunities for volunteers as leaders and sidewalkers, as auction hosts, greeters and recruiters and in set-up, horse washing and transport. It's so fun!!

Special Olympics

Turning Point takes most riders older than 8 to Special Olympics Equestrian each Fall. It's a life changing opportunity to help your favorite horses and riders "go for the gold!"

HorseTales Literacy

Each Spring, the Turning Point horses and volunteers take books to first graders at a local Title 1 school to encourage them to Read to Horses, Rope, Feed, Paint and do other horse activities.

Mini Horse Visits

As we ramp up our Mobile Mini Program, we will be training and asking volunteers to join us at schools, nursing homes and nonprofit agencies where we will be providing services.

Finally, THANK YOU!

Volunteers!!

Because of you, Turning Point Ranch can offer individuals with physical, mental and emotional challenges life changing lessons that give them skills to use in the arena and out in the world.

We thank you for sharing your time and talents!

DISABILITIES SEEN IN THE TURNING POINT PROGRAM

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER: Inability to focus attention

Characteristics: May have difficulty following directions, may be overly active

Benefits: Stimulates attention span, group skills, builds confidence, opportunities to meet goals

AUTISM: A self-centered mental state from which reality tends to be excluded **Characteristics:**

Unresponsiveness to the presence of others; withdrawal from physical contact; severely delayed and disordered language; self-stimulating behaviors; unusual or special fears; insensitivity to pain, unawareness of real dangers; hyperactive, passive; unusual behaviors such as smelling/tasting/licking/mouthing all objects; ritualistic behaviors; developmentally delayed; unusual response to sounds; clumsiness; social withdrawal; resistance to change.

Benefits: Interaction in a group setting stimulates interest away from self and toward others and the horses. Postural and verbal stimulation.

CEREBRAL PALSY: Brain damage occurring before, at, or shortly after birth. It is a non- progressive motor disorder.

Types and Characteristics:

Spastic - hypertonicity with hyperactive stretch reflexes, muscle imbalances and equilibrium.

Increased startle reflex and other pathological reflexes.

Athetoid – extensor muscle tension, worm-like movements, abnormal posturing and slow and deliberate speech

Ataxic – poor balance, difficulty with quick, fine movements and are often described as having a “rag doll” appearance.

Benefits: Normalization of tone, stimulation of postural and balance mechanisms, muscle strengthening and perceptual motor coordination.

Associated Problems: Seizures; hearing defects; visual defects; general sensory impairment; perceptual problems; communication problems; mental retardation; emotional disturbances; learning disabilities

DEVELOPMENTAL DELAY: A general term applied to children functioning two or more years below grade level.

Characteristics: Varied but can include slow physical, motor and social development **Benefits:**

Provides arena for success, opportunity for sport and recreation, stimulates body awareness.

DOWN SYNDROME: Condition in which a person is born with an extra chromosome resulting in mental retardation and developmental delay

Characteristics: Broad, flat face, slanted eyes, neck and hands may be broad and short. Usually hypotonic, have hypermobile joints and tend to be short and slightly overweight. Prone to respiratory infections.

Benefits: Riding improves expressive and receptive language skills, gross and fine motor skills, balance, posture, muscle tone and coordination.

EMOTIONAL DISABILITIES: A congenital or acquired syndrome often compounded by learning or physical disabilities incorporating numerous other pathologies.

Characteristics: Trouble coping with everyday life situations and interpersonal relations. Behaviors such as short attention span, avoidance, aggression, autism, paranoia or schizophrenia may be exhibited.

Benefits: Increases feelings of self-confidence and self-awareness and provides appropriate social outlet.

HEARING IMPAIRMENT: Congenital or acquired hearing loss from mild to profound. **Characteristics:**

Communication difficulties – may use lip reading, finger spelling (manual alphabet) or sign language.

Often phase out and have attention deficits.

Benefits: Stimulates self confidence, balance, posture and coordination. It also provides appropriate social outlets and interactions.

LEARNING DISABILITIES: Catch-all phrase for individuals who have problems processing, sequencing and problem solving, but who appear to otherwise normal intelligence skills.

Characteristics: Short attention span, easily frustrated, immature.

Benefits: Effects depend on the particular disorder. Stimulates attention span, group skills, cooperation, language skills, posture and coordination.

MENTAL RETARDATION: Lack of ability to learn and perform at normal and acceptable levels. Degree of retardation is referred to as educable, trainable, severe or profoundly retarded.

Characteristics: Developmentally delayed in all areas. Short attention span.

Benefits: Stimulates group activity skills, coordination, balance, posture, gross and fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination. Provides a structured learning environment.

MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (MS): Progressive neurological disease with degeneration of spinal column tracts, resulting in scar formation.

Characteristics: Most commonly occurs in the 20 to 40 year range. It is progressive with periods of exacerbation and remissions. Fatigues easily. Symptoms include weakness, visual impairment, fatigue, loss of coordination and emotional sensitivity.

Benefits: Maintains and strengthens weak muscles and provides opportunities for emotional therapy.

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY (MD): Deficiency in muscle nutrition with degeneration of skeletal muscle. Hereditary disease that affect mainly males.

Characteristics: Progressive muscular weakness, fatigues easily, sensitive to temperature extremes.

Benefits: Provides opportunity for group activity, may slow progressive loss of strength, stimulates postural and trunk alignment, and allows movement free of assistive devices.

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT: Moderate or total loss of sight

Characteristics: Insecure posture, lack of visual memory, anterior center of gravity, fearfulness, and developmental delay.

Benefits: Stimulates spatial awareness, proprioception, posture and coordination. Provides social outlet, structured risk taking and freedom of movement.

TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY: A brain injury may be primary, the result of a trauma or disease that directly affects the brain; or secondary, a result of another condition or treatment that in turn affects the function of the brain.