



Parent's Handbook 2018



Turning Point partners the magic of horses with tools to build productive futures for individuals with physical, mental, emotional and socio-economic challenges

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VISION: *We believe individuals with challenges in any stage of life can build and sustain rewarding futures that contribute to our community.*

Welcome to Turning Point Ranch.

This year we celebrate our 19th year as a non-profit agency serving Payne County. We encourage both our clients and our volunteers to maximize their capabilities in a safe, positive and relaxed setting built on a special relationship with horses.

On a horse, someone whose physical challenges prevent them from walking, has legs to run.

Someone whose physical, mental or emotional challenges isolate them, has a friend to trust.

Someone who spends hours in therapy and special classes finds a "fun" way to master new skills and interact with people in ways that benefit them in the classroom, the workforce and throughout their lives.

We believe our program can provide physical, social and educational benefits to your son or daughter. And we will love having the opportunity to introduce them to the wonderful world of horses.

Rachel Royston
TurningPointExecutive Director
405-269-2225
rachel@turningpointriding.org



Rider Eligibility

Turning Point Ranch does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, age, religion or national origin; however in order to protect the health and safety of participants and our equine partners, the following issues will be considered in accepting or releasing riders from the program:

COMPLETION OF PAPERWORK:

Turning Point MUST have a full set of completed paperwork including Physician's Release, medical history, liability release, photo release, Emergency Medical and Information Release forms before a rider may enter the arena. Forms must be updated ANNUALLY!

EVALUATION/ASSESSMENT:

All clients must attend a formal assessment session with a TPR Certified Instructor prior to admission to the program.

Riders referred thru the contract with the Stillwater Public Schools will be admitted on a provisional basis until they can be assessed during their initial session.

AGE:

Riders must be at least 4 years old. There is no upper limit on age but current, annual physician's approval is required for all riders.

DISABILITY:

Physician's approval is required for all riders; however, TPR Certified Instructors may decline or temporarily or permanently dismiss a rider:

if his or her physical disability appears to make mounting, dismounting or riding unsafe,

if follow up investigation with the physician reveals contraindications to riding,

if a developing or new physical condition or surgery makes riding unsafe

if uncontrolled behavior or emotional issues threaten the safety of the rider or others in the arena.

SIZE:

Turning Point cannot accept riders who weigh more than 185 pounds. As current riders appear to approach that weight, parents, guardians or school officials will be reminded of the weight restriction which is set to protect our horses and volunteer

RULES COMPLIANCE:

Riders who cannot or do not follow the guidance and requirements of instructors during sessions will receive verbal followed by written warning. If the out of control behavior continues, the rider may be released from the program. This includes willingness to wear a required ASTM/SEI helmet!

FINANCIAL:

If a rider falls more than two months behind in payments, he or she will not be allowed to attend sessions until the account is brought up to date or a payment plan has been arranged with the Turning Point office.

SKILL ACCOMPLISHMENT:

Riders whose skills advance to a level beyond the instruction Turning Point can supply will be "graduated" to seek riding instruction elsewhere. Additionally, riders who have achieved the goals set by either the schools or their parents/guardians may be evaluated for graduation from the program through conferences with schools/parents/guardians.

FAMILY COMPLIANCE:

Safety rules at Turning Point apply to staff, volunteers, riders and family members or others who observe sessions. Family members and observers/visitors whose behavior disrupts sessions or violates safety rules in the Parent's Manual or posted in the barn will be given verbal and written warnings by instructors or the Program Coordinator. If the situation continues, those individuals and their rider may be excused from the premises and the program.

GRIEVANCES: Should you or a member of your family have a concern about facilities or treatment of your rider or other issues at Turning Point, they may be addressed with the session instructor, Executive Director or Board Member present at the session or by appointment at 405-269-2225.

General Information and Policies

Turning Point Ranch is a Premier Accredited Center through PATH International, the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, the international accrediting body for therapeutic horseback riding.

Sessions are conducted under the supervision of a PATH certified instructor and our Executive Director who is also a PATH certified instructor. Instructors in Training who teach sessions have passed at least two tests and are closely monitored by an instructor.

ADMISSIONS requirements and enrollment procedures are as follows:

1. Classes are filled on a first come/first served basis according to the date enrollment forms are submitted and assessment is completed.
2. If classes are filled, names will be placed on a waiting list.
3. As vacancies occur during the year, they will be filled from the waiting list and then from new registrations.
4. Efforts will be made to place clients in sessions with riders of similar age and size.
5. Physician's statements regarding health issues and weight must be received and reviewed by our staff who must also do a formal assessment before a client is allowed to ride in our program. Please note the 185 pound weight limit.
6. All paperwork must be updated annually for a rider to continue in the program.

HEALTH INFORMATION

PATH standards require up to date health information annually on every client, so no client will be allowed to participate in any session without required documents in our files.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mail: Turning Point Ranch

P.O. Box 672 Stillwater, OK 74076

Phone/text : 405-269-2235

E-mail: info@turningpointriding.org

Web: www.turningpointriding.org

facebook: Turning Point Therapeutic Riding

PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF OF CLIENTS

- Normal arrival time for sessions is 5 minutes prior to the start time of the riding program. Parents and clients are invited to come into the barn upon arrival, relax on the front porch of the barn or remain in the car.
- Bleachers beside the arena are available for families of riders during the session.
- Parents are encouraged to attend/observe sessions as long as it does not interfere with ability of the client to participate fully. Parents may not enter the arena during sessions. Parents may not interfere with the lesson by coaching from the rail.
- Because of our unique location by a busy road, apartment complex and acreage including ponds, it is imperative that siblings **MUST** be supervised by parents and must avoid posted Off Limits areas.
- Clients need to be picked up within 10 minutes of the end of the 50 minute session.

LOCATION

Riding sessions take place at Turning Point Ranch, 385 S. Country Club Road in Stillwater. The arena is just north of 6th Street on the east side of the road.

PARKING

ADA parking is provided near the barn or you may use the other parking spots further down the road. Families are encouraged to park closer to the barn and arena while our volunteers are happy to walk further.

TUITION and SCHOLARSHIPS

- Fees are \$25 per session -- due at the first of the month following invoices.
- Checks should be made payable to Turning Point Ranch.
- Payments should be mailed to: Turning Point Ranch, P.O. Box 672, Stillwater, OK 74076 or presented to the Executive Director at a session.
- Be sure to indicate the name of the client on the memo line of the check.
- Receipts will be issued on request.
- Partial scholarships are available. Forms can be found on the website at: www.turningpointriding.org Completed forms can be mailed or handed to an instructor at a session.

If tuition falls in arrears, clients may not be allowed to participate in future sessions.

Due to the financial commitments of Turning Point, a **partial charge of \$10 will be made in the event of unreported absence**. When riders are absent without calling, tacked horses are already in the arena and volunteers are standing by which affects both safety and volunteer retention. If an absence is due to hospitalization or a doctor's appointment, there will be no charge.

If a session is canceled due to unforeseen circumstances such as lightning, snow or ice, every attempt will be made to make up the session. If that is not possible, full credit will be applied to the next month.

SAFETY AND GUIDANCE

The safety of both clients and volunteers is critical in any therapeutic program involving horses. Our horses are carefully chosen and trained for therapeutic riding purposes.

Our volunteers are selected based on equine experience and are trained in PATH safety standards. The equipment used in our program – from ASTM-SEI helmets for riders to surcingles for horses – are selected, required and regularly inspected with safety in mind. We use safety/peacock stirrups on ALL of our saddles. For all these reasons, clients are required to comply with safety requirements and instruction during sessions.

If, for any reason, a client refuses or cannot follow instructions during a session, the instructor will try to resolve the problem in the following way:

1. Try to understand the reason the client is upset or uncooperative.
2. Explain the importance/safety reason for the required behavior
3. Remove the child and his/her horse from the arena until calm and cooperation is restored in order to insure the safety of other horses and riders.
4. Redirect the particular rider into an activity where safety can be assured such as grooming instead of riding

We will not spank, isolate, humiliate or ridicule or subject any child to physical or psychological punishment.

Here are the safety guidelines we use at Turning Point Ranch:

1. Even though we select very gentle horses and train them for our therapeutic program, only trained members of our horse team should touch or interact with them without supervision.
2. Hand feeding of our horses is prohibited. Treats may NOT be given due to the ages of and prescriptions taken by some of our horses.
3. All horses and areas outside the garden, barn and arena are OFF LIMITS.
4. Running and shouting near sessions is strictly prohibited and any children not in classes should be supervised and kept out of OFF LIMITS areas.
5. Family and friends are encouraged to watch from viewing areas only--never inside the arena-- and should only interact with clients during sessions or participate at the invitation of the instructor.
6. Dogs are NOT allowed on the property .
7. Smoking, as well as alcohol use, is banned on the Turning Point property. Violators may be excused from the premises by instructors or the Program Coordinator!

TERMINATION/GRADUATION OF A CLIENT FROM THE PROGRAM

Although Turning Point is dedicated to providing opportunities to clients with a variety of abilities, there are times when it may be in the best interest of a client or the center that a client be removed or move on from the program. Reasons for termination/graduation may include but not be limited to safety issues, extreme aggression, dramatic improvement of skills beyond our program scope or lack of payment .

Prior to termination, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Parents will be informed of the situation and a conference with the parents will be held to share information and develop a plan of action.
2. Periodic conferences will be held to measure progress and alternatives including termination/graduation will be discussed.
3. If, after a period of time, the situation is not reconciled, parents will receive a letter giving them two weeks written notice that the client is being terminated/graduated from the program.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Client's records are open only to the Executive Director, session instructor, the

client's physician or public school representative as authorized by the parent/caregiver or legal guardian. Records with the client's name blocked may be examined by accrediting agencies. Please don't discuss your rider in front of others. We won't but will be happy to set a time to meet with you.

DRESS

Appropriate dress is a safety issue where horses are involved, therefore, clients are required to wear long pants and appropriate footwear – no flip flops or sandals. While riding boots will not be required, boots which protect ankles (as opposed to tennis shoes which do not) are preferred. For client safety, footwear with a heel is encouraged. We use safety stirrups on all our saddles, but hard-soled boots with a heel are still safer. Jewelry such as chains or clothing with decorations such as fringe are not allowed. Generally strong perfumes or colognes are also discouraged. Each rider is required to wear an ASTM/SEI equestrian helmet which will be provided by Turning Point during sessions. Personal helmets must be ASTM-SEI certified.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PLANS

Turning Point sessions will be canceled whenever the public schools are closed. Listen to KOSU 91.7 FM or KSPI 93.7FM for information. In the event of abrupt weather events such as tornado or lightning storms, sessions will also be canceled. In the case of extreme cold, (generally below 28 degrees) or extreme heat (above 95 degrees) we may also cancel sessions but will notify parents in advance by phone or text message.

If at all possible, we will hold unmounted classes in the interior of the barn teaching important horsemanship skills.

FUND RAISERS

Turning Point will host an annual fundraiser in order to purchase special equipment or fund scholarships. If you are interested in serving on the fundraising committee, please let us know. Turning Point is not able to "Host" events for individual businesses even if part of the proceeds are donated to the Ranch. We will support such events through our newsletter and website.

PROGRAM PLANNING

Activities will be designed to meet the needs of varied age groups. Your son or daughter will have the opportunity to participate in developmental and age-appropriate activities that will promote: physical, social, language and emotional

development and impart horsemanship skills. Positive guidance will always be used.

LESSON PLANS

Generally, sessions will be comprised of five or fewer riders with up to three volunteers assigned to each rider. Prior to the session, the instructor will develop a lesson plan for each rider and communicate specific goals to the volunteers assigned to that rider. We encourage every rider to move towards appropriate independence.

Turning Point will make an effort to assign the same volunteer team and horse to the same rider throughout the semester. Lesson plans will usually include activities on and off the horse and will make use of games or activities to address fine motor skills, large motor skills, balance and social skills. The instructor will make progress notes on each rider for each lesson.

LONG RANGE GOALS

Here is a summary of the Long Range Goals our program supports:

Physical Development:

1. Development of basic large motor skills such as balance, trunk control, throwing skills
2. Development of basic fine motor skills such as hand-eye coordination, using tools such as grooming brushes or fastening buckles on tack.

Social/Emotional Development

1. Increased abilities to adjust to new situations
2. Development pro-social behavior such as taking turns, respecting the rights of others and using thinking skills to resolve conflicts
3. Learning to regulate his/her own behavior and manage feelings
4. Development of patience through interaction with horses
5. Development of trust skills through meeting new volunteers/adults

Cognitive Development

1. Increased attention span
2. Increase understanding of the physical world through interaction with horses and volunteers
3. Development of new verbal and other skills through games
4. Development of new physical skills through grooming and riding exercises.

Language Development

1. Development of both receptive and expressive language through interaction with volunteers, instructors and horses
2. Increased ability to ask and answer questions, hold conversations

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation can be an important part of our program. Parents are always encouraged to observe sessions from outside the arena. Other opportunities to help will be shared in newsletters. Join us on facebook at Turning Point Therapeutic Riding.

Private conferences with parents are always welcome. Informal discussions may be scheduled whenever needed, however parents are discouraged from discussing issues as sessions are ending since instructors are responsible for the safety of all horses, volunteers and riders who are leaving the arena until the horses have been unsaddled and returned to the pasture. It is generally not a good idea to discuss concerns and problems in front of clients. Please contact us for an appointment so we can work as a team. Concerns may be addressed with the Executive Director at 405-269-2225.