

# Why Riding?



The benefits of Therapeutic Riding are evident in many areas.

Physically, it is the horse's movement that has a dynamic effect on the rider's body. The horse stimulates the rider's pelvis and trunk in a manner that closely resembles the normal gait of a human. This movement can be used to produce specific physical changes in the rider. The benefits to our riders include normalization of tone, postural improvement, improvements in balance, and increased strength.

Sensorially, the movement of the horse can help with a variety of Sensory Integration issues. A smooth-gaited, consistently paced horse can provide needed input to help a rider establish rhythm, etc. A rough-gaited horse may be able to provide a rider with stimulation to help organize and integrate sensory input. Movement exploration while on the horse can help improve overall body awareness.

Emotionally, the success of overcoming fear and anxiety can help a rider realize self-worth and increase self-esteem. The ability to achieve a riding skill will also have a positive effect on a rider's self-perception. For some of the youth that are involved in various activities at Greenlock Therapeutic Riding Center, Inc., the farm and barn environment, the companion animal bonding, and the development of new skills are all critical components in the success of the experience offered. The relationships that develop between riders, volunteers, horses, and staff are all integral to a positive emotional experience at Greenlock.

Cognitively, the horse provides many of our riders with the motivation to learn many new things. Educational goals such as letter recognition and sequencing can be incorporated into riding activities.

Socially, therapeutic riding activities enable individuals to interact with their peers in a group activity. Riding and the related activities are both fun and challenging.

Through the development of an Individual Riding Plan (IRP) for each of our riders, the staff at Greenlock is able to achieve individualized goals and objectives for each of our participants. We invite and encourage each of our riders and their parents and guardians to actively participate in this process. Please feel free to contact us at any time to set up a conference opportunity to establish, review, and revise goals.