

Happy Horsemanship Program

Sterling Hunter/Jumpers offers a special class designed for boys and girls aged 4 to 6 to introduce them to the joys and rewards of horsemanship and riding. Enrollment is limited to 4 children per instructor so that the instructor can work with each child individually during the session.

The “Happy Horsemanship Program” clinics are one and a half hours (1 ½ hr.) in duration, and consists of four (4) classes, totaling six (6) hours of instruction. This is the maximum amount of time that we have found to be optimal, per session, while maintaining the child’s attention, thereby exposing the children to horsemanship and equitation in a safe, fun and stimulating environment.

Each week the children practice haltering, leading, grooming, and help tack up their horse to ride. Safety helmets are provided, and the children take turns riding to learn basic balance, posture, and control of the horse to start, stop and steer at the walk and trot. During the four-week course, the class also learns through fun, hands-on activities, how to safely approach and move around horses; the parts of the horse’s body; horse colors and markings, and basic care of the horse instilling responsibility and compassion.

This program is appropriate for youngsters who have:

- 17 Good balance skills such as tumbling or riding a bicycle.
- 18 Good motor skills and hand eye coordination, such as printing.
- 19 A complete vocabulary for their own body parts, such as “heel”, “knee”, “elbow”, not just “leg”, or “arm”.
- 20 Good knowledge of “left” versus “right”, “inside” versus “outside” and similar basic spatial concepts.
- 21 Good social skills such as the ability to take turns.
- 22 Weigh at least 50 pounds and in reasonable athletic shape in order to accomplish the tasks safely.
- 23 Ability to follow instruction.
- 24 A seven to ten minute attention span.
- 25 Are free of allergies to animal dander, dust, grass, sawdust, and dirt.

Children should dress appropriately, preferably in boots but must have on closed-toe shoes and wear long pants. Parents are not required to remain on the premises during the classes but if you choose to do so we ask that you remain in your car or in our covered porch area so as not to distract the children.

Additional programs are available commensurate with the child’s abilities and skills taught on any given level. Please ask the instructor for more information. Children may also take the class multiple times to improve their skills and master their current level, if necessary.