

Welcome to HorseTalk Hippotherapy!!

HorseTalk Hippotherapy welcomes you to its program! We know that you will enjoy your time with us and that your rider will demonstrate great progress while he/she is with us.

The barn is called Shannon Trails and is in Salem, NH. Take exit 3 off of 93 and follow your GPS to 208 Shannon Road (approximately 12 minutes off the highway). The property comes up on your left and the first thing you see is a red barn. Drive to the back of the barn and park near the indoor arena. It takes me approximately 30 minutes from my Bedford office.

*There is a waiting area and a bathroom off of the main house as you first enter the driveway (on your left). If you wish to walk around and visit the other horses while you wait you **MUST** have a staff member with you, for your own safety. Horses in paddocks and stalls can still bite and kick, and many of the fences are electrified.*

If your rider would like to bring a treat for his/her horse, that treat will be given to the horse at his/her next meal. Hand feeding any of the horses is prohibited. Treats for Kaileigh and Toby, however, are welcomed and will be consumed immediately! :)

We require our students to wear helmets, hard shoes (no flip flops, sandals/open toe or crocs) and long pants for riding, preferably jeans. No wind pants, slippery gym pant material or skirts/dresses, please. We provide the helmets. We also provide safety “belts” during the ride.

The weather can be misleading so please dress your rider in layers. Little legs can get cold if the pants tend to ride up. Long boot socks work well, as do tights.

Our riders ride typically on bareback pads. It is the best way to “feel” the horse's movement. There will be a HorseTalk team member leading the horse (Kaileigh) and at least one sidewalker to help keep your rider safe. Sessions are typically 40-45 minutes in length unless otherwise specified.

As you know, horses can be unpredictable. Although we go to great efforts to insure safety to our riders, please be aware that we are dealing with animals and there is an inherent risk at every ride. Helmets, the right clothing and sidewalkers will help in the event of a challenging situation.

The anxious/nervous rider will be handled most delicately. The goal of the first visit does NOT have to be “getting on” the horse. There are many horse assisted activities that can be utilized to get the rider more comfortable being near/on the animals. It has been the occasion to groom the animal or walk around the arena participating in the activities with the animal in tow, while providing speech and language stimulation. The well being of the rider is never compromised just to get him/her “on” the horse. Clearly, however, if this situation remains ongoing, discussion will ensue as to how to best proceed.

You will get a confirming email the Friday or weekend prior to your ride schedule. If you do NOT get this email, please contact me at 512-1263 to make sure your rider is scheduled. Also please use this number on a hippotherapy day, in the event of same day cancellation. The sooner I know, the better I can operate.

Generally speaking, we operate every Monday. Unsafe weather conditions include high wind, high temperatures (over 85) and thunder/lightning storms. These are conditions that might require HorseTalk to cancel for that day. If the weather is suspicious, it is best to call us (we are usually at the barn by 11 on Mondays) prior to leaving your home, to make sure we are operating that day. Every once in a while, we get a quick change of weather that was unpredicted and have to cancel at the time. We apologize in advance for those rare times, however, your child's safety is still our highest priority. We try our best to stay on top of weather conditions and alert you when there is concern.

Please bring your check made out to Toby Freeman or HorseTalk, unless other arrangements have been made. Payment is expected at the time of service. Cancellations will be accepted without penalty as long as there is a 24 hour notice. A fee of 25\$ will be charged if you do not call or cancel at least 24 hours before your session. Emergencies or sudden illnesses are the exception to that rule. We do not accept credit or debit cards.

Thank you and HAPPY RIDING!! :)

Toby, Kaileigh, and the rest of the HorseTalk Hippotherapy Team!