



## WELCOME PACKET

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# We are so happy you are here!

## Your journey to connecting and growing with horses begins here.

Welcome to Horse Sense for Kids, where we believe in the transformative power of horses. Our western horseback riding lessons provide you with a unique opportunity to develop both horsemanship and life skills.

Horses and horsemanship teach an abundance of life lessons and offers experiences beyond what words can describe. The true depth of all we can learn from horses comes from our ability to be open and willing to put their needs ahead of ours and learn how to care for all aspects of the horse. We believe there is so much to enjoy with horses and wish for you to experience all the many facets of connecting with such magical animals!

Our horsemanship programs include all the traditional riding skills however we add in the most powerful component – CONNECTION AND RELATIONSHIP. Learning to ride and handle horses from this perspective opens the door to developing a deeper understanding and growth as a horseman.

Horses are not here just to meet our needs; it is our responsibility to help meet theirs. We believe that when a horse's needs are met, they are more than willing to offer us all they can give. It is through understanding, appreciation, and empathy that the full gift of what horses can do for us is experienced.



Horse Sense for Kids teaches a whole-horse approach, where you will learn to care for your horse and to develop a relationship with them both on the ground and in the saddle. If you don't have a strong relationship and skills on the ground with your horse, how can you expect to have it in the saddle?

Horse Sense for Kids' unique curriculum teaches a wide variety of skills to be successful with horses from the ground up! You will learn from topics such as: behaviour, feeding, barn management, leading, vet care and so much more! There's a lot that goes into having happy, healthy horses that perform well and we are excited to help guide you on your journey to achieving this for yourself.

Join us at Horse Sense for Kids and embark on an unforgettable journey filled with adventure, growth, and a deep appreciation for these incredible animals.



# Barn Rules

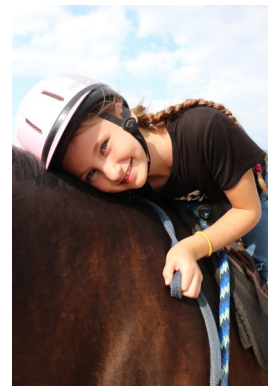


Our goal is to provide a safe space for all our animals, staff, students and visitors with the following barn rules:

1. If a student is more than 10 minutes late for their scheduled lesson, the lesson will be forfeited.
2. Only the instructor and the student will be allowed in the barn past the chain guard (or the line where it normally is if it is down).
3. Parents and visitors may watch lessons from behind the chain guard in the barn, the indoor lounge room or by the outside riding ring (no leaning on or through the fence of the outdoor riding ring).
4. Visitors will not be allowed in the barn and must remain in designated areas of the farm - signs are posted for private areas, if unsure, please ask a staff or volunteer member.
5. No hand feeding of ANY animals is permitted (including petting area animals). Hand feeding can lead to unsafe behaviours and health issues.
6. Parents will not be allowed inside riding areas and no commentary or co-teaching over the instructor will be permitted.
7. Students and visitors under 18 years of age are not to be left unattended on the farm before and after their lesson.
8. No pets are allowed.
9. No smoking on the property.
10. Certified riding helmets are available for use. Ask for assistance if needed to select and fit one properly. Do not play with or drop helmets, if helmets are dropped and it leads to needing a replacement, the student will need to pay for the replacement.
11. Please arrive with a hairstyle (and if wearing a head covering) that will allow for the use of a helmet.
12. Horse assignments are at the discretion of the instructor and preference to a particular horse is not always possible. If a student would like to work with a particular horse, please discuss with their instructor.
13. Lessons may be conducted individually or in small groups, at our discretion and depending on the needs of the rider. Private lessons are 30 minutes, group lessons are one hour. Note: Lesson time includes grooming and tacking up a horse.
14. Extreme heat, cold, wind etc impacts the health of our horses and their performance so lessons will be adjusted according to the weather conditions or the horse's needs at the discretion of the instructor.
15. Always return equipment in clean condition and neatly put away.
16. Clean up any manure your horse leaves behind in the aisles.

# Hours of Operation

Lessons are booked in advance, no walk ins are permitted. Lessons are available based on availability from 2-9pm Tuesdays to Fridays and 10am to 4pm Saturdays. The farm is closed to the public Sundays, Mondays, civic holidays and "shutdown" weeks between semesters.





# Cancellation Policy

At HSFK, lesson spots are limited and horses and staff are scheduled carefully to support each class. Consistency is important for both rider progress and horse well-being.



## Cancellations

- A minimum of 24 hours' notice is required for any lesson cancellation to qualify for a make-up lesson.
- All cancellations must be completed directly in your Activity Messenger account.
- Cancellations made by email, text, or verbal notice are not considered official unless they are also submitted in the online system.

If you are unable to provide 24 hours' notice due to unexpected circumstances, please notify us as soon as possible so staff can adjust scheduling and horse care accordingly. If a rider arrives more than 10 minutes late, the lesson will be forfeited.

# Make up Lesson Policy

- **One (1) make-up lesson per rider, per session is permitted with 24-hour notice.**
- Make-up lessons are not guaranteed and are based strictly on availability.
- Make-up spots become available when other students cancel and may occur on different days or times than your regular class.

### **It is the responsibility of the parent or rider to:**

1. Cancel the lesson within Activity Messenger.
2. Book an available make-up lesson through the portal.

Make-up opportunities will appear online as they become available. We encourage families to check the system regularly if a make-up is needed.



# Payment Policy

A deposit (if more than one month before the start of the session) or full payment is due upon registration. If a deposit is paid, the balance is due one month before the session begins. Payments can be done through the online portal or sent by e-transfer to [horsesenseforkids@gmail.com](mailto:horsesenseforkids@gmail.com).

# Weather/Emergency/Policy

Lessons may be cancelled due to severe weather such as thunderstorms, snow storms, wind storms or unpredictable events. If staff feel it's unsafe/unsuitable for lessons or if there's a staffing issue, you will be notified as soon as possible. A cancellation email will be sent from our admin system and staff will notify you by text and/or phone call. We ask that you confirm receipt of the notice to ensure everyone stays safe and we know you received the notice. We will reschedule any lessons missed due to our cancellation.



# What to Wear and Equipment Required

Safety is first and foremost. This means that absolutely NO flip flops, Crocs or other flimsy type of footwear may be worn in the barn or around horses. We want you to keep your toes!

**Boots** - All riders must wear cowboy boots, paddock boots or another hard-soled boot with a half inch heel. No fashion boots. Some boots are available for use if needed.



**Pants/Shirts** - Long pants are required for all riding activities even in the summer. Shorts can be worn for some groundwork lessons (please ask instructor what is required). T-shirts, full tank tops and long sleeve shirts are suitable, no bikini straps or crop tops are allowed.

**Helmets** - ASTM/SEI Certified helmets must be worn at all times. We provide helmets, but recommend that riders purchase their own. They can be purchased at a tack store (Greenhawk in Beamsville) or on Amazon.



## Ages

Horsemanship programs are available for children ages 5 and up. Adults of any age are welcome provided they have the mobility to ride and/or participate in ground lessons.

## Weight

Riders come in all shapes and sizes, as do our horses. Because of this, we must follow some guidelines for the safety of both horse and rider. Our maximum weight for riding is 225 pounds. Any riders that do not meet this requirement are welcome to participate in ground work lessons provided the student has good

## Registration Process

You can access the registration form in two ways:

Direct link:

Child Registration: <https://activitymessenger.com/p/gq8iYFQ>

Adult Registration: <https://activitymessenger.com/p/tKKpMLk>

HSFK Portal: <https://activitymessenger.com/org/4874/page/6POi7cZ/hsfk-portal>





# Your First Lesson

A guide to help you prepare for your first riding lesson.



## A Note for Parents:

Learning about horses can be as rewarding for you as it is for your child. Being at the farm and around these beautiful animals is a great way to unwind and improve mental health and wellbeing - you'll see what we mean when you get here. We welcome you to relax and unwind while visiting the farm. We have designated areas for you to watch your child's lesson—our indoor heated lounge room for indoor lessons and picnic tables by our outdoor riding ring. You are welcome to bring a lawn chair and a good book to set up and enjoy the peace of the farm! If you have allergies or are fearful around the horses, please let a member of our staff know.

## Arrival:

Upon arriving at the farm, a member of our team will be there to show you around and teach you how to get your horse ready for the lesson. Our farm is very friendly place, with lots of friendly people, so never hesitate to ask a fellow rider or parent for information if you have a question and you don't see a staff member around.

You are welcome to enter the barn and/or visit our petting area if you are early (**please do not feed the animals or go into the petting area**). There is a designated waiting area in the barn just inside the door, we ask that you do not go past the chain guard into the barn to visit the horses.

## Lesson Time:



When it is your lesson time, a staff member will welcome you and introduce you to the horse you are working with that day. Your instructor will go over basic safety for working with horses and give a brief overview of grooming and saddling.



Once your horse is saddled, your instructor will take you into either our indoor riding arena or the outdoor ring and help you to get mounted. Once mounted, they will lead you around to get use to the movement of the horse, during this time, you are welcome to hold on to the horn for balance. As you start to get comfortable, and if you get to the point of balancing without holding on, your instructor will review basic steering aids and assist you with starting to use them.

We encourage you to ask questions at any time during your lesson, especially if you are unsure of anything. Our lessons are tailored to your individual needs so we will go at whatever pace you are comfortable with—there are no time limits to your development!

## After Your Ride:



Once you have dismounted, your instructor will help you lead your horse back into the barn for a quick untack and to put the grooming tools and any equipment you used (helmet or boots) away.

## Congratulations!

Your first lesson is done! We look forward to continuing to develop your knowledge, skills and enjoyment of horses in your next lessons!