

h o r s e n s e

Equine-Facilitated Coaching

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Horsense, LLC Safety Contract

All Equine programs emphasize creativity and responsiveness in relating to horses. The only rules we stress are safety rules. Anyone who knowingly or maliciously breaks these rules is a safety risk for the entire group and, as such will not be allowed to participate in the programs. Horses are prey animals and are easily startled into a flight or fight mode. The following guidelines will prevent serious mishaps and make the experience more enjoyable for everyone involved, including the horses.

1. Do not touch or feed horses. Please remember when you arrive to the workshop location and during break times and departure times. You will have time to connect with the horses during supervised activities throughout the workshop day(s).
2. When leading the horse, never wrap the lead line around your hand. Do not lay the line over your neck or shoulder.
3. Avoid standing directly in front of or directly behind the horse. When walking behind the horse to get to the other side, put your hand on the horse's hindquarters and move around him with your body close to his body. This allows the horse to know where you are and keeps you from stepping into kicking range (about 2 feet from the horse's body). Children who cannot comfortably reach the horse's hindquarters are not tall enough to walk safely behind the horse and should always ask for assistance in walking around the horse.
4. Do not hit the horse. Physical violence only escalates the horse's impulse to fight or flight.
5. Stop what you are doing and move away from the horse or return to the neutral leading position when the instructor calls a "TIME OUT". Wait quietly for further instruction.
6. If a horse begins to panic, give him some space. Do not try to restrain him. If the panic escalates Let the Horse GO! Call "Time Out" or "Loose Horse".
7. As prey animals, horses are very sensitive to the feeling of their herd members as well as the human beings who interact with them. Feelings are a primary source of information to this species. Pay attention to your feelings and sensations and how these may be changing or shifting. If you get frustrated, fearful, or angry, call your own "Time Out" and reassess the situation. Do not hesitate to ask for help.
8. It is not uncommon for human handlers to pick up feelings that actually belong to the horses. If you have distressing feelings that you cannot name or have a logical reason for, call your own "Time Out" and consult an instructor. In most instances, a horse's panic may be avoided by examining these feelings before they escalate into panic.
9. Keep your breath flowing. Horses give and receive information through quality and frequency of their breathing. Holding your breath or producing quick, shallow, breaths convey feelings of stress and fear to the horses and can cause them to become stressed or fearful.

I have read the safety guidelines above and will listen to the accompanying demonstration. I agree to follow these rules to the best of my ability and to ask for help when I'm having trouble with any of the Equine Activities facilitated by Amanda Dumenigo. I agree to be responsible for my own safety and thus contribute to the safety of the group.

Participant's Name (print) _____

Signature _____ **Date** _____