

## **What the Outside of Calypso Run Farm can do for the Inside of a Child**

At Calypso Run Farm, children learn to care for another living being. There are manes and tails that need to be combed, bodies brushed, hooves picked out, noses and eyes wiped and, occasionally, wounds cared for. They learn this horse, even though so much bigger than them, depends on them for its wellbeing. The horse's needs come before theirs, and, hence they learn patience and humility.

All lessons are not learned while on the back of a horse. In fact, some of the best lessons happen off the horse. As an example, medical care that has applications to human care, nutrition lessons that translates into an understanding of how sugars and starches affect mood and health, why vaccines are helpful but sometimes not necessary. The children learn how to "think like a horse"; how an animal's perspective is about how *they* see the world, not how *you* see them in it. The process requires them to step out of their world and into the world of another living thing. And maybe, just maybe, that process will help them when they deal with friends or bullies or partners. Then there is the psychology of groundwork with a horse and creating a trust that leads to a "join up". Learning that true leadership comes from confidence and tact vice threats and dominance whether it is starting a young horse, retraining a spoiled horse or establishing the trust of a horse that has been wounded in a previous life. The dialogue at the barn is continuous. There are always "teaching moments" and we find them and use them to help a child get a better understanding of their world.

Then there are the woods and the fields and the wildlife they harbor. The discussions or the moments we stop our horses and close our eyes and "be still and think of the wonders of the world or God" or whoever, the point being there are wonders to admire if we only take the time. On our full moon rides we close our eyes and listen to the sound of horses hooves, creaky leather, rustling brush and smell the wildflower aroma. I tell them that there WILL be a creative writing assignment at some time in their lives and learn to draw on this experience of sound and smell to write about it.

So we are more than a farm with horses. While we do ride, we also listen to the animals. We hear them whisper and we whisper back, we work hard, we smile harder, we move out of our comfort zones and learn we are ok, we open doors that were closed, we love and we lose, we are a respite for some and a home for others. We make impressions and memories. We are not for everybody but for some we are everything.

If you are interested to see if this is where you want your child to land, please contact me.