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## Teaching Riding & Horsemanship To Individuals With Disabilities

Since 1974, this therapeutic and recreational program has taught horseback riding and horsemanship skills to persons with disabilities.

PEP (Proud Equestrians Program) is an educational 4-H Youth Development Program of Michigan State University Extension.

The local program, "If Wishes Were Horses..." , is supported through fundraising activities of the county programming committees, donations, and numerous volunteer hours.

**MICHIGAN STATE**  
**UNIVERSITY**  
**EXTENSION**



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If wishes were horses  
It's a thought we all know  
We could all take a ride  
But where would we go?

If wishes were horses  
And with friends by your side  
Lift you up in the saddle  
And away you would ride!

Up the walls of the world  
You would race  
Feel the sun in your eyes  
And the wind in your face!

Laughing and singing  
How proud you would be!  
With a strong horse beneath you  
And the chance to be free!

The sky is the limit  
So let's reach for the stars....

If wishes were horses  
They are! Oh they are!

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*IF WISHES  
WERE HORSES...*

**Proud  
Equestrian  
Program**

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Gratiot & Isabella County  
Michigan State University Extension  
4-H Youth Programs

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The Benefits of P.E.P.  
(Proud Equestrian Program)

- develop self awareness
- build self confidence
- improve concentration
- learn self discipline.
- improve posture, balance, coordination, strength, and flexibility.

Therapeutic riding is particularly beneficial for people with impaired mobility. The rider seated on a horse is gently and rhythmically moved in a manner that is similar to human walking. Medical professionals, such as physical and occupational therapists, may suggest this type of rhythmic movement as a part of a total therapeutic exercise program.

Exercising the spirit is as important as exercising the body. Physical activities and individual accomplishments can be psychologically uplifting and rewarding to the student.

The discipline and concentration required in this form of physical activity has proven to be of great benefit to those with developmental disorders and is particularly beneficial for children with autism. Many children and adults with emotional impairments find a unique relationship with horses which improves their human relationships.



Rider applications are available at the MSU Extension offices in either Gratiot or Isabella County.

The program operates with a certified instructor and volunteers screened by MSU Extension.

*For more information please contact:*

- Isabella MSU Extension (989) 772-0911 x302
- Gratiot MSU Extension (989) 875-5233
- Colleen Robinson (989) 463-5093

Do you have an  
interest in P.E.P.?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about us? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please check one of the following:

\_\_\_\_ Interested Rider

\_\_\_\_ Interested Volunteer

\_\_\_\_ Interested in giving a donation

Mail to:

PEP  
Isabella County MSU Extension  
200 North Main  
Mt. Pleasant, MI 48858