



2021 Annual Appeal

A Pathway to Healing



It's heartwarming to witness the positive impact our programs have on the men, women, and children we serve from Caroline, Dorchester, Queen Anne, and Talbot counties.

From autism and addiction recovery to PTSD and cerebral palsy, equine therapy can play a powerful role in giving a person the confidence and skills they need to live a fulfilling life. Our CATCH Riders program helps youth at risk and adults recovering from family violence and sexual abuse. Just brushing and interacting with a horse can calm a person with dementia or help someone with depression.

During our 2021 Fall Session, the therapist of one of our new riders reported that he constantly talks about the time he spends riding. According to her, he is normally very shy and reserved in interactions with others. But as soon as he arrives on the farm, he has a huge smile on his face! He loves telling his horse to "walk on" and "whoa." He is making great strides at being able to ride more independently.

One of our biggest goals for all riders is to offer them independence and increased self-confidence through equine-assisted activities and therapies.

We can't deny that Covid has impacted our operations. For over a year, we suspended all therapeutic services and fundraising, yet continued to provide top notch care to our seven horses and ponies. It came at a great expense to our organization.

Donations are essential to the success of our programs, and that's why we are reaching out to you today. Your gift allows us to provide financial assistance to clients and quality care to our horses. It helps fund special purchases and maintain our facilities.

You are an important partner in our work.

After training our volunteers on new Covid protocols and putting in place additional safety and health practices, we resumed our therapeutic riding sessions in the spring/summer of 2021. We started with 12 riders. It was such a relief to reconnect with them and work on their goals.





Additionally, we launched the *Time to Ride* program in March 2020, and had a great first day. Unfortunately, we had to suspend the program after the first week due to the pandemic. Created by the American Horse Council, *Time to Ride* is an after-school program that gets students out of the classroom and into the farm environment. Positive Strides is a certified *Time to Ride* facility. We hosted nine students from Dorchester County Public Schools for 6 weeks. They were handpicked by Omeaka Jackson of Harvesting Hope Youth and Family Wellness, Inc. The program was funded by a grant from United Way of Lower Eastern Shore. The results were overwhelmingly positive for everyone involved.

We recently completed our Fall Session with nearly 30 riders. In order to support our growth, we are adding two horses to our program. We are in the process of building two bigger stalls to accommodate our larger horses. The project will be completed by volunteers. The design and construction supervision will be managed by Jim Thomas, building superintendent of Habitat for Humanity Choptank. He is also donating all of his services.

By pledging \$25, \$50, or \$100 a month, you will be providing life-changing therapy to residents of the Eastern Shore with physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges. All of the proceeds from this annual appeal support Positive Strides programs, horses, and operations.

We also have several [horse sponsorship](#) opportunities. They make a wonderful gift for someone you love! You can donate via [PayPal, Debit or Credit Card](#). Please make checks payable to Positive Strides and mail to the PO Box address below.

We wish you a wonderful holiday season and thank you for your support.

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