

Kids Summer Horseback Riding Camp and your Child's Physical and Mental Development

Looking for a fun, outdoor, healthy, and challenging Summer Camp for your son or daughter? A Summer Camp that keeps your child's brain and body fit during the long summer break? **Crystal Springs Ranch's Kids Horseback Riding Camp** is the way to go!

Learning the art and sport of horseback riding is beneficial for body conditioning AND brain conditioning. All children are born with either a dominant right or left brain hemisphere. The right side of the brain controls the movement in the left side of your body. The right side of the brain is also credited with creativity, creative drive, ingenuity, innovative thought, the love of nature, and memory. The left side of the brain controls the movement on right side of your body, but is also credited with seeing the positive side of life, analytical thinking, organized thought, computing math problems, spelling and reading. Dyslexics have unusually dominant right-sided brains. While mathematicians have dominant left sided brains. **Horseback Riding assists in brain development because the young rider needs to use both hemispheres of the brain.**

The most productive brain is equally strong on both the left and right side. Horseback riding requires a large amount of cross-lateral movements. For example: in order to ask a horse to canter on the proper lead the rider signals simultaneously with the inside hand (left hand) and the outside leg (right leg). Both sides of the rider's body are necessary to operate concurrently and yet individually. This action "unsticks" the brain and energizes learning.

Horseback riding is good for your child's brain development and strengthening the body's core and over all physical fitness. Keeping one's balance on a horse is a great workout for the abs, hips and lower back (the body's core). Having proper posture on a horse is a wonderful "isometric exercise": a type of strength training that involves maintaining a position.

Horseback riding builds your child's self-confidence and self-esteem. Getting on a horse for the first time can sometimes be a bit of a challenge. However, as the rider's skills progresses to walk, trot and even canter, a real sense of accomplishment and pride is achieved.

That is just the tip of the iceberg of the many benefits of being around horses and horseback riding for Children (and Adults). A favorite horse activity is not riding, but rather caring and being around the horse. Building a bond with an animal and caring for it gives a wonderful sense of purpose and responsibility. Horses offer affection and "just being there." Horses provide companionship thereby combating feelings of loneliness, resulting in a boost to the child's overall mood that brings feelings of elation and happiness. Simply being around horses is a great stress reliever.

Kathy Weiss' Crystal Springs Ranch, located on Missouri Heights, outside of Carbondale, has been offering Kids Summer Horse Camps for the past 30 + years. Crystal Springs is the favorite Children's Riding Camp in the Roaring Fork Valley for several reasons.

One of the most fabulous features of **Crystal Springs** is the Ranch's beauty. **Crystal Springs** has 380 private acres of lush green pastures and gentle mountains adjacent to BLM land. Children and horses spend their Days amidst well-kept barns and arenas surrounded by big green pastures, not dirt filled paddocks. **Crystal Springs Ranch** has numerous private trails for hiking and riding. There are acres and acres to explore and observe the wildlife or just daydream.

Second, the professionalism of the facility, the wonderful lesson horses and ponies and the Instructors and trainers of three Equine disciplines; Hunter/Jumper, Vaulting, and Western. **Crystal Springs Ranch** owns and maintains year round well-trained horses and ponies. They are not leased from another Horse Operation for the Season. The Horses and Ponies are Valued and loved members of the Staff.

All Campers start with the discipline of **Vaulting**, which is gymnastics on the moving horse. Kathy Weiss is a certified American Vaulting Association Coach since 1982. The very calm, well-trained horse allows the Camper to develop their core muscles for balance before moving to the next level. The next level is the **basics of show jumping and trail riding**. **Crystal Springs** owns lesson horses for both disciplines. The Ranch has 5 different rings of all shapes and sizes to accommodate all the levels of riders - from the very beginner to the seasoned Horse Show Competitor. The Owner and the Instructors at **Crystal Springs** have spent their lives in the horse world. In fact, some have competed at the highest levels in Hunter/ Jumper and Equitation Competitions.

Third, Kathy has a Tack Shop at Crystal Springs Ranch. Many of the items at the Tack Shop are second hand- allowing parents to save some money. Parents and Kids can shop for the proper helmets, boots and clothing with knowledgeable sales people. Everything needed for the young Equestrian to get started off right is there on the property. Also popsicles and ice cream bars are sold at the Ranch.

Fourth, camp costs. After researching the prices of all the Riding Camps in the Roaring Fork Valley, **Crystal Springs Ranch Kids Summer Riding** camp is the least costly. With the purchase of the "Bakers Dozen" package, Camp is just \$100.00 for a full day! The other camp's cost varies from \$120.00 to \$184.00 for a full day.

To sum it up: **At Crystal Springs Ranch**, the kids learn to care for, vault and ride horses all day, 4 days a week. They have gifted instructors who not only know horses but also understand children. The private Ranch situated on lush green pastures is an exhilarating, comfortable and safe place for any child to spend the summer. **Best of all - the discipline of horseback riding helps your child become physically fit and build the most important muscle...THE BRAIN!**

Crystal Springs Ranch is offering 2 **Kid's Camp Horse Shows** (limited to Campers only) on *Thursday, July 13th* and *Thursday Aug. 17th*. For more information and Camp sign- up call **Kathy Weiss at 970-963-1505, or email kathy@crystalspringsranch.co** .