

# LANARK COUNTY

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## Therapeutic Riding Program

### TR Heroes

August 2019

*Featuring the People and Horses Who Make a Difference*



“Riding my horse makes all my sad and bad emotions go away and helps me forget my troubles. I always leave my lesson with a smile,” says Ailish.

Ailish has been riding with the Lanark County Therapeutic Riding program for 15 years and through it all her mom Julie has been one of the program’s strongest supporters. Ailish and Julie are August’s TR Heroes.

“As parents of a child with many exceptionalities, we struggled to see how our daughter could participate in sports or other recreation programs. Then we were introduced to therapeutic riding and all of its benefits,” says Julie. “Riding helps to match

Ailish’s movement to the gait of her horse. Her leg muscles are also stretched and this helps increase her flexibility and forces her to use muscles she doesn’t use as often when she walks.”

Julie says there are also emotional benefits. “I see Ailish’s mood change and her anxiety levels decrease or disappear when she finishes a lesson. That is wonderful to see.”

Ailish can ride most of the program’s horses, but with all of them she has one favourite thing to do. “My favourite thing is trotting! It’s fun and your horse goes fast!” says Ailish. “It works my muscles when I post and it’s a great feeling when you’re trotting.”

In addition to being Ailish’s biggest fan, Julie is a tireless supporter of the TR program. According to Program Administrator Amy Booth: “She fundraises like crazy for us. Programs that she coordinates and in which she participates bring in significant funds and help to keep our program going.”



Julie is pretty humble about her role. She says: “I believe that this program has given us more than we have given it! Trying something new for your special needs child is very important because you never know what they may love or what will help them until you try. The love and support you receive from a horse and all of the wonderful volunteers and staff at therapeutic riding program are like no other! I have made lifelong friends from being a volunteer with this program and I couldn’t imagine what my life would be without it.”

Would you like to see how horses change lives? Please consider volunteering for the program. We will make sure you have the training you need. We can be found at [www.therapeuticriding.ca](http://www.therapeuticriding.ca), on Facebook, and by calling our Program Administrator Amy at 613-257-7121 extension 3238.