

RDA CENTRES:

RDA State Office:	215 Portrush Road, MAYLANDS SA 5069 Phone: 8331 1833 Email: admin@rdasa.org.au
RDA Barossa & Light:	Barossa Pony Club Grounds, Angaston-Nuriootpa Road PO Box 212, GREENOCK SA 5360
RDA Blackwood:	Majors Road, O'HALLORAN HILL Phone: 0466 987 433 (Tues, Wed, Fri)
RDA Jennibrook Farm:	72 Pine Road, WOODCROFT Phone: 8322 4244 Email: rdajbf@tpg.com.au
RDA Mount Barker:	Cnr Daniels and Wellington Roads, WISTOW Phone: 0434 379 277
RDA Mount Gambier:	Sunnybrae Centre, Sunnybrae Road, MOUNT GAMBIER Phone: 8723 0123 Email: rda@hotkey.net.au
RDA Murray Bridge:	1 Coolibah Drive, MURRAY BRIDGE Phone: 8532 3408
RDA Northern Area:	Cnr Ryans & Whites Roads, GLOBE DERBY PARK Phone: 0403 862 438
RDA Port Lincoln:	Ravendale Pony Club, Proper Bay Road, PORT LINCOLN Phone: 8682 4544
RDA Port Pirie:	Anzac Road, PORT PIRIE Phone: 8633 1646
RDA Riverland:	Berri Racecourse, Moritz Road, BERRI Email: riverland@rdasa.org.au
RDA Victor Harbor:	Victor Harbor Riding Club Grounds, Bacchus Road PO Box 914 VICTOR HARBOR SA 5211
RDA Whyalla:	Racecourse Road, WHYALLA NORRIE Phone: 8644 1310 Email: rdawhyalla@hotkey.net.au
RDA Yorke Peninsula:	Kadina Equestrian Centre, Wallaroo Road, KADINA PO Box 589 KADINA SA 5554



DOWN SYNDROME

RDA SA DISABILITY FACT SHEET

• What is Down Syndrome?

- Down Syndrome is a congenital condition that includes a degree of intellectual disability and unique physical characteristics:
 - Small almond-shaped eyes
 - Small ears
 - Large tongue
 - Short neck and flat back of head
 - Short stubby limbs and digits
- Down Syndrome is caused by a chromosomal abnormality resulting in an extra chromosome, generally in the 21st pair.
- One child in every 800 live births is born with Down Syndrome.

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SYMPTOM	RDA BENEFIT
Low muscle tone	Muscles are strengthened by the increased use involved in riding. Exercise improves respiration and circulation.
Intellectual Disability	Shapes, colours, counting, sequencing, pattern recognition and problem solving are taught through games and activities on horseback.
Hearing & Vision Impairments	Improved visual spatial perception including directionality (knowing left from right), space perception (knowing when items are close in shape but different)
Poor fitness	Trotting and cantering increase both respiration and circulation
Difficulty with fine motor coordination	Riding a horse requires a great deal of coordination in order to get the desired response from the horse. Since the horse provides instant feedback to every action from the rider, it is easy for a rider to know when they have given a correct cue. Repetition of patterned movements required in controlling a horse quickens reflexes and aids in motor planning.
Concentration	Programs include educational concepts, learning numbers, colours, shapes, patterns and sequencing. Memory and concentration can be improved through playing games.
Social isolation	Group lessons provide riders with the opportunity to join in with their peers and develop friendships

Contra-indicators for Down Syndrome:

Instability in the atlanto-axial joint of the neck

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Matthew's Story

Matthew Woods rides high at Riding for the Disabled Northern Area centre on RDA pony "Midge", supported by volunteers Ed, Tony and Ian.

"RDA is without doubt the best thing we have organised for Matthew," says his mum Ronni.

Matthew Woods has a severe form of epilepsy, as well as Down Syndrome.

He started riding with RDA Northern Area when he was four. When he began riding, he could not sit unsupported due to extremely low muscle tone, and would only tolerate being on a horse for five minutes.

With the persistence of a handful of volunteers Matthew gradually extended the time he spent on a pony.

His giggles of delight make everyone smile. After four years, he proudly sits bolt upright without support. Matthew shows pleasure when we talk about riding on "his horse", and gives his pony Midge an unprompted gentle "thank you" pat on the nose after his ride each Wednesday.

