

Frequently Asked Questions

Dressage4Kids

Winter Intensive Training

What is the WIT program?

The Winter Intensive Training (WIT) Program is a rare opportunity for aspiring riders, ages 25 and under (using actual birthdate), who are committed to being the best they can be. This program, as its name suggests, is intense and takes determination, drive and passion. The program runs January through March in Wellington, Florida.



What's in a Name?

It is important that potential applicants understand that the WIT program is very well known, especially by the international gathering wintering in Wellington. Lendon Gray, founder of Dressage4Kids, has established a renowned reputation of assembling a fantastic group of youth riders for this program. The WIT name is recognized, the WIT logo is recognized, and strangers will stop and talk to you about the program. The WIT program has opened countless doors for riders to pursue their passion with some of the top professionals in our sport. It is a privilege to be a participant. You have a responsibility to yourself and to Dressage4Kids to represent both yourself and the organization with pride and respect. You are an extension of decades of dedication to make these opportunities available. There will be no tolerance for inappropriate behavior that reflects badly on Dressage4Kids.

More than 50%

*of WITees return to Florida
as working students, to train, and compete.*



Where is the program?

The 2026 WIT program will take place in Wellington, Florida at Top Meadow Farm located at 5851 140th Ave S, Wellington, FL 33449. Any correspondence with the facility should go through Lendon Gray, please do not contact the facility directly.



Who can participate in WIT?

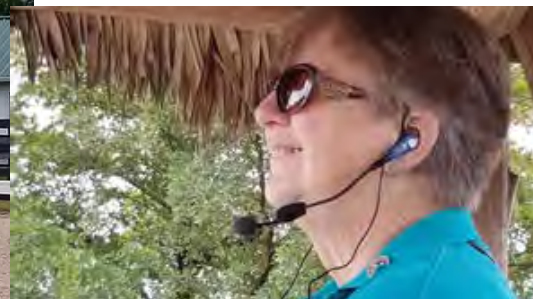
Any rider age 25 and under may apply. It does not matter how much experience you have, at what level you're currently riding, or the horse you have. Dedication, passion and discipline are major factors in the participant selection process. Participants should fully expect to be held to very high standards of character and professionalism.





Who are the trainers?

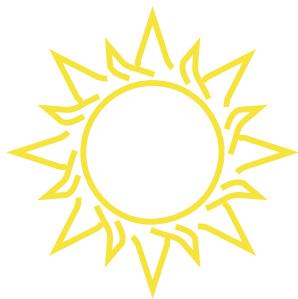
Two-time Olympian Lendon Gray is the main instructor of the program. The goal of the Winter Intensive Training Program is to give opportunities for youth riders to participate in consistent and extensive training; not only in the saddle, but in all areas of horse care, riding and training theory, and competition skills. Often times throughout the program, you may have the option to ride with a guest trainer.



What are the amenities at the stables?

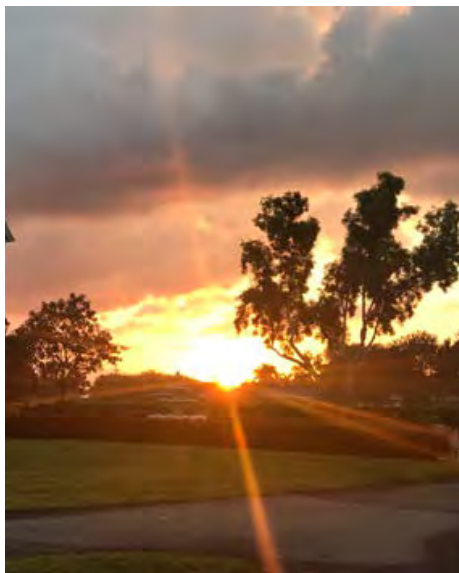
The WIT program utilizes a beautiful facility on 15.5 acres that features a 215'x115' covered arena with mirrors and a 300'x140' outdoor arena, a four horse walker, round pen, fenced paddocks, wash racks, and large matted stalls complete with fans and fly spray system. WIT will have private tack rooms, feed room and access to a full bath and laundry. Both arenas are impeccably groomed with professional grade GGT footing and both offer plenty of space to watch lessons under cover. There is limited on-site trailer parking for the WIT program participants. Please check with D4K in advance for availability and possible fees.





What is a typical day like?

The program starts at 7:00 a.m. with basic stable chores. Each rider must take care of his or her own horse as well as help with maintaining the facility where the program is held. Lesson times are posted the day prior, riders can sign up for their desired lesson times in advance. Days vary with private lessons, semi-privates or group lessons. Everyone should plan to watch as many lessons as possible with a journal in hand for note taking. Lendon encourages and will answer questions from spectators during lessons.



Participants will have a full schedule of learning that includes required reading, theory, written and verbal tests, riding lessons, field trips and lectures on many pertinent subjects. Fitness will be held in the afternoon followed by P.M. chores. Your day at the stables will end around 4:30 p.m. There may be some evening activities where participants will leave straight from the stables after P.M. chores. Evenings may include off-site lectures, competitions to watch, or volunteer activities. Notice will be given to allow for a change of clothes or required matching shirts.

IN 2025:

70% of NAYC competitors are D4K participants



More than over 50% of FoC competitors in the youth classes are D4K participants



What is a typical week like?

A typical week includes five days of lessons, one day for riders to hack on their own (or give their horse another day off), and one “day off”. Supervised night checks are typically organized in teams of two, so expect to return at least once a week at night.

The “day off” usually falls on Monday. Monday is also when you can expect more than usual activity at the farm with regard to landscape work, trash removal, manure removal, deliveries, and maintenance. It is also a popular day to schedule your farrier, vet, or chiropractor appointments. Plan to turn your horse out, hand walk, graze, etc., but do not ride your horse. Horses are working very hard in the program and one day off is required unless you discuss otherwise with Lendon.

This “day off” is for your horse, as YOU are still expected to take care of your horse and complete stable chores. Riders often pair up so one does the A.M. chores for two horses and the other does P.M. chores-- this frees up a half day. All such arrangements must be approved by your stable manager.

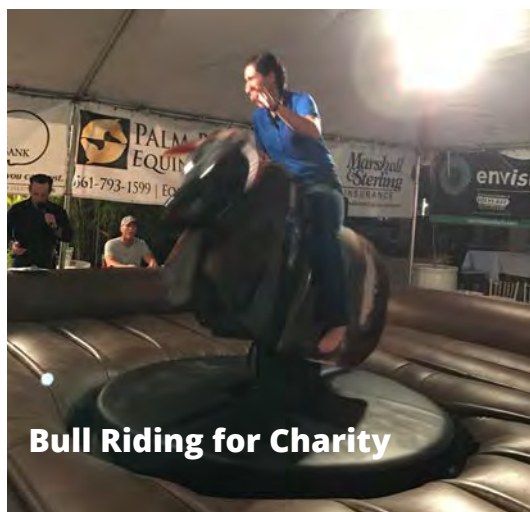


What else will I have to do?

Here are a few things you might not expect. Participants will be required to interview someone from the horse world. The interview is usually a sit down, one-on-one, private meeting lasting up to an hour. If a personal meeting is not possible, by phone or FaceTime/Zoom is arranged. You will need to take notes and write up the interview to share with the group. With permission, you may record the interview. Posting any portion of this interview, whether video or written is prohibited without written permission from Lendon. Please check with Lendon regarding social media policies. Posting a photo may be acceptable with permission from your interviewee. All participants are also required to give a presentation to the group on a topic of their choice, with a Q&A session. You will also have regular written tests, sometimes on non-horse related topics such as current events. You will have required reading for tests. You will also be tested on general horse knowledge and skills, such as mounting from the ground, or changing hands with your whip or citing the number of beats in each gait. Cleaning the bathroom, watering plants, and raking the sides of the arena may also be expected.



Shavings Mannequin Challenge



Bull Riding for Charity



Polo Outing

Each year presents different opportunities for WIT participants. But, there is always something fun in store.

D4K PARTICIPANTS HIGHLIGHTS

50% OF THE EUROPEAN YOUNG RIDER TOUR SINCE 2015
OVER 80 CHAMPION AND RESERVE INDIVIDUAL PLACINGS AT NAYC AND FOC



Laura Graves at Friday Night Freestyles



Photo Shoots



Examples

Lectures that cover:

- Human first aid
- Stretches you can do with your horse
- The life of an international groom
- Special care of the horse in Florida
- Lunging
- How the Training Scale relates to your training
- Various leaders of fitness (yoga, pilates, equibody)
- Evaluating conformation
- Saddle fit
- Bit Fitting
- Practice judging
- How I got to the Olympics
- Sports Psychology
- Young entrepreneurs

What other activities does the program offer?

Beyond lessons, lectures, and fitness at the stables, participants are exposed to a plethora of other opportunities. Some of these activities will be mandatory/strongly suggested, some will be optional, and others will be more social in nature. These include: schooling shows on-site, visiting the facilities of top riders and trainers, auditing off-site clinics, attending evening lectures, conferences, sponsor-hosted parties, volunteering at equestrian related events, helping in advance with event planning and set-up, and more. Wellington is known as the Winter Equestrian Capital of the World. You are minutes away from Dressage, Polo and Jumping events during the three months. You are welcome to take advantage of some of these activities during your personal time.



Speakers have included:

- Christian Simonson
- Betsy Juliano
- Lauren Sammis

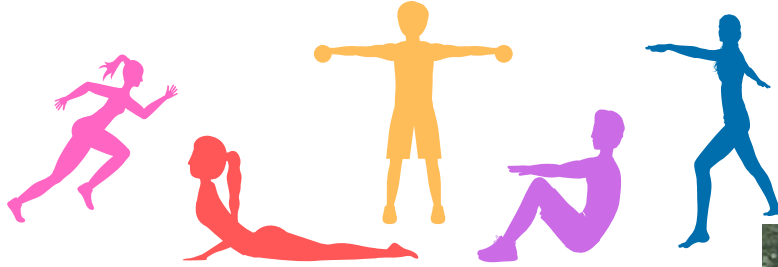
Field Trips have included:

- Ali Brock
- Endel Ots
- Olivia LaGoy Weltz
- Robert Dover
- Vitor Silva
- JJ Tate
- Sarah Tubman
- Adrienne Lyle



Is the fitness portion of the program optional?

Fitness is required. All participants are expected to take part in physical fitness programs, even if they choose to do additional workouts outside of the WIT program. Exceptions are made if there are medical or health reasons that prohibit safe involvement. Any concerns should be handled confidentially with Lendon to determine the best plan. Fitness might include yoga, Pilates, running, swimming, weight-lifting, general aerobic training, as well as coordination and balance exercises.



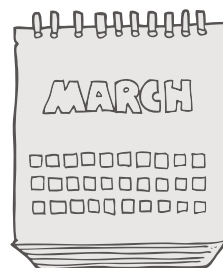
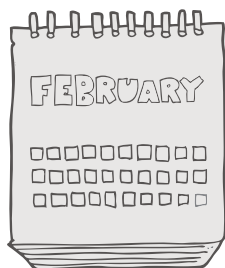
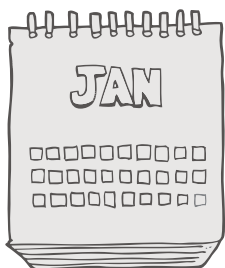
Do participants get days off?

The real answer here is “No”. Horses get at least one day off a week, usually Monday (your hack day can also be substituted as an additional day off). Participants are still required to provide all care. There may also be more time consuming chores scheduled on Mondays, i.e., major clean outs of the feed room, refrigerator, paddocks, etc.

Each year the program is run slightly differently. There may be opportunity to split shifts or share chores in order to get more of a real “day off”. Riders often pair up so one does the A.M. chores for two horses and the other does P.M. chores. All of this will be addressed at the start of the program.



Even in the best-case scenario, you can expect to sleep in maybe two Mondays a month.



Do I have to do the entire three months?

You may attend for a shorter amount of time only if stabling permits. This is coordinated on a case-by-case basis after full program participants are booked. Preference is given to riders who stay three months. Please inquire.



Do I need to bring my own horse?

Yes, horses are not provided for the program. If you are looking to lease a horse specifically for the program, please contact D4K in advance to discuss feasibility. Historically, these short-term leases have posed some complications. If you have a long-term lease, you are responsible for showing proper documentation that the horse is permitted to participate and travel and board at Top Meadow Farm or current facility.

Can I change horses during the program?

Ideally the program is designed to provide three months of consistent training on the same horse so that you can assess, set goals, create a plan, and experience progress. If you have a multiple horse question, please ask in advance of submitting your application so that fit and feasibility can be determined.

Will D4K Ship my horse?

No, D4K does not get involved with horse shipping. We may be able to refer you to a shipper. The participants will be able to contact each other in advance and determine if there is an opportunity to use the same shipper or share rides. You are responsible for the arrival and departure of your horse based on parameters provided by D4K. You should plan on being there, night or day, to meet your shipper. You will be given the gate code if needed for entry. There may be special instructions if you are shipping with a tractor trailer. Please be sure you communicate the type of vehicle in advance.





Does D4K provide housing?

No, D4K does not assist with housing. In the past, participants and their parent/guardian have shared housing with other participants. This can certainly help with rotating adult supervision/chaperones, the costs, as well as car pooling/transportation. You are fully responsible for any and all arrangements. D4K assumes no liability with regard to personal living situations.

The Village of Wellington is the immediate area near our host stable Top Meadow Farm. Surrounding towns (Loxahatchee, Royal Palm) are also about a 20-minute drive. Rentals can be found online at VRBO, Zillow, Realtor.com, AirBnB, and other similar sites. There are also several Facebook groups geared to seasonal rentals. Many homes offer a private bedroom rental with shared amenities. Realtors in the area are also very accustomed to sourcing seasonal housing. We encourage you to be diligent about these decisions and ask for references. D4K does not assume any responsibility for housing issues, nor can we refund your money if housing does not work out as planned.

Rental fees within Wellington can range dramatically based on the housing details. Be prepared to see rates for a private room that shares a bath and other house amenities to start at approximately \$1,000 per month. A two bedroom/two bath type condo \$3,800 and up per month. Homes with 3 bedrooms, 3 baths, and pool for \$6,000 and up. These are very rough prices to give an idea, there is no guarantee these prices are available. More luxurious homes with extensive amenities can easily start at \$15,000 per month. Location, access to pool, tennis courts, clubhouse, and if in a gated community all factor into rates.

If you are browsing websites and listings, check for a few important factors: Is the term annual or seasonal? Is there a minimum rental period for seasonal? Is the rental furnished? Are there parking restrictions, i.e. dually trucks. What is the cancellation policy?





How do I apply?

The application can be found on the Dressage4Kids website (www.dressage4kids.org) or by clicking [HERE](#)

When is the deadline for applications?

You may submit your application and video at any time. Participants are typically announced in mid-summer. Keep in mind the timing with regard to which winter session you are hoping to attend.

What do fees cover?

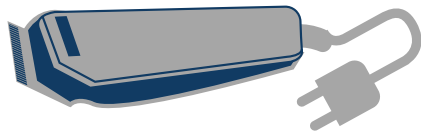
Program fees include your stall, hay, minimal amount of shavings, lessons, coaching at competitions and stable management supervision. Fees vary based on current costs and stable fees. It does not include items such as horse's grain, vet, farrier, transport, show fees, supplements and your living and food expenses. If you would like the current fees or an idea of future fees, please inquire by email graydressage@gmail.com

Visit www.dressage4kids.org
for the most up-to-date information.



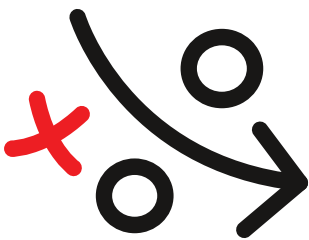
Should I clip my horse?

Yes, horses typically arrive already clipped. And, will often require another clipping during the program. If this is first time shipping across such drastic climate change, please talk with your shipper about how to dress your horse for the trip. Horses that originate in the cold areas and are already clipped will start with a blanket of some sort. The shipper will need to take off layers as the temperatures rise along the route. Be sure to discuss the best approach with all parties involved.



What if something happens and I can't come? (My horse is injured, I am injured/not able to ride, etc.)

Please contact D4K immediately to discuss your situation. Refund decisions are made based on each individual circumstance and often times if a replacement participant can be found.



What if something happens *during* the program and I can't ride? (My horse is injured, I am injured/not able to ride, etc.)

Lendon will do her best to help you continue in some fashion with the program. Sourcing another horse, sending your horse home, moving your horse elsewhere for continued care by you, allowing another rider to work your horse, etc. are all options under consideration for discussion. Lendon and the D4K team have experience with many unexpected situations and always handle with the utmost professionalism and empathy. Keep in mind that a tremendous amount can be gained from auditing lessons and attending lectures. You are expected to be present and involved to the best of your ability. And while there are many resources available though the D4K network, remember all expenses are your responsibility.



Will I be able to show/compete during the program?

Yes, well... maybe. We encourage you to make decisions about competing in conjunction with your training progress. If you want to show, there are several local schooling and recognized shows as well as CDIs during the season. Entering as a non-compete is also an option if you want to expose your horse to the showgrounds and school without showing in any classes. You will be responsible for your entries, expenses, and any trailering needed to the show. Most of the time another participant will have a trailer locally and may be willing to help. Lendon is also available to coach, you must coordinate the specifics with her and her schedule.

If you are hoping to compete at a recognized show, please be sure everything is in order with regard to your USDF and USEF numbers/memberships as well as any SafeSport requirements. Keep in mind, registered owners of the horse must also complete required SafeSport training. For details, visit the USDF and USEF websites.



**We suggest
you pack your
show clothes.**



Is showing required?

No, it is completely optional. Many choose to focus on the training and the program and forego showing until they return home. Schooling shows will be offered as part of your program fees. Judges will visit our stable and WIT will hold a private schooling show, typically a few times during the program. Your decision to show, and at which level, will be discussed with Lendon in advance. Riders are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity. Ribbons may or may not be presented but you can usually count on some fun prizes. All riders get a signed copy of their test to keep and review during lessons.



What should I do about school?

Participants and their families are responsible for all facets of continuing necessary schoolwork. Numerous tutoring services are available in Wellington and can be easily coordinated as needed. Off-site tutoring is often scheduled for Mondays. Dressage4Kids is not responsible for supervising schoolwork in any fashion. D4K will, however, provide you with a note verifying your involvement in the program. These details should be worked out on a case-by-case basis and be sure to give plenty of notice if you require any formal documentation. Schoolwork is a priority. Lendon and Dressage4Kids supports the importance of maintaining grades while in the WIT program. It is the participant's responsibility to plan around the WIT activities. If for some reason your schoolwork requires you to miss a lesson or activity, you must inform Lendon personally of the situation. Excused absences are possible, but not encouraged.



Can I do homework at the stables?

Yes, any free time you have during the day can be used to do some schoolwork at the stables. Keep in mind, you will need to adapt to your surroundings. Often times, older participants will aid younger participants if tutoring help is desired.



**D4K riders at the 2023
Festival of Champions, Lamplight, Illinois**

**The D4K family included 35
competitors at the 2020
Festival of Champions and
Dressage Seat Medal Finals**

12 WITees represented their Regions on the Junior and Young Rider Teams
at the 2019 North American Youth Championships

What should I expect as a parent (adult guardian)?

This will vary greatly based on the age and personality of your rider. And, based on the amount of time you will be in the area. If you are the primary source of transportation, you should expect to drop off in the morning and pick up in the afternoon. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to watch lessons. This may mean returning back to the stables midday at lesson time (for a total of three round trips per day).

Parents/guardians are discouraged from “hanging out” at the stables and lingering in the aisles, etc. during the day. Specific rules will be announced at the start of the program. Parents are also welcomed to attend the majority of lectures and off-site activities. Parents are not permitted to help with the daily responsibilities of the participants with regard to chores, horse care, etc.

The program is intended for the participants to fully immerse themselves in the day-to-day routines of ownership and care, irrespective of what your routine at home may be. Obviously exceptions are made for things the rider is not capable of or physically able to do, however, it is encouraged that they seek assistance and rely on fellow participants whenever possible instead of a parent. You may also expect to play a much greater role in your child's schoolwork. Checking in that assignments are completed, maintaining any required communication (verbal and written) with the school/teachers, and ensuring supplies are always stocked in terms of feed, supplements, fly spray, etc.

The schedule will be very busy—you may also need to help keep your rider on time and organized with regard to activities. And, while it seems basic, perhaps some of the most important things parents do for riders of all ages is ensure they are eating regularly, getting the necessary nutrition, drinking plenty of fluids, and getting as much sleep as possible so they are rested.





What is Wellington like?

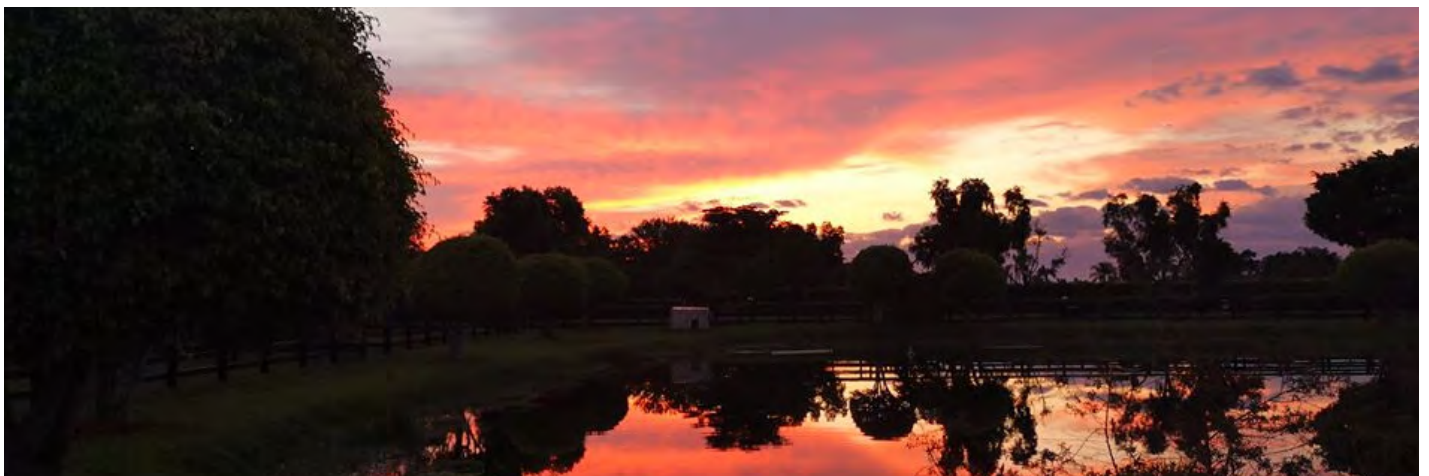


The first response here is usually “expensive”, but of course it depends on your normal. It’s not unusual to see your favorite brand bacon for \$12 a pack, and butter for \$6 a pound, cheese for close to \$8 per pound. Gas will be at the higher end of the spectrum for national prices. If you were to purchase your own bale of timothy and alfalfa mix it runs close to \$20. Once you get past some of the sticker shock, it is an area synonymous with equestrian life.

Wellington is technically a village, about 25 minutes west of West Palm Beach. It is a year round home to many people but is best known for the seasonal population who come from all over the world to train and compete in dressage, polo, and jumping. Wellington has an abundance of traditional retail chain stores and restaurants, as well as several specialty and boutique businesses and services. It also offers a vast variety of restaurants.



Within Wellington and the immediate surrounding area, you will find many feed stores and tack stores as well. We have rarely heard of anything that was not available to our participants within the immediate vicinity of our stable. However, we encourage to check in advance if your specific feed/grain is available locally. The Village is also a very easy 20-minute drive to public beaches.

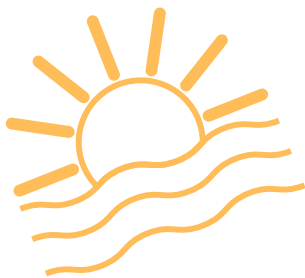


What's the weather?

January through March in Wellington is typically the best weather of the year. Cloud cover is minimum with daily highs in the mid-high 70's F and nights in the mid-high 50's F. This does not mean it doesn't get chilly. Parkas and "puffy coats" are needed at least a few times due to cold and windy conditions. The cooler evening can feel particularly cold if you like to be warm and especially if you have been in the sun all day. The days can also



get to the mid 80's and feel quite hot by the end of the program. Most sessions are fairly dry, but there have been a few very rainy and wet ones. Rain gear for rider (and possibly horse) should be available. The UV rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes, even with cloud cover. The UV index in Florida during the session may be much higher than what you are accustomed to at home. Be sure to cover up and use proper sunscreen for protection. Sunglasses, hats, long sleeve sun shirts, etc. are all encouraged for sun safety. Lessons continue rain or shine. Lessons will be canceled or delayed if dangerous conditions exist such as lightning or heavy wind and rains.



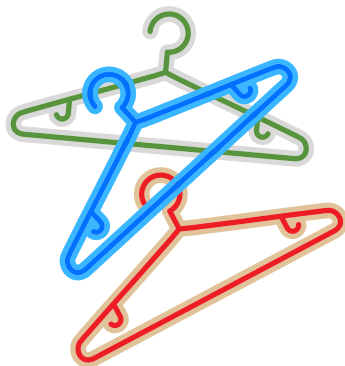
**Nearly
50%**

*of the Discover Dressage USEF/USDF Emerging Athlete
Program Members have been WIT participants*

Can my trainer come?

Trainers are welcome to visit the program. We do ask that you give a courtesy heads up to Lendon and the stable manager so we know who to expect on the property and when. If you want to receive instruction from your regular trainer during the program, please see Lendon for details and permission waivers.





What should I wear?

Proper helmet, breeches, belt, collared shirt, and hair neatly pulled back or in a bun is required for your lessons. There may also be a specific dress code for events, such as matching D4K shirts (provided at the session). Proper clothing for daily fitness is also required—traditional exercise attire, proper sneakers, etc. When you are not riding, and there is no required dress code for a lecture or event, you may change into casual clothes (or your earlier fitness outfit) around the stables. Under NO circumstances will open toed shoes, sandals or inappropriate footwear be tolerated in the stables or while handling horses. Safety is a number one priority.



What should I bring for my horse?

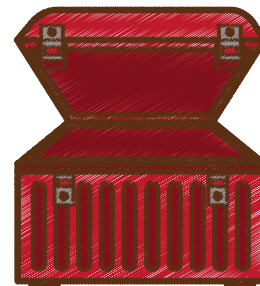
A fairly comprehensive lists of things to consider while packing will be provided. However, requirements can vary greatly by horse. You should know, or find out, what your horse needs to be comfortable on a daily basis in full work. For certain you should have a fly sheet, fly mask, and fly spray. Your usual supplies for turnout boots, bell boots, etc. Liniment, bathing supplies, and any medication/first aid items you keep on hand. It often gets cool at least a few nights, so it is recommended that you bring a Back on Track or whatever you would use for temperatures in the high 40's. Keep in mind your horse will be clipped. Since storage space is at a premium, consider acquiring some items locally as needed versus a three month stockpile.

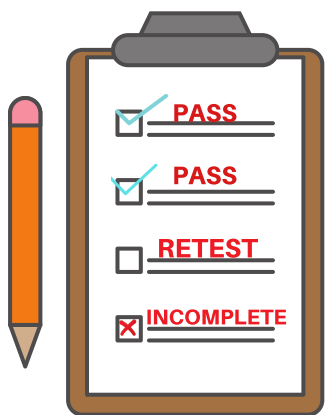


Where will I store all my supplies at the stables?

The setup is organized and run by the stable manager for that session. The stable manager will announce guidelines and rules (approved by D4K) that she/he feels will create a successful environment. In general, participants should expect to set up very similar to stabling at an away show. Keep in mind, storage space is limited. You can utilize space in front of your stall for your trunk, but no personal trunks are permitted in the center aisle. An out building with cover will be utilized for shavings. These may be bulk or bagged. WIT will also have use of two private climate controlled tack rooms. There is one room dedicated to feed and supplements. You may be asked to use a specific size/shape container for your feed. It is recommended that any stall front trunk or storage container is water tight if contents are required to stay dry. All stalls are matted, have a fan, fly spray system, and water source. You should not plan to hang your own fan unless your horse has some special medical requirements. Personal fans must be approved in advance. Stay tuned for specifics from your stable manager as space is assessed and needs are reviewed. You will receive instructions on how to plan and what to pack. If you have approved parking for your trailer on-site, keep in mind you can also utilize this space for storage.

Please label your stuff!



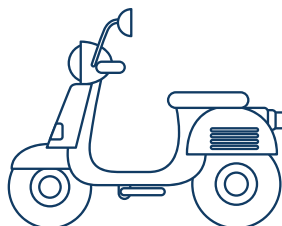


Do I need to worry about “failing out”?

The WIT program is a very supportive environment. Riders will vary in ages and level of riding. While there will be regular testing to ensure you are absorbing the material, both on and off the horse, you can't necessarily “fail”. You must show a commitment and continuous effort to improve. If you choose not to participate as required, or show disregard for the testing, or become complacent/disruptive, or exhibit unacceptable behavior, or create a dangerous situation, it is possible that you will be asked to leave the program.

Do I need my own transportation?

Yes, you need your own car or your own transportation. Since ages vary in the program, many participants will not be of driving age, or may have a license with restrictions. If you are not old enough to drive, you should plan ahead for all your basic transportation, especially if you do not have a full-time parent with you. This includes getting to the stables in the morning, getting back home, and getting to night check at least once a week. Also keep in the mind the need to get groceries, shopping, tack/feed store, and other transportation necessities.

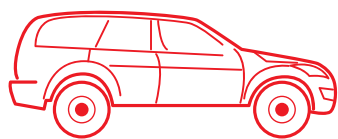


Should I bring my bike?

Yes, if you like to ride your bike. You may also keep a bike at the stables for use as your daily transportation if close enough to your house. We recommend you have a lock to secure when away from the stables.



Please message Lendon privately if you have any allergies, medical concerns, or medication requirements.



If you have a license and a car and are permitted to drive others/minors, your help with group day trips is always appreciated. Sometimes we also ask for parent volunteers to drive. Carpooling to evening activities may also be needed from time to time.

What should I do about meals?

Participants are responsible for all of their own meals. Plan to bring your lunch each day. The stable has a refrigerator and microwave. Feel free to bring snacks and drinks. Please label everything and keep your belongings neat and tidy. Since the facility is gated, you should meet any food delivery at the gate- do not share your gate code. We encourage the use of reusable water bottles and electrolytes for hydration.



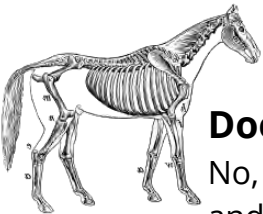
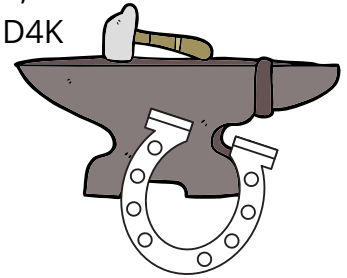


Does D4K have their own veterinarian?

No, participants are required to source a vet, schedule, and pay for services in accordance with payment terms. D4K can help with names and numbers of local veterinarians. Participants can also ask for referrals from past WITees.

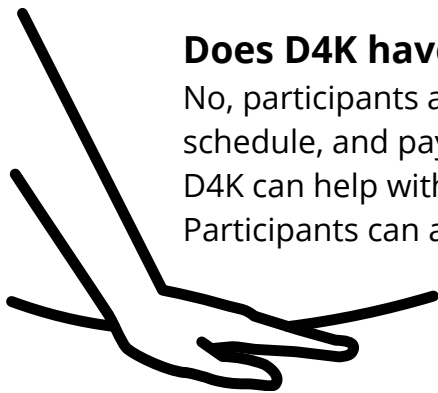
Does D4K have their own farrier?

No, participants are required to source a farrier, schedule, and pay for services in accordance with payment terms. D4K can help with names and numbers of local farriers. Participants can also ask for referrals from past WITees.



Does D4K have their own equine chiropractor?

No, participants are required to source a chiropractor, schedule, and pay for services in accordance with payment terms. D4K can help with names and numbers of local chiropractors. Participants can also ask for referrals from past WITees.



Does D4K have their own equine massage therapist?

No, participants are required to source a massage therapist, schedule, and pay for services in accordance with payment terms. D4K can help with names and numbers of local therapists. Participants can also ask for referrals from past WITees.

Instructions will come from D4K requiring any necessary paperwork for your horse to enter the facility- coggins, proof of vaccines, etc. Please plan ahead.

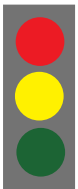


The Wellington area boasts some of the top equine professionals and facilities in the country. Search online to become better familiar with the available services before you arrive.



HELPFUL HINTS

- Florida has very strict laws about **horses crossing into the state**. A Health Certificate is required. Be sure to talk with your veterinarian well in advance about necessary documentation and to ensure your horse is up to date on required vaccines.
- Contact your **school** as soon as possible to see if they are willing to work with you regarding an extended absence. 
- When searching for **housing**, note that many online listings are for annual leases and are NOT furnished. Pay close attention to the minimum rental period. You may have to call to get these specific details.
- Consensus over the years suggests that **staying within a 15-minute drive** to the stable is ideal. This also puts you in close proximity to the dressage and jumper showgrounds. This is recommended so that your daily drive to drop off/pick up and watch lessons is more manageable. The drive time to evening activities (almost always within the Wellington area) will also be minimal. This also allows more time to: run back and shower/change, grab the forgotten lunch, deliver the correct polo shirt for the field trip, and be in the vicinity when riders meet up for ice cream, a movies, or other things on personal time. This is just a suggestion.
- **Driving conditions**- There will be delays during school hours for crossing guards, buses, and school line pick up and drop off areas. The area drivers can be a bit precarious at times. The village has thousands of drivers descend on the roads from all over the world. Driving style and competencies vary greatly. It is a good idea to be a very alert driver and accustomed to being extremely conscious of your surroundings.
- Check with your **horse insurance** carrier regarding the extended stay off of your primary property and coverage impact. You may also want to explore liability insurance.
- The damp ground and humidity can pose **unique challenges** for horses, particularly their feet and legs. Instruction will be given early on during the program advising riders what to look for, how to protect, and how to treat some common conditions in the Florida climate.
- To take advantage of all that WIT has to offer, you will be best served if your horse and you are in **fit condition**. Horses should be ready to work 5 days a week. You should be fit to ride 6 days a week and participate in daily fitness classes (tailored to each person's ability).
- This is a **very hands-on program** where everyone is expected to share in the chores. If you are not accustomed to, or feel you should not be required to: sweep, muck, clean, even scrub a toilet, then this might not be the right program for you. 





Summary

Thank you for taking the time to explore the Dressage4Kids Winter Intensive Training Program. It's impossible to cover every aspect of the program and all the potential questions in one place. This document was created as a guide and hopefully answers many of your questions--those you had and those you didn't even think of. We encourage you to talk with our WIT alumni and their parents or guardians to get a better sense of this fantastic experience. Just ask and we can put you in touch.



How has WIT delivered over its 10-year history? Participants have enjoyed:

- meeting Olympians and holding their Olympic medal
- interviewing some of our most high profile riders, trainers, and judges
- learning ringside with an FEI judge
- getting pointers from the 'go to' Grand Prix freestyle master
- expanding their overall knowledge of proper horse care
- making significant progress with their training.

The specifics of each session varies but you can count on D4K and its supporters to go above and beyond for these enthusiastic, passionate young riders.



Each session concludes with a dinner celebration where participants are presented with their certificates...but things never end there. The program creates friendships that last for life. Our WITees from coast to coast are still in touch and meeting up whenever possible. Each session also features an Alumni dinner party hosted in Wellington by Lendon for any past WITees who can attend. Everyone gives an informal update of what they are doing and many rounds of applause ring out for the successes over the past year. We hope you will consider being part of this incredible community.

This amazing opportunity is available thanks to the dedication of Lendon Gray and the entire Dressage4Kids team of volunteers and supporters.



What WIT Alumni say about the program...



Alexa Derr

"The WIT program was truly life changing. It kickstarted my career as a young professional; it gave me the foundation to my training and horse management system; it helped me develop lifelong mentorships and friendships; but, most importantly, it taught me the value of persistently working hard for my dreams. I wouldn't be where I am or who I am without this program."

WIT Participant 2013



PC: Dawn Maurer Derr



Ali Perkins-LaTorre

"WIT exposed me to a whole different world of dressage that sparked my passion and drive to ride to Grand Prix. The best part of the program is the connections that you make with professionals, other young riders, and most importantly, the horses!"

Participant 2013 & 2014
Assistant 2015
Stable Manager 2018



Caroline Cadorette

"The WIT program is an experience I will forever treasure and draw on; its unique educational opportunities broadened my horizons and bestowed knowledge that changed my world. I carry these lessons along my journey, wherever it takes me.

The friendships built are made to last a lifetime, and I am grateful beyond measure for all that my WIT years have brought into my life."

WIT Participant 2020 & 2021



Photo: [unintelligible]



Emma Teff

"WIT was truly an experience like no other that I will always be grateful. I grew as a person and horseman and met incredible people. WIT prepared me for competitions, clinics, and even going off to college."

WIT Participant 2019



Hayley Baker

"I learned so much about riding/training, equine nutrition, and how to develop a successful career in this sport during my time with Lendon. WIT is an amazing experience, and I can't recommend it enough to young riders wanting to further their education!"

WIT Participant 2019



Eros, owned by Maggie Tift



Katrina Sadis

"WIT was probably the most valuable experience I had as a young rider. Besides the valuable riding education, I made connections in the industry and lifelong friends."

WIT Participant 2014 & 2015



© 2019 [unintelligible] Photo: [unintelligible]



Kayla Kadlubek

"The WIT program allowed me to be immersed in day-to-day education about all aspects of riding and caring for horses. I have formed lifelong connections with people that share the same passion for horses."

WIT Participant 2016 & 2017



PC: Melissa Fuller, EquiTimes Magazine



Kendall Cox

"The D4K WIT program played a huge role in my development as a rider and propelled my professional career. I have access to incredibly talented horses, enjoy training, competing, and continue to learn every day."

WIT Participant 2017





Kiara Williams-Brown

"WIT gave me the opportunity to learn so much from experts in all aspects of the horse industry, including Lendon herself, and gave me so many valuable connections I will carry with me throughout my career. I would not be where I am today without Lendon and the WIT program."

WIT Participant 2022





Leah Tenney

"The Winter Intensive Training program was easily one of the most influential experiences of my riding career. The program provides excellent instruction, endless opportunities and experiences, and allows you to be a part of a very special community for the rest of your life. I would not be the rider I am today without Lendon Gray and WIT!"

WIT Participant 2017



PC Bethany P. Photography



Olivia Martz

"The D4K WIT program gave me the opportunity to meet people I never would have expected to meet and ride a horse I never would have expected to have. The kind of dressage it exposes you to is mind blowing and the community it creates is so welcoming."

WIT Participant 2022





Phoebe Keliher

"D4K and WIT provide critical support for those who want to reach their dressage goals. In D4K and in WIT hard work is seen and rewarded with opportunities, regardless of how fancy your horse is. Having been a part of D4K for many years, their programs helped set me up to succeed in WIT and take advantage of all opportunities that came available to me."

WIT Participant 2022





Marin Roth

"Lendon Gray and the D4K WIT program opened my eyes to countless educational, competition, and equine employment opportunities. I am forever grateful for the program and for all those who continue to make WIT possible."

WIT Participant 2018



Tessa Holloran

"Training in the WIT program helped me with challenging horses and introduced me to an incredible support system. Thanks to WIT, I have wonderful friends for life. It's an amazing experience that you never forget."

WIT Participant 2017 & 2018



Jessica Gaston

"WIT changed my life's trajectory by opening doors and giving invaluable education and opportunities. I am so thankful for the lasting experience and friendships that the program gave me!"

WIT Participant 2014



Annie Klepper

"I am so incredibly grateful for the WIT program--for the priceless opportunities and knowledge it provided--as well as the unique WIT community and experiences that helped develop me both as an athlete and as a person. The WIT program was the perfect introduction to the difficult-to-navigate world of Wellington and CDI competition, and I owe so much to Lendon Gray and her program for giving me that gift."

WIT Participant 2017 & 2018



Participant Highlights as of 2023

Alexa is a Grand Prix Dressage Trainer & Owner of Vue de Lou Dressage. She is a recipient of D4K donation horse: Versace N. She has her USDF Bronze, Silver and Gold Medals as well as USPC C2 Flat and H-B Certifications. With a B.S. in Business Administration and Marketing from Albright College, Alexa is able to embrace both of her passions: dressage training and industrial/operational business.

Ali is a graduate of the University of Maine at Farmington with degrees in Elementary Education and Art. She is a USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold medalist and USDF Certified First Level instructor. She runs her own training business in North Carolina and was a D4K donation horse recipient. She is also certified and regularly teaches equine-facilitated literacy instruction.

Caroline is a first-year pre-med student at University of Florida; she is originally from Maine and now resides in Wellington, Florida. Caroline competed the YR CDIs in 2021 and 2022 and represented Region 8 at the 2021 North American Youth Championships with her D4K horse, Dustin. She continues to train with Katherine Bateson-Chandler and competes the YRs with her D4K horse, Hilly while continuing her pre-med studies and electrophysiology internship.

Emma is a sophomore Computer Engineering major at Purdue University. She boards her horse, Ugo, near school and makes riding a regular part of her schedule.

Jessica is a professional rider and trainer at her business Majestik Dressage in Ohio. She achieved her USDF Bronze, Silver, and Gold medals on a D4K donated horse.

Katrina graduated with a degree in Marketing from Florida Atlantic University in 2022. She works as a rider for Yeguqda de Ymas in Wellington.

Kayla is a USDF Bronze and Silver medalist and represented Region One four times at NAYC two of which with her D4K donation horse Perfect Step, generously donated by Suzanne Dansby, as well as four trips to Festival of Champions where she was 2017 Reserve Champion Junior Rider and 2019 Champion Young Rider. Kayla was also part of the 2019 Young Rider European tour and USEF Emerging Athlete program. After WIT she trained and worked full-time for Shelly Francis and Olivia LaGoy-Weltz. Kayla is now a full-time student at Northern Virginia Community College pursuing a degree in engineering.

Kendall double majored and graduated from the University of Findlay with degrees in Business and Equine Science. She is a USDF Bronze, Silver and Gold medalist and holds the Large Bronze, Small Bronze, and Silver German training medals. Kendall resides fulltime in Wellington employed by Robert Dover as his assistant with 15 horses in training.

Leah graduated from Endicott College and is a certified Interior Designer with her own business specializing in equine facilities and homes. She spends winters in Wellington and is competing the Small Tour with her horse "Tibi."

Marin is working and riding full-time with the Tubmans at Donato Farms in Wellington, Florida. She is currently competing FEI Juniors on her Zweibrücker gelding that she had as a four-year old in the WIT program. Marin graduated early from high school and is exploring college options.

Phoebe is a working student for Ali Brock.

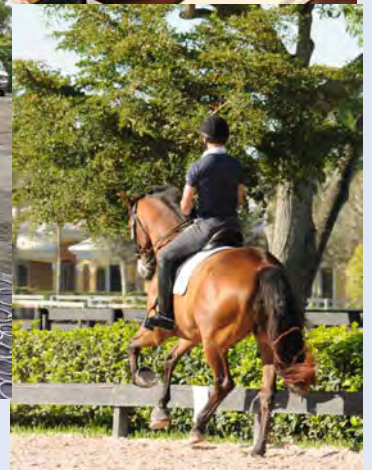
Tessa resides fulltime in Florida and is a Sophomore pursuing a Business Degree at Florida Atlantic University, Boca Raton. This is her fifth season working for and training with Ali Brock in Wellington.

Frequently used addresses:

Top Meadow Farm
5851 140th Ave S
Wellington, FL 33449

Global Dressage Festival
13500 S Shore Blvd.
Wellington, FL 33414

Winter Equestrian Festival
Wellington International
3400 Equestrian Club Drive
Wellington, FL 33414



APPENDIX: RESOURCES

The following resources may be very useful for your WIT evaluation and planning purposes. Please note: Dressage4Kids does not endorse, make any guarantees, nor does it receive any commission (monetary or otherwise) based on your patronage from these sources.

School Resources

Remote learning, tutoring, test proctoring, etc. Please review each one for specific offerings.

Upper Echelon Academy

<https://upperechelonacademy.com>

Kate Bomgaars

(561) 249- 6305

kbomgaars@upperechelonacademy.com

Palm Beach International Academy

<https://pbiafl.com>

Sergio Andre

(786) 280-3023

Horseshow Tutor

<https://www.horseshowtutor.com/wellington-tutoring-services/>

Contact Gina Marie

(561) 795-8868

info@horseshowtutor.com

Laurel Springs School

<https://laurelsprings.com>

Facebook Groups- Housing

These are some suggested groups you could join to explore housing.

- Move to Wellington, Loxahatchee, Royal Palm - Buy - Sell - Rent – Invest
- Loxahatchee, Acreage, Wellington & Royal Palm Beach LOCAL NEWS, BUY AND SELL
- Wellington WEF seasonal stall rentals- you might find some housing here.
- Wellington Loxahatchee Equestrian Classified
- Wellington West Palm Loxahatchee Equestrian Horse Classifieds ONLY

Local Tack Shops, Grain and Feed

(partial list of popular picks)

Tackeria

<http://www.tackeria.com>

Dover Saddlery

<https://www.doversaddlery.com>

11120 S Crown Way

Wellington, FL 33414

Phone: (561) 422-2025

You can order online and ship to this store if you want to order prior to your arrival. Be sure to ask about hold times.

Show Chic

<https://www.showchicdressage.com>

Horse of Course

<https://thehorseofcourse.com/>

Tack n Rider

<https://www.tacknrider.com>

On Course Consignment

Extremely popular place to buy and sell. Particularly good selection during season and as people come and go- they sell items "like new" because they can't travel back with them. Might be worth bringing anything you have to sell while you are here. Very easy process and will mail check to home address if needed.

<https://www.oucourseconsignment.com/>

Grand Prix

<https://sites.google.com/view/grand-prix-feed-supply/home>

Red Barn- in Loxahatchee

<https://redbarn1.com>

Gold Coast

<https://gcfo.coth.com>

British Feed- on the Loxahatchee line

<http://www.britishfeed.com>

**** Be sure to source your grain in advance if you want to keep your horse on the same feed. Check that they carry what you feed or can order enough for your season.**

With the heat and storage constraints, you may not be able to keep a large amount at the stable or in a trailer. A trailer will likely be too damp and hot, so grain will get moldy. Consider if you can store feed bags at your local residence/rental.

Program will supply hay, unless you need something special. That will be your out of pocket expense and responsibility to source.

Local Retailers

Wellington and the surrounding areas offer many favorites. These include: Whole Foods, Trader Joe's, Apple store, major pharmacies, groceries, and numerous restaurants. Also, Walmart, Target, BJ's, Costco, Michaels, Hobby Lobby, Marshalls, TJ Maxx, Best Buy, Dollar Tree. Several Starbucks and Dunkin Donuts.

Gyms

LA Fitness, Crunch, Orange Therapy, Planet Fitness, Cycle Bar. Several private gyms, Pilates and yoga. Several providers cater to equestrian needs. This is a partial list, please google for specifics.

Hotels

The closest hotels to the center of Wellington:

Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott

Wellington
10616 Forest Hill Blvd.
Wellington, FL 33414
Phone: (561) 408-5990

Hampton Inn & Suites Wellington

2155 Wellington Green Drive
Wellington, FL 33414
Phone: (561) 472-9696

Showgrounds

Global Dressage

This is the showgrounds where the dressage shows, CDIs, Friday Night Stars (freestyles) and other events are held on Pierson Rd.

<https://gdf.coth.com/>

Usually free to enter, but you pay for parking.

Wellington International

Commonly referred to as "WEF" This is showgrounds where show jumping is held. Also, hunters, and Saturday Night Lights (jumping). Also on Pierson Rd., at the other end from global.

<https://pbiec.com>

Usually free to enter, but you pay for parking.

Jim Brandon

<https://discover.pbcgov.org/parks/Pages/JimBrandon.aspx>

White Fences

<https://www.whitefencesflorida.com>

The Village of Wellington

Wellington offers an amphitheater, Thursday night food trucks and live music, a Lakeside Market on Fridays.

Activities Schedule:

<https://www.wellingtonfl.gov/603/Amphitheater>

Follow **Wellington Parks & Recreation** on FB for up to date information.

Pool

There is a large town public pool. It's around \$5 for a day pass, or you can buy packages. It's heated. Hours vary by season.

<https://www.wellingtonfl.gov/230/Aquatics-Complex>

Peaceful Waters Sanctuary

This is a wonderful place to walk.

<https://www.wellingtonfl.gov/Facilities/Facility/Details/Peaceful-Waters-Sanctuary-56>

Medical

There are numerous Urgent Care Centers, Walk in Medical Centers, specialty providers, and full-service hospitals with trauma care/ER. Please google the area to explore options and check if your insurance is accepted.

The area is also well populated with vision care and dental offices.