



ADVANCE PHOTOS ■ PAULE SAVIANO

From left, Leslie Bartoletti of Tottenville, Jessica Mucciariello, 10, of Castleton Corners, Lucile Bendik of Rosebank and Vicky McAvoy of Westerleigh soak up the sun during a walk around the ring at Carousel Riding.

Horses

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has cerebral palsy, Keri-Anne Loglisci, 21, of Annadale, who is mentally handicapped; and Jody Imbriale, 33, of Westerleigh, who asked that her handicap not be printed.

And then there is Alan Russo, Damian's brother. Alan, who is 11, also has Down syndrome, as well as fetal alcohol syndrome. But Alan has done so well in riding that he's competing in other categories on Saturday, against kids who aren't disabled. The riding has helped Alan gain a great deal of concentration and release his energy in a positive way, his mother said.

"He loves it," said Alan's mom, Teri. "His whole room is horses. It's just a natural thing — you put him on a pony one day, and that was it."



Alan Russo, 11, of Pleasant Plains looks a little doubtful high atop this horse. No matter, he's got control of the reins and the horse doesn't seem to mind.

His brother overheard this. "Me, can't explain it — it relaxes me. Even brushing the horse does." Alan added.

