

Big Maple Farm's Natural Therapies, Inc

Benefits of Positive Animal Interactions

(Particularly with Equines)

2019



WHAT IS EQUINE ASSISTED THERAPY?

Equine Assisted Therapy encompasses a range of treatments that includes activities with horses and other equines. Activities can be used to promote physical, cognitive, occupational, mental, and emotional growth in an individual.

Who Can Benefit:

Hundreds of medical conditions can benefit from Equine Assisted Therapy Activities. Some can be mild and some can be severe. Some examples are:

ADHD
Learning and Language Development
Sensory Integration Disorders
Autism
Multiple Sclerosis
PTSD
Depression
Cerebral Palsy
Down's Syndrome
Traumatic Brain Injury
And so many more...

Different Types of Equine Assisted Therapy

(Please Note: BMFNT does not engage in all listed activities)

Therapeutic Riding: Uses a team of individuals including an instructor, up to three volunteers (depending on the individual) and the horse.

Hippotherapy: involves a certified occupational therapist, speech/language therapist, or physical therapist working with the individual, volunteers, and horse team presenting different challenges while on the horse to encourage postural responses from the rider.

Equine Assisted learning: learning life skills through equine activities.

Equine Assisted Psychotherapy: does not always involve riding. A team made of a counselor, an equine specialist, the horse (can sometimes be more than one horse), and the individual work together on ground skills while understanding deeper feelings with in themselves.

Interactive Vaulting: involves vaulting in a therapeutic aspect.

Therapeutic Carriage driving: involves driving a horse in a carriage while in a wheelchair.

Equine Assisted Activities: Includes all other equine activities such as grooming, stable management, shows, parades, demonstrations, and many others.

Benefits One Might Receive

*Coordination Skills

*Strength Building

*Balance Changes

*Psychological Changes (individuals with anxiety, depression, PTSD, Stress Disorder, Bipolar, etc have all been known to have positive effects with equines)

*Visual Experiences (coming to a barn is new for individuals, sitting on top of a horse creates a new visual experience)



*Auditory Experiences (Participants may become more aware of the sounds in the barn and of their “horse” and that experience outside of the barn)

*Vocabulary Changes

*Life Skills: Stop, go, Feeding meals, various textures, brush strokes, spatial awareness, etc.

How the Horse Helps

*A horse has a rhythmic gait that when they walk. Their gait mimics a human’s. So for a child or adult who has been in a wheelchair this is an extraordinary feeling of walking for them. Riders improve strength, balance, posture, flexibility, motor skills, and sensory communication.

*Horses also use body language to communicate with the rider or individual on the ground. As a prey animal, horses can display many emotions as well. This is how individuals with Stress Disorder, Bipolar, Anxiety, depression, etc. begin to learn to read their own body language. They learn to read the horse and then they can learn to apply it outside the barn.

*Horses like repetition, tolerate mistakes, and respond to correct cues, which helps improve humans’ self-confidence and well-being.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR QUESTIONS REGARDING OUR PROGRAMMING OR THE BENEFITS, PLEASE CONTACT BMFNT AT 814-387-3571 TO SET UP AN INDIVIDUALIZED APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS YOUR NEEDS. THANK YOU.

Big Maple Farm’s Natural Therapies Inc. provides individuals and the community the opportunity to enhance their independence and quality of life through positive animal interactions and therapeutic horticulture.

BMFNT

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