

HEALTH



HOLISTIC EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING – THERAPEUTIC HORSEMANSHIP





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Jeffrey Rumpf
Executive Director



Liz Fortes
Program Director

About us

Jeffrey Rumpf, Executive Director at Pegasus

Jeff has Award-winning experience in organizational growth and strategic planning. MSED in Experiential learning and counseling, founder and Executive Director YMCA Camp Combe experiential learning center. Founder and Executive Director for Catholic Charities Little Heroes Camps for 9/11 Children who lost a family member, including developing an equine experiential learning and counseling program. Executive Director Pegasus more than doubled services in 4 years.

Liz Fortes, Program Director at Pegasus

Liz has been a professional in the horse industry for over 40 years as an instructor and trainer, with the last 18 years in therapeutic riding. She is an Advanced TRI, CTRI, ESMHL, PATH Lead Evaluator, PATH video assessor, PATH Certified Mentor, Special Olympics Coach, PATH EAP-PTSD, PATH Equine Services for Heroes, ARIA Certified Level 3 Hunt Seat, ARIA Certified Level 2 Dressage, and Facilitator for The Equus Effect.



Learning Objectives

The PATH instructor certification process is specific to mounted program. We were taught to be therapeutic RIDING instructors. Our goal is to help centers embrace the therapeutic benefits of unmounted programs and learn to utilize them to their full potential.

Pegasus incorporates social-emotional goals for all participants as part of our holistic approach. We want to encourage others to do the same.

Gain a deeper understanding of the transferrable skills unmounted horsemanship activities can provide. **Handout on transferrable skills provided*



Benefits of Therapeutic Horsemanship

Physical

Participants with physical challenges can work towards improved coordination, balance, strength, posture, proprioception, increased activity and exercise tolerance, endurance, overall fitness, fine and gross motor skills, and flexibility,

Cognitive

Participants with cognitive challenges can work on goals including motor planning, sequencing, following directions, safety awareness, impulse control, self-regulation, focus/attention, social cues, spatial awareness, and sensory integration.

Social-Emotional

Participants with social-emotional challenges can develop increased confidence, decreased anxiety, improved self-esteem, self-awareness, socialization, emotional regulation, improved mood, communication, coping skills, connection, and trust.

Raise your hand if you have you seen an increase in social-emotional challenges in your participants.



PHYSICAL/BODY	COGNITIVE/MIND	SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL/SPIRIT
Improve core strength	Sensory integration	Connection
Improve posture	Improve hand-eye coordination	Empathy
Improve coordination	Spatial perception/awareness	Increase confidence
Improve range of motion	Motor planning	Decrease anxiety
Improve flexibility	Sequencing	Emotional regulation
Improve reflexes	Speech and communication	Sense of well-being
Improve fine motor skills	Appropriate voice volume	Pride and sense of accomplishment
Improve gross motor skills	Focus/attention	Socialization
Grading of pressure	Following directions	Increase communication
Improve proprioception	Motivation	Patience
Improve balance	Remedial math	Empowerment
Increase ambulation/mobility	Remedial reading	Gratitude
Help normalize muscle tone	Decision-making	Adaptability
Decrease spasticity	Finesse vs force	Self-advocacy
Bilateral integration	Patterning	Self-esteem
Increase in serotonin	Social cues/social skills	Increase in serotonin
Increase in oxytocin	Safety awareness	Increase in oxytocin
Decrease in cortisol	Teamwork	Decrease in cortisol
Increase endorphins	Impulse control	Increase endorphins
Decrease blood pressure	Eye contact	Responsibility
Decrease heart rate	Independence	Nurturing
Increase body awareness	Self-regulation	Sense of purpose
Increased activity	Increase participation	Leadership skills
Increase endurance	Adaptability	Setting intention
Increase overall fitness	Connection	Trust
Increase exercise tolerance	Increase language	Boundaries
Improve sleep	Organization	Mindfulness
Benefits of being in nature	Processing	Improve mood



Participant Goals and Progress

- We track the progress of our participants on a 1-5 scale using our comprehensive progress rubric.
- Goals set are highly individualized and comprehensive, encompassing the participant's physical, cognitive, and social-emotional needs.
- The results/outcomes of our trauma groups are tracked using surveys given at the end of each program session. These surveys also use a 1-5 scale and anecdotal written feedback on the clients' experience. These surveys provide metrics for our trauma groups. In addition, we send a six-month follow-up survey to track the lasting impact of our trauma group programs.

PROGRESS RUBRIC SAMPLES- PHYSICAL, COGNITIVE, AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL SESSION GOALS FOR PROGRESS NOTES

SKILLS:	1	2	3	4	5
<p>Physical: Picking feet</p> <p>Sample session goal: <i>Participant can effectively pick front feet while maintaining a safe position with minimal support.</i></p>	Does not demonstrate the ability to pick feet.	Beginning to demonstrate the ability to pick feet with maximal assistance and close supervision to ensure safety throughout the process.	Intermittently demonstrates the ability to pick feet safely and effectively with moderate assistance sometimes needed to facilitate success.	Able to demonstrate the ability to pick feet safely and effectively. Demonstrates proper technique with good position. Minimal assistance may be required to manage challenges such as the horse not wanting to pick up leg and/or trying to pull away before completion. May or may not be able to pick hind feet.	Consistently demonstrates the ability to independently pick feet safely and effectively. Demonstrates proper technique with good position. Can successfully manage challenges such as the horse not wanting to pick up leg and/or trying to pull away before completion. Able to pick hind feet.
<p>Cognitive: Effort and Participation</p> <p>Sample session goal: <i>Participant can groom horse for five minutes while remaining engaged.</i></p>	Does not demonstrate effort and participation.	Beginning to demonstrate effort and participation. Support/encouragement is consistently needed to remain engaged.	Intermittently demonstrates effort and participation. Support/encouragement is sometimes needed to remain engaged.	Able to demonstrate effort and participation with minimal need for support/encouragement.	Consistently demonstrates effort and participation without the need for support/encouragement.
<p>Social-emotional: Connection:</p> <p>Shows willingness to form connections with horses, peers, staff, and volunteers (i.e., greets horse, acknowledges others).</p> <p>Sample session goal: <i>Participant can spend 3 minutes of intentional connection with their horse prior to grooming.</i></p>	Does not demonstrate connection with others. Does not outwardly engage with horses, peers, staff, or volunteers.	Beginning to demonstrate signs of connection with initiation from staff/volunteers. Connection is fleeting.	Intermittently demonstrates the ability to make connections with initiation and encouragement as well as some self-initiation. Awareness, interest, and concern for others are emerging.	Able to demonstrate the ability to make connections with self-initiation. Able to maintain the connection for longer periods of time with greater interest.	Consistently demonstrates the ability to initiate and establish meaningful connections/bonds with horses, peers, volunteers, and staff through communication, body language, and intention. Connection is genuine and consistent.

Day of week	Class times (a.m./p.m.)	Program type M-mounted, U-unmounted	Total number of participants	Total # of PHYSICAL goals	# Physical goals stayed same	# Physical goals improved	Total # of COGNITIVE goals	# Cognitive goals stayed same	# Cognitive goals improved	Total # of Social-emotional goals	# Social-emotional goals stayed same	# Social-emotional goals improved	Instructor(s):
Monday	3:30, 4:30	U/TH	9	9	0	9	4	0	4	5	0	5	VC/CS
Wednesday	12-1:30	TH 1.5 hrs Greenburgh	7	5	0	5	3	0	3	2	0	2	VC/JH
Wednesday	4:30	U/TH	6	6	0	6	3	0	3	3	0	3	VC/JH
Thursday	3:30, 4:30	U/TH	8	8	0	8	3	0	3	5	0	5	VC/DM
Friday	10-11:30	TH 1.5 hrs Reach	5	5	0	5	2	0	2	3	0	3	VC/JH
Saturday	10:30, 11:30	U/TH	9	9	0	9	2	0	2	7	0	7	CS/JG
Saturday	12:30, 1:30	U/TH	9	9	4	5	4	1	3	5	1	4	KM/BG
TOTALS			53	51	4	47	21	1	20	30	1	29	



Science-based Research on the Physiological Benefits of Equines

- Decreased heart rate
- Decreased blood pressure
- Decreased cortisol levels
- Increased oxytocin (love, affection, connection)
- Increased serotonin (happiness, feeling of well-being)
- Increased dopamine (reward and motivation)
- Release endorphins (reduces stress, relieves pain)
- Creation of new neural pathways

Experiential Learning

***“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember,
involve me and I learn.”***

-Benjamin Franklin

- Holistic perspective/experiential learning model
- Little Heroes Camp



Testimonials

Therapeutic Horsemanship

“It’s hard to find the words to describe Pegasus, so heart centered. From the heart hugs to the sense of belonging and care. The effect for me and others has been profound and lasting.”

-Former Participant/Current Volunteer

“The time spent at Pegasus is a time for them to re-ground, kick start, and gives them the strength to go on. That 45 minutes, once a week is a beacon in their life. When my child leaves their lesson, I see a lighter child, not weighed down by their depression.”

-Participant Parent

“The best ever. To feel so powerful felt amazing. The trust, energy, the focus. It all ties together and is very important. The impact of the people, the exercise, being present, boundaries.”

-Crime Victims Treatment Center Participant/PTSD/Trauma



“My Child Just Wants to Ride.”

- Changing the culture through education.
- Creating horsemen not just riders/encouraging all riders (within their capability) to participate in unmounted programs.
- Changing the culture within our school groups/agencies and their faculty.
- Be an ambassador for unmounted program- you must believe in it to promote it authentically.



HEAL-TH Training and Workshop

- Get practical information for developing a curriculum for unmounted program sessions
- Learn to create lesson plans and content that allow for experiential learning
- Understand the transferrable skills in lesson activities and their ability to have lasting effects
- Learn how to foster independence by providing the appropriate level of challenge to participants
- Specific volunteer training and education
- Horse selection and training for therapeutic horsemanship programs
- Learn strategies for working with trauma groups including veterans and first responders

And more! We hope you will join us to learn how to implement a holistic approach with your own participants.



Thank you!

Q & A