

Therapy Visits



Pony Parties

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How Our Ponies Can Help with Autism & Neurodiversity

For thousands of years the bond between man and animal has proven to be effective in creating an emotional, healing bond.

What is Horse & Pony Therapy?

Horse & Pony therapy is sometimes known as Equine-Assisted Therapy. In its basic form it is being around horses, whether it's grooming, just stroking them or even just sitting and observing them in their natural environment or helping with day to day care of the animals and learning all about the needs of horses and ponies whilst working in a controlled environment with both the client and therapy horse or pony.

The aim is to help the client understand and discover themselves and learn how to deal with daily life in a more positive way.

Why Horses ?

- * Horses are sensitive and intuitive
- * Horses mirror human emotions
- * There is a powerful connection between horses and humans
- * Horses offer non-judgemental affection
- * Horses allow people to relax by providing acceptance and allowing for give and take, which also builds confidence and focus
- * Small ponies and miniature horses, because of their smaller size, provide a non-threatening therapy experience especially for children, seniors and those in wheelchairs

It has been proven that touch is a very important aspect in the nourishment of the human mind.

Animals bring warmth and contentment into a place (like hospitals) where ordinarily it may be tough, invasive or not pleasant.

Equine therapy has proven to be a powerful antidote to the feelings of loneliness, dependency, and isolation often experienced by individuals with a range of disabilities.

Non verbal clients expressions and emotions become more clear and understanding using body language as a way of communication.

Not only does petting an animal reduce your heart rate and blood pressure, it also encourages socialisation. In the presence of our ponies, clients tend to be less withdrawn and more in touch with their feelings. There is more laughter and interaction among clients when animals are present, and also often for the family members who also come to visit on a equine therapy day.

Scientific studies have shown that there are many positive effects of human-animal interaction. The presence of animals has a multitude of benefits for both children and adults . Studies have proven that animal-human interaction and pet therapy can improve a person's social, emotional, and physical health.

Benefits of Equine Assisted Activities

Along with Autism and other developmental disorders and Neurological conditions, Equine-Assisted Therapy has been proven to help clients on so many levels. It can not only help clients to understand themselves but it can also help them to find their confidence and reduce their anxiety.

- * Reduces blood pressure
- * Lowers anxiety and stress levels
- * Improves Socialisation skills
- * Stimulates the release of endorphins, which help people feel good - especially important for people who are feeling depressed or isolated
- * Encourages exercise, and movement to help increase muscle strength, joint mobility, balance and coordination
- * Stronger connections to the physical world and to other people
- * Greater self - confidence and trust
- * Increases a sense of community
- * Stimulates memory and sharing
- * Improved communication, social and perceptual skills
- * Stimulate both sensory and concentration levels
- * Improved spacial awareness and perceptual skills
- * Development of patience
- * Emotional control, self disabling and self awareness
- * Cognitive skills
- * Leads to a more independent and fulfilling life

Can Horses Sense Autism?

The simple answer is yes, a horse wont see the child or adult and know that they have autism but they will sense and understand that they need to be more patient and forgiving with the child or adult.

Horses are herd animals and they look out for each other, they will behave in their same way with anybody that they feel needs 'looking after'. This means that while the horse can sense that your child or adult has autism they will understand that the child may be vulnerable and needs to be protected.

Not all horses have the temperament to be therapy horses but those that do will be calm and patient and allow the child or adult to interact with them in ways which a lot of other horses wont.

A horse picks up on the way people are feeling, Mirroring their emotions and responding. As a herd animal attuned to body language and stress, a horse will move away from a person if they sense anger or aggression, follow someone who they know they can trust and they can feel unsettled if they sense fear.

Psychological Benefits

Psychological benefits of working with horses are now being recognised by growing numbers of therapists who work with autistic children or adults, young people with behavioural problems and adults with depression or addiction.

It's good for people who don't take to talking therapies, counselling is not a 'one size fits all'. While you might forget a conversation you had with your counsellor a few weeks on, its unlikely that you will forget what happened when you are stood in a field with your therapy pony.

It has been clinically documented that just being around horses changes human brainwave patterns. We calm down and become more centred and focused when we are with horses.

It is inspiring to watch the magical emotional connections and comforting effects our ponies have on everyone, young or old. They light up the room when they enter, and leave an unforgettable impression on people's hearts and souls long after they have gone. They have bought many tears of joy and happiness to the friends they visit, and to the people that witness the healing and life touching effect they have as angel therapy ponies.