

**STUDENT BASED EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING –EAL** is a program that has been developed to meet the needs of school age children utilizing our three miniature horses. Lessons are tailored to meet the needs of the students and are experiential in nature allowing the students to learn by exploration, hands on activities, teamwork, and problem solving all while immersed in a fun activity with the horses.

### **GOALS**

- Offer learning activities in an experiential setting
- Tailor lessons to the need and ability level of the group
- Incorporate focus of School, Teacher, IEP or 504 goals
- Allow clients time and space to think and problem solve so learning can occur
- Assist as needed for safety of the horse and client
- Focus on the development of character traits allowing personal growth
- Encourage client discussion before and debriefing after the lesson
- Meet the expectations of the parents or organization requesting EAL
- Establish routine for entering and exiting a session modeling expected social skills

### **BENEFITS**

- Identification of personal strengths
- Opportunity for reframing, metacognition and new paradigms
- Increased creative thinking and problem solving
- Developing and/or enhancing social skills: teamwork, communication, sharing, following, leading
- Enhanced sense of self and spatial awareness
- Learning from doing

### **THE FOCUS**

The focus could be on developing character traits such as: safety, respect, teamwork, courage, leadership, sportsmanship, honesty, imagination, choices, alertness, problem solving, attitude, creative thinking, etc. while allowing learning and personal growth to happen through the process.

### **THE PROGRAM**

The Program is offered in an individual or group setting. A single session or a series of sessions may be scheduled. Sessions will be experiential in nature, based on addressing character traits while allowing personal growth and learning to occur. School, teacher, IEP or 504 goals may be incorporated. The size of the group can vary, but based on student needs it may need to be limited to a small group size.

### **SINGLE SESSION**

Student Based: A single session may be scheduled for an individual or a group to address a specific topic based on the identified needs. Sessions can be 45 minutes to 90 minutes long depending on student needs, size of group, and time restrictions.

### **SERIES OF SESSIONS**

A series of progressive and/or ongoing sessions may be scheduled which are tailored to the needs of the students. A range of 4-12 sessions can be scheduled for a group. Each session should be no more than an hour long and can be shortened based on student needs.

Small group sessions are held at Spring Brook Farms or offsite at organizations'/clients' location: church, school, center, etc. If sessions are offsite from the farm only mini horses will be assisting in all sessions.

The number of clients, number of horses needed, number of facilitators needed, and location of the sessions determine cost.

### THE FORMAT OF A SESSION

- **Meet and Greet** - Modeling by facilitators of an official greeting including welcoming the student, exchange of names, and a handshake.
- **Lesson Introduction** –Discussion with students relating the topic to horses and/or cowboy culture as basis to help students process the topic in a realm outside of themselves.
- **Safety Discussion** – Horses will behave in a way to maintain their own safety therefore students are taught or reminded how to be responsible for their own safety while keeping the horses safe.
- **Experiential Activity** – Students engage in a learning activity with a horse or group of horses that allows them to think, process and apply the topic discussed.
- **Debriefing** – Gather back as a group to discuss what happened in the activity, ask questions to help students find their own answers, make observations allowing students to respond, offer support for students in making a connection in how the topic and lesson applies to them and their life by allowing students to ask questions, make statements, have discussion as needed.
- **Official Farewell** – Students are encouraged to tell the horses good bye and even thank them. Modeling by facilitators of an official good bye including thanking the student for their part in the session and a handshake.

### EXAMPLES OF STUDENT BASED SESSIONS

Examples of how a session may look and how a series of lessons/sessions may progress in the client's interactions with the horses and the experiential approach while maintaining the described format of a session:

- 1 Safety and Respect - the clients meet the horses, learn how horses protect themselves, and the safety zones are reinforced to teach how to be safe around them. Students are encouraged to pet the horses, hold and walk the horses by the lead rope while maintaining safety of the horse and their own safety to apply the concept of safety and respect.
- 2 Care and Responsibility - Math game is used to teach the students about grooming tools and their proper uses. Horse care is discussed. Students share about how they care for and are responsible for a pet or someone at home. Students apply the concept of care and responsibility by demonstrating on a horse how a grooming tool is used.
- 3 Teamwork and Following and Leading – Discussion is held to demonstrate herd interactions. Students play follow the leader while taking the horse with them. Each student gets an opportunity to follow and lead while working as a team member.
- 4 Problem Solving, Taking Turns, Encouragement – Discuss cowboy culture in rounding up cattle on horseback. Play a relay game with loose rules allowing students the opportunity to use taking turns and encouragement while problem solving to make improvements with each game.
- 5 Oral Speaking, Pride, Confidence - Students dress their mini horse for a style show. They then present their horse by introducing them and describing their "fashion look".

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