



# CHINOOK HORSES

Changing Lives through  
Equine Partnerships

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## Our Mission

To Provide Opportunities For Individuals And Families, Regardless of Their Ability to Pay, To **Engage, Learn, And Thrive** Outside Of The Classroom And Traditional Therapeutic Environments By **Practicing Equine Assisted Activities**.

## Our Services

We offer Equine-Facilitated Learning (EFL) and Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP) services to the youth and families of Yellowstone and surrounding counties. Our programs include Social Thinkings Group, Leadership Development, and Individual EFP.

# What is EFL and EFP?



**EFL and EFP sessions incorporate:**

- A herd of horses
- An equine specialist
- A licensed therapist, special education professional and/or occupational therapist
- The client(s)

The horses are valued members of the team and their behaviors inform the session.

# How Does It Work?

- All sessions are ground-based (*no riding*) and horses are at will
- NO prior horse experience is necessary
- Session plans are driven entirely by treatment and/or educational needs

Specific language is practiced when working with the horses as partners, such as...

- *Ask not make*
- *Invite not force*
- *Regard not ignore*
- *Teach not break*
- *Respect not use*
- *Assume responsibility not blame*





# Why Horses?

- Gifted at reading and responding to situations
- Masters of relationships
- Non-judgemental and loving



# Horses and Equine-Facilitated Psychotherapy

EFP can be especially helpful for clients who are not responding to a traditional therapeutic environment.

An opportunity to be outside of the 'office' or classroom and engage in experiential intervention may feel less intimidating to clients who might otherwise feel resistant to engage in traditional talk therapy.

Horses can....

- Intuit and mirror emotion and feeling
- Nonverbally communicate with the client
  - Offering constant *authentic* and *honest* feedback





# Benefits of EFP and EFL

- Allows for time to “turn off and tune in”
- Experience communication “in the absence of words”
- Improve coping mechanisms, communication skills, and ability to emotionally self-regulate



# Benefits of EFP and EFL



- Enhance **self-awareness** and re-pattern **maladaptive behaviors, feelings, and attitudes**
- Getting out into **nature**
- Provides opportunity for **good, safe touch**
- Requires our bodies to be **focused and attentive**, **staying present in the moment**

SOURCE: Leslie McCullough, PhD, LCSW, Washburn University, Effect of Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy on Posttraumatic Stress Symptoms in Youth With History of Maltreatment and Abuse



# Who Can Benefit?



**Individuals who have been diagnosed with:**

Depression & Anxiety  
Trauma  
Bereavement and loss  
Traumatic Brain Injury  
Substance Use Disorders (SUD)  
Autism Spectrum Disorder  
ADHD  
ODD  
Sensory Processing Disorder  
Fetal Alcohol Syndrome  
Executive Functioning Disorder  
Social Communication Disorder  
Learning Differences

# Integrating EFP/EFL with Different Modalities

EquiPower: Treating Trauma with the Power  
and Sensitivity of Horses, Trauma Focused CBT

Find the Spirit Within - Self Esteem & Goal  
Setting

Social Thinking

Zones of Regulations

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and  
The 7 Habits of Happy Kids



# EquiPower: Treating Trauma with the Power and Sensitivity of Horses



**EquiPower** integrates TF-CBT with the Eagalá modality for children, youth and adults

Examples of TF-CBT concepts explored through activities include:

- Being in the “here and now”
- Learning about trauma
- Building a safe space
- Coping skills
- Dealing with the trauma
- Setting boundaries
- Recreating your story
- Discovering and experiencing safe touch
- Activities based on client therapeutic goals



# The Chinook Horses Program

## Session One: Meet & Greet the Herd

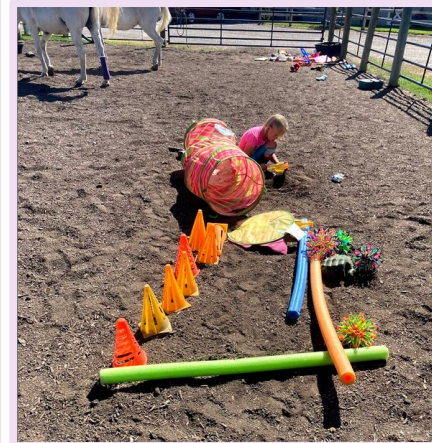
### *Naming the Horses*



# The Chinook Horses Program

## Session Two: The Goal Ladder

*Therapeutic goals identified*





# The Chinook Horses Program

## Session Three: Grooming - Spa Day *Self Care*





















# The Chinook Horses Program

## Session Four: Identifying Zones and Feelings *Emotional Self-Regulation*



The **ZONES** of Regulation®

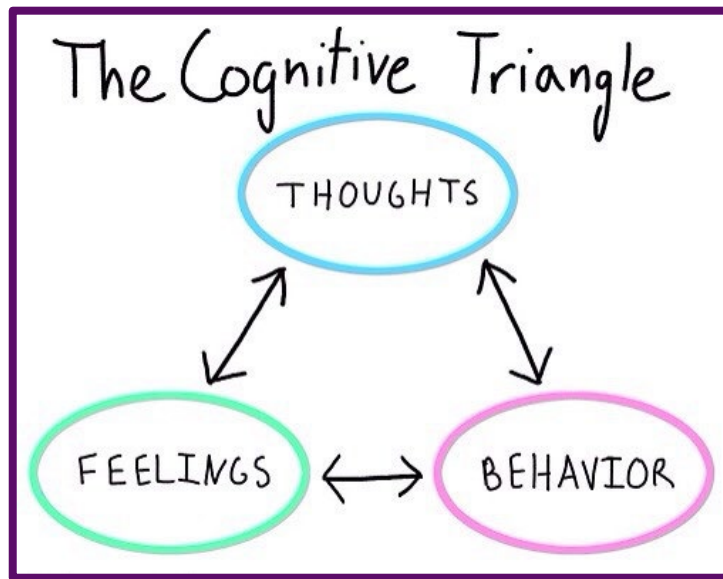
   	   	   	   
<b>BLUE ZONE</b> Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	<b>GREEN ZONE</b> Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	<b>YELLOW ZONE</b> Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	<b>RED ZONE</b> Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

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From The Zones of Regulation® by Leah M. Kuypers • Available at [www.socialthinking.com](http://www.socialthinking.com)



# The Chinook Horses Program

## Session Five: Cognitive Triangle Activity



# The Chinook Horses Program

## Session Six: Painting Activity

*Painting feelings where we feel them*





# The Chinook Horses Program

## Session Seven: The Obstacle Course



# Research and Data

- 2019 University of Mary, Department of Occupational Therapy & Billings Public Schools
  - Increased body awareness
  - Improvement in motor planning
  - Improvement in communication skills
  - Caregivers reported positive changes in their child's behaviors such as:
    - increased engagement with their environment
    - improved social interactions with adults and peers
- 2020 purchased access to database system with valid and reliable scales for tracking client and program outcomes

# Why Chinook Horses?

We are the only organization in town that is both PATH Int'l and Eagala certified

We operate out of a state-of-the-art facility with access to 3 outdoor and 1 indoor arenas, as well as a private ranch with an indoor arena

We work with 12 vetted Horse Partners, showcasing multiple personalities, who are cared for and treated as partners and teachers

## Accomplishments:

- Since 2017, over **1,190 sessions with 300 children, youth, and adults** in Yellowstone and surrounding counties
- Last year, **100% of all donations went to scholarships**
- **Collaborations with various organization to provide services** including University of Mary, STEP, Washington School's Special Education Program, the Billings Public Schools, CPS, Department of Family Services, Creative Counseling, Benefis, Cor Enterprises, Northwest Counseling Center, Blue Skies Pediatric Therapy Services, BUIHWC and Leaf Pediatric Therapy



# Thank you!

Questions?



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