



Arlee Rehabilitation Center

k9arc.org

(406) 207-9338

700 Woodworth Ave., Missoula, MT 59801

# PRESS RELEASE

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Registration Open for Arlee Rehabilitation Center's Annual Summer Camp

**Arlee, MT — 30 May 2023** — This year's Pawsitively Healing Summer Camp is coming up June 12-18 in Arlee. This is the fourth Summer Camp put on by the Arlee Rehabilitation Center (ARC). Registration for this unique experience is open now for children ages 8–13. The camp focuses on building social and emotional resiliency in at-risk youth by cultivating empathy, stress management, self-esteem, and communication/relationships.

“Our core values are very straightforward,” said Filip Panusz, ARC’s founder and Executive Director. “We recognize the powerful bonds between people and animals, and we feel that those bonds can be used to reduce youth suicide in Indigenous communities. Unlike traditional animal rescues, we help people to rescue reservation animals and let those animals help people—especially youth—that are afflicted by serious trauma.”



ARC is based on the Flathead Indian Reservation and works closely with the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes. The camps, however, are open to any at-risk youth residing in our service area and dealing with historical trauma and poverty. This week-long day camp helps campers build resiliency and participate in animal-led trauma healing featuring dogs, horses, and raptors.

The camp runs from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm every day at the Brown Building in Arlee. Camp activities include an equine day at a local horse sanctuary, lots of cuddle time with rescue dogs, and daily presentations by other guests such as Animal Wonders and Working Dogs for Conservation. ARC will provide nutritious locally sourced meals for each child and hopes to partner with Tribal Transport to provide shuttle services for Reservation families.

The camp uses the Pawsitively SEL curriculum, which builds capacity for (1) Empathy, (2) Stress Management, (3) Self-Esteem/Self-Empowerment, and (4) Communication/Relationships. ARC's overarching goal is to build emotional resiliency that helps mitigate Native youth suicide risk.

The Pawsitively SEL curriculum uses dogs to teach coping mechanisms that help youth overcome socioeconomic barriers. In addition, there will be a guest presentation each day. Topics will include the traditional role of dogs in Tribal culture, animal care and behavior, humane treatment of animals, safe handling, and breed discrimination as a metaphor for cultural prejudice. There will also be other activities, including animal-inspired art and outdoor games, many inspired by Indigenous traditions.



### To sign up for the camp

To reserve a spot or get more information, text (406) 207-9338, email [info@k9arc.org](mailto:info@k9arc.org), or contact ARC through Facebook. There is limited space available, so ARC is encouraging early reservations.

Financial hardship should never keep at-risk youth from being able to participate in programs like the Pawsitively Healing Summer Camp, so tuition sponsorships are available for eligible families with a small required copay.

**WHEN:** June 12–18, from 9:00 to 4:00 each day

**WHERE:** Arlee Brown Building

## To donate for the camp

These camps are expensive to put on, and ARC is a small nonprofit funded entirely by grants and donations. If you'd like to help out with the costs, please visit ARC's website or Facebook page to get details on how to provide financial support.

## To help with the camp

A program as ambitious as these summer camps needs lots of help. ARC has recruited six camp counselors and two mental health professionals for the event, as well as a Camp Director and Camp Coordinator. Volunteers are being recruited. This includes many pet owners who are invited to participate with their dogs, which serve as healers for the kids.

Volunteers will help with everything from food preparation to setup and clean up. Even if you can only help for a half-day day, ARC could definitely use your help.

Counselors will facilitate camp activities, supervise children and animals, direct volunteers, and ensure the safe, smooth implementation of summer camp programs. All counselors must commit to the entire week of the camp (June 12-18) and a required full week of paid training (June 5-10).

ARC's work is guided by a Cultural Sensitivity Position Statement that pledges a proactive effort at every opportunity to recruit, hire, involve, and embrace Tribal community members. For details and job descriptions, please visit [K9ARC.org](http://K9ARC.org).

## About Arlee Rehabilitation Center

Arlee Rehabilitation Center (ARC) is dedicated to providing a sanctuary where animals heal people and people heal animals. Their Pawsitively Healing Summer Camps are dedicated to reducing youth suicide rates on the Flathead Reservation using therapy animals and stress-relief training. Their Paws on the Ground program offers emergency rescue, intervention, and support for canines and their caretakers. Their Spay/Neuter Taskforce offers both large clinics and regular private appointments for spaying and neutering dogs and cats.

ARC is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that relies on grants and donations for the services it provides.

Find out more about ARC at [K9ARC.org](http://K9ARC.org).

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*Photos and copies of this press release are available on the ARC Press Kit page at [K9ARC.org/press-kit](http://K9ARC.org/press-kit)*

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