

Spring Newsletter

MENDED HEARTS

March 2025



Equine Therapy: What It Is and What It's Not

As the only equine-assisted psychotherapy facility south of Chicago, Mended Hearts is uniquely suited to provide effective outpatient, individualized psychological care using equine partners.

However, not everyone understands the benefits of equine therapy and how it is used to implement treatment plans and achieve better mental and behavioral health.

What is equine-assisted therapy?

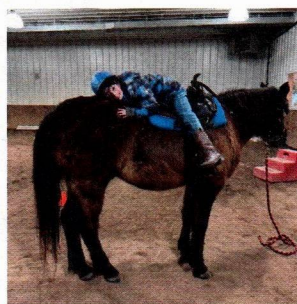
Equine-assisted therapy programs may or may not include riding. In fact, one large, international model of equine mental health therapy - EAGALA - is ground-based only. Clients learn about themselves and their life situations by connecting with loose horses who are free to move about the space and interact - or not - with the client.

Mounted equine-assisted psychotherapy therapy can help the client develop trust in both the horse and in the therapist. It also helps the

client understand the importance of consistent communication, setting healthy boundaries, and being a leader when the equine does not want to follow directions.

What is equine-assisted therapy NOT?

Equine-assisted therapy is not the client riding "for fun" or getting to "run" the horse; clients who want to ride for fun will be referred to a facility that provides riding lessons or trail rides. Clients are expected to focus on their relationship with the animal and giving back (caring for) the animal. The therapist uses this interaction to help the client explore how they relate to and give back to others in their life.



What's Happening?

March

- Brain Injury Awareness Month

www.biausa.org

April

- Autism Acceptance Month:

AutismSociety.org

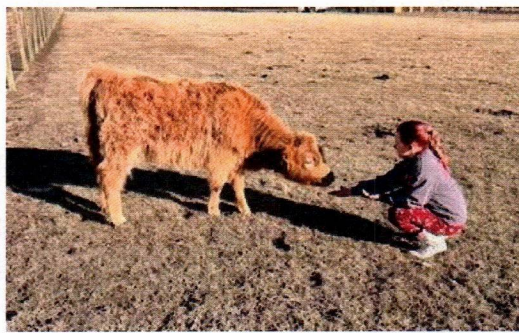
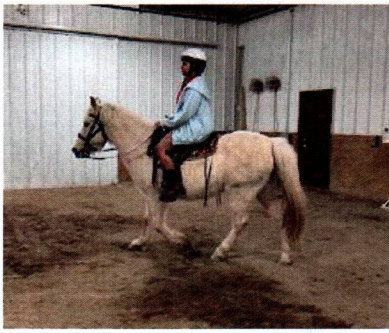
- National Child Abuse Prevention Month:

childwelfare.gov/preventionmonth

May

- National Trauma Awareness Month:

www.amtrauma.org



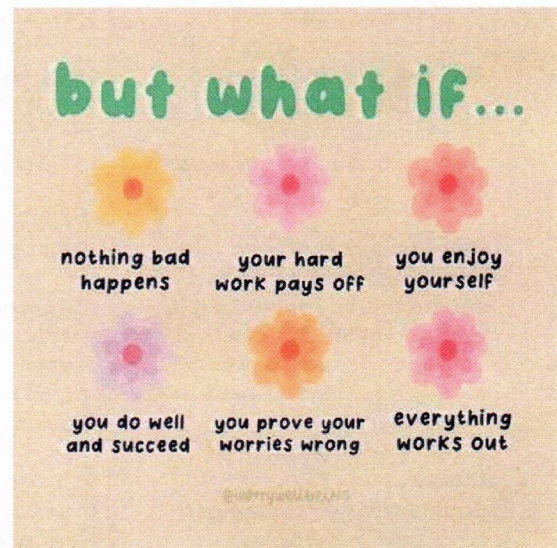
Gloria's Corner

Have you ever heard the phrase "don't cry over spilled milk"? It means there's no point in being upset about something that's already happened. It's better to move on and focus on what you can do now to change your situation.

A lot of people struggle with letting go of what has happened in the past. Accepting things as they are, instead of ignoring, avoiding, or wishing the situation were different, can be an important way to have a happier, more meaningful life. It's called "radical acceptance," and it can keep you from dwelling on unhelpful emotions, like anger or regret, so you can process past trauma and better manage everyday stress.

Building Update

After receiving a grant from the Illinois Department of Veterans Affairs last fall, Mended Hearts was planning to begin building a 1,500-sq. ft. addition to our facility this spring. Unfortunately, due to instability in financial markets and the price of building materials, we are putting these plans on hold. We will continue to focus on providing a safe and supportive environment where our clients feel comfortable and where they can develop the skills and tools they need to thrive.



Sponsor Your Favorite Animal!



We are on the hunt to find sponsors for seven horses, four dogs, three cats, a mini Scottish Highland cow, a goat, and a flock of chickens that call Mended Hearts home. Call the office at (309)383-4323 for more information.