



# VETERAN'S PROGRAM



## Who Are We?

A Stable Learning, LLC is a family, and veteran owned, for profit company that provides support services for the community in the form of psychosocial, psychoeducational, behavioral, and academic interventions that aim at improving the participant's quality of life.

## What We Do

Equine-facilitated learning (EFL) is an experiential approach that demands active participation from the participant, the facilitator, and the horse(s) to create an environment conducive to learning. This method guarantees the development of essential life skills that improve academic and professional performance, prosocial skills, job satisfaction, and an enhanced quality of life by minimizing some symptoms associated with internalized and externalized behaviors.

These outcomes are achieved through equine-assisted activities, a proven method that has delivered documented benefits to participants over many decades. As non-judgmental social animals, horses are acutely sensitive to nonverbal cues and their environment, providing immediate and valuable feedback to the participant's behavior. This unique ability of horses makes them exceptionally well-suited for teaching social-emotional skills, piquing our audience's interest in the method's effectiveness.

Our holistic perspective, which ensures that our services target individual, family, and community factors, is a crucial aspect of our approach. We attend to a client's prosocial positive outcomes and behaviors, not merely their symptoms or problems. Given the diversity of our client population, a one-size-fits-all treatment approach is vehemently opposed.

Behavioral interventions led by a certified Equine Facilitated Learning facilitator and Animal Assisted Intervention Specialist are emphatically non-clinical. It's important to note that they do not replace clinical support services, i.e., counseling or psychotherapy. These interventions address the needs of the client(s) as established by the client, a careful assessment by the lead facilitator, or as directed by a licensed clinician or counselor. Interventions are developed, implemented, and administered by certified professionals.

Once the client's specific needs are identified, our interventions are meticulously designed to be engaging and memorable, tailored to the client's capabilities. We prioritize the participant's awareness and understanding of



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the potential benefits of fully engaging in the intervention, making the learning process exciting and motivating for our audience.

## **Target Population**

The targets of this program are the Veterans and their immediate family. The reason for including the family is that the effects of traumatic events not only affect the individual, but also others around them, especially their immediate family. Symptoms of traumatic events may lead to strained relationships, communication difficulties and increased stress. For example, it has been noted that family members may experience secondary trauma in the form of feeling the emotional impact of the Veteran's trauma/PTSD symptoms, also increased stress and anxiety, experience caregiver-burden, that is, the family member(s) may feel the burden by the responsibility of caring for the Veteran, thus leading to burnout and mental health problems; and may also experience social isolation, anger and guilt associated to the Veteran's condition or their own inability to help the Veteran. The ones who most likely experience this firsthand are their spouse and children that is evident in divorce rates in Veterans diagnosed with PTSD, who may also experience reduced intimacy, communication breakdown and marital conflicts. Marital conflicts have a direct impact on the children, where the emotional, physical hostility, and/or neglect, have a spill-over effect on the children that leads to the child internalizing and externalizing behaviors. Internalizing behaviors may include anxiety, depression, low self-esteem; and externalized behaviors may include acting out, noncompliance, oppositional defiance, conduct disorder, and possibly self-harm.

## **The Session(s)**

The sessions take place at Duck'N Stables/A Stable Learning Facilities located at 30559 FM 509, San Benito, TX 78586; are weekly sessions, one-hour in length, with consecutive one-hour sessions being optional. The sessions include unmounted and mounted activities that follow a progression where the pace of such progression is dictated by the participant(s). Here the participant will gain fundamental horsemanship knowledge, riding skills, and knowledge and skills targeting specific goals that lead to improvement of quality of life while reducing aversive symptoms or problematic behaviors. In addition to the horsemanship component, a psychoeducational component is also implemented that targets parents by educating the parents in basic behavioral principles that may help them understand the effects of how the parent responds to the child's behavior and how the child responds to the parent's behavior shapes the family dynamics.

Each session presents a set of skills that build-on themselves and plenty of opportunities to exercise such skills and knowledge, and follow the sequence below:

*Session 1* – Intake Session. During this session the participant(s) are introduced to the staff, go over safety protocol, appropriate attire, conduct rules, attendance policy, brief relevant background history of the participant(s), identify target behavior, and establish goals and expected outcomes; also they get a tour of the facility to meet the rest of the staff (horses) and assess the participant's response to the environment.



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*Session 2 to X* – The following sessions consist of horse safety and care, where the participant(s) learn the how and the why of basic equine care, i.e., barn chores (cleaning a stall, giving fresh water), equine diet (proper diet and feeding directions) and equine health (grooming and lameness prevention).

*Sessions Y to Z* – Groundwork, here that participant learns basic equine behavior and effective human-horse communication, i.e., safe approach to, assess, halter, lead and exercise the horse in preparation for mounted work.

*Session Z to ...* – AT this stage the participant learns about the proper tack and saddle fit, how to saddle a horse, and basic riding skills. Eventually the participant will take part in short trail rides within the vicinity.

Thank you for your consideration, and for more information please contact:

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### **A Stable Learning, LLC**

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