

Sitara's Gold Award - Healing Through Horses

Here's the website link for more information, patch orders, etc:

Patch Program Steps

Daisies/Brownies:

- Complete Introduction
- Complete 1 in Discover
- Complete 1 in Connect
- Complete 1 in Take Action
- Complete Reflection

Juniors:

- Complete Introduction
- Complete 2 in Discover
- Complete 1 in Connect
- Complete 1 in Take Action
- Complete Reflection

Cadettes:

- Complete Introduction
- Complete 2 in Discover
- Complete 3 in Connect
- Complete 1 in Take Action
- Complete Reflection

Seniors/Ambassadors:

- Complete Introduction
- Complete 3 in Discover
- Complete 3 in Connect
- Complete 2 in Take Action
- Complete Reflection

Introduction: All levels are required to complete these steps before moving on to activities.
(These steps may be revised for younger girls).

1. Introduction

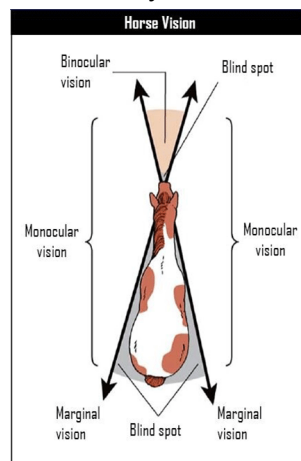
- a. Watch these 2 short videos explaining Equine Therapy

<https://youtu.be/2OyIWsgISpl>

<https://youtu.be/mgocha4vQQM>

- b. Horse Behavior & Senses: We have to first start by understanding the equines.

- Vision - Horses have 2 sets of vision:
Monocular is their side vision. Their eyes are set wide apart to allow horses to see areas of each side of their body. This protects them from predators and they can see danger coming without turning their head.
Binocular is used to judge distance. They are looking at the same thing with both eyes at once.



- Touch - The horse's most important sense for responding to cues (signals) from the rider.
The horse responds to the rider's hands through the touch of the bit on its mouth and to the touch of the rider's legs on its ribs. If the rider's touch is light and gentle, these areas will stay sensitive and the horse will respond.
- Hearing - The horse has excellent hearing. The horse's sense of hearing is much better than its sense of sight. This is useful in riding as some horses respond to voice commands with the combination of a gentle leg and hand with small shifts in weight.
- Social Behavior - Horses naturally have a strong desire to be in the company of other horses. This is a basic survival instinct as a group of horses can protect themselves from predators much better than one can alone.



c.

Discuss the physical and mental benefits listed in the picture above. (This graph is for kids with autism, however the explanations are great examples of benefits for many groups.)

What are some of the ways horses help people mentally? (Thinking of boundaries, emotional awareness, trust, etc) What about physical benefits? (Thinking along lines of nature, outdoors, movement etc)

- d. Read the graph below and discuss. This graph breaks down Equine-Assisted Therapy. The graph can help us understand what activities fall under this therapy and what they consist of. These activities are super versatile and can be tailored to meet everyone's individual goals!



- e. Sometimes names and acronyms can get confusing
For older girls or those wanting more explanation:

Here is a brief breakdown of the types of Equine Therapy
Equine Therapy is a broad term which under these fall:

- **Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT):** A broad term referring to services provided by a *licensed health professional* that incorporates horses into the therapy process.
- **Equine Assisted Counseling (EAC) or Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy (EFP):** EAC and EFP fall under the heading of *equine-assisted therapy*. It is a *clinical* service that incorporates horses into mental health therapy and is provided by a qualified/licensed mental health professional. The goal of EAC/EFP is not to teach riding or horsemanship but rather to address specific mental health goals through interaction with horses.
- **Hippotherapy:** refers *only* to the use of horseback riding/equine movement in *physical, occupational, or speech therapy*. The goal of hippotherapy is to use the horse's movement to promote functional improvements in sensory, neuromotor, and cognitive functioning.
<https://www.americanhippotherapyassociation.org/>
- **Therapeutic Horseback Riding (THR):** equine-assisted *activity* that adapts horseback riding lessons for individuals with disabilities. It is a *non-clinical, recreational* service with inherent therapeutic benefits.
- **Equine-Assisted Activity (EAA):** services provided by a *non-licensed professional* that utilizes the inherent therapeutic benefits of being around horses to enhance non-clinical activities

The purpose of this patch is to educate and give a brief overview and idea of Equine Therapy, we may touch on these different aspects of it though.

Step 1: Discover

- a. **Equine Guided Activities:** UC Davis is partnering with the nonprofit organization Connected Horse to study how equine-guided activities could benefit people with dementia and their caregivers.

Watch this video: <https://youtu.be/R0JmpmkS2VU>

Discuss:

- b. **Hippotherapy:** This video explains equine-assisted occupational therapy aka hippotherapy. <https://youtu.be/k8EtZlpJDbM>

Discuss: How do the horses help Maxwell (the 2-year old)? How has Maxwell improved?

- c. **Equine Assisted Psychotherapy:** Dennis is a Purple Heart recipient who struggled to get help dealing with PTSD. Then he discovered equine-assisted psychotherapy. This facility uses equine-assisted psychotherapy to help veterans heal. Dennis quickly bonded with the horse he was assigned to work with. "It's a matter of respect with an animal," he says. "Words don't need to be said to express who you are."

Watch his story: <https://youtu.be/cLcKrckzTBU>

Discuss: Who is Dennis and what is he struggling with? What was his last job? How did horses help Dennis to deal with PTSD?

Connect through Doing: These activities show some of the things equine therapy does, also can help us relate and connect to this idea.

- a. **Do this, make an obstacle course for your friends and try to navigate through it.**

Read this article:

How do these sensory activities benefit people with special abilities or disabilities? Give some examples.

- b. **Paint/Draw any animals you love or know.**

Answer these questions: What's their name? What's your favorite thing about them?

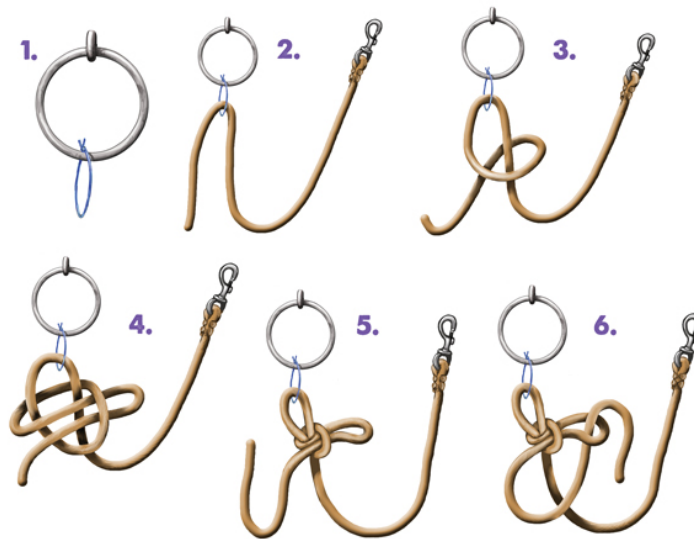
How does it make you feel about them?

Do this coloring sheet and learn about horse face markings.

[facemarkingcoloringshee](#)

- c. **Learn how to tie a quick release knot.**

This is an important skill equestrians learn, and it is a good life skill to know.



d. Make No-Bake horse treats! (for the perfect ride)

6 peppermints

¼ cup of water (add more if the mixture is still dry)

1 tablespoon of molasses

1 cup of rolled oats

Read more at: <https://currituck.ces.ncsu.edu/2020/08/no-bake-horse-treats/>

e. Go outside and go for a hike through nature. Before: answer these questions in a notebook: How calm do you feel? Are you stressed? After: How calm do you feel? Are you stressed? How does taking a break in nature make you feel?

f. If possible take a tour of an equine therapy program.

g. Visit a local horse farm.

After e or f discuss:

How did you feel being at the farm? What was your favorite animal or horse? How did that specific horse/animal make you feel? How did the horses make you feel? How might someone with disabilities or special abilities benefit from being at the farm and around horses?

Take Action/Give Back: Girl Scouts is all about helping those around us - How can we take what we've learned and give back?

This is the most important step.

a. Reach out to local therapy programs, inquire if they need any help by volunteering (this can be through time working on any projects - not just horse related).

- ex. *help organizing, donations/fundraisers, or work around the farm*

b. Start a collection drive for items

(Reach out to local equine therapy programs, ask if they need donations of specific items)

- *ex. rider, horse, and facility needs*
- c. Talk to a family/friend about what you learned through this patch program and ask them to share their knowledge with someone else.
- d. Reach out to any non profit equine rescue, inquire ways that you can help.
 - *ex. what specific donations do they need, time, work, etc*