

MINI MULE EQUINE THERAPY

Equine therapy, also known as **equine-assisted therapy (EAT)**, is a treatment that includes equine activities or an equine environment to promote physical, occupational, and emotional growth in persons with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), anxiety, autism, cerebral palsy, dementia, depression, developmental delay, Down syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, behavioural issues, abuse issues, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other mental health difficulties. Since the horses and mules have similar behaviours with humans, such as social and responsive behaviors, it is easy for the patients to create a connection with the horse/mule. The use of Mules in therapy is called **Onototherapy**. Mules are social animals and known for being gentle.



Mini Mule Therapy will not involve riding. In some sessions, a client might not even touch the Mule at all. Often the Allied Health Professional leading the session will set goals for the client to complete, such as leading the mule to a designated area or putting a halter on the mule. The client will complete the task to the best of their ability and then discuss the thought process, ideas and problem solving used to complete the task. Discussing what the client is doing at a given time allows them to improve language skills. Listening to the instructor helps improve the individual's ability to listen and follow directions, ask questions, etc. Not only is there communication between the client and the instructor, but also between the client and the mule.



Physical therapy, occupational therapy, psychotherapy and speech-language therapy strive to assist the individual with many of the same goals with Equine-Assisted Therapy. However, physical therapy focuses more on gross motor movement and ability, occupational therapy focuses on fine motor ability, and speech-language therapy on the physiological systems associated with speech and language. Equine Assisted Therapy is used by these professionals to provide these benefits without giving the individual a feeling that they are in therapy.



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Equine-Assisted Therapy involves creating a connection between the patient and horse/mule through grooming and being around each other.

Information from:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Equine_therapy

"NCEFT: National Center For Equine Centered Therapy". *National Center For Equine Centered Therapy (NCEFT)*.

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