



# ANIMAL-ASSISTED INTERACTIONS

A Resource Guide



## OVERVIEW

This resource guide is a reference to animal-assisted interactions. Section-1: Describes assistance animals, including service animals and emotional support animals, and related regulation. Section-2: Discusses guidelines on Animal-Assisted Interactions (AAI); animal-wellness guidelines from the American Veterinary Medical Association; and application, purpose and type of AAI's applied to professions, including education, speech pathology, mental health, healthcare, physical and occupational therapy, emergency medical services, public health and veterinary. Section-3: Describes Animal-Assisted Education, such as reading programs to improve reading comprehension and empathy. Section-4: Explains Animal-Assisted Activities, including crisis response, hospital and nursing home visits, at-risk or delinquent youth and stress reduction with therapy animals. Section-5: Describes Animal-Assisted Therapy, and how therapy animals enhance traditional therapy in mental health, social work, physical and occupational therapy, speech therapy, and paraprofessional service models. Section-6: Describes Equine-Assisted Interactions, certification organizations, and describes how equine-assisted activities, equine-assisted therapy, Hippotherapy, equine-assisted psychotherapy, equine-assisted learning, therapeutic carriage driving and therapeutic vaulting can improve traditional therapeutic treatments.

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## About This Guide

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This resource guide was designed as an addendum to a Healthy Pets Healthy Families Forum for the Los Angeles County, Veterinary Public Health, on Animal-Assisted Therapy: Applications and Strategies, presented on October 29, 2019. It can however, also can be used as a general resource on applied animal-assisted interactions, for educators, librarians, speech pathologists, mental health professionals (including Mental Health Interns), healthcare professionals, physical and occupational therapists, emergency medical professionals, public health professionals (health educators and program planners) veterinarians (including Veterinary Technicians) and other interested professionals.

It provides an overview of animal-assisted interactions and how animals can be incorporated into various professions to enhance programs and treatments. Animal-assisted interactions, includes any program that incorporates animals to improve the lives of humans. It is also a subset of Anthrozoology, the study of interactions and relationships between humans and animals. The human-animal bond helps to reduce anxiety, grief, depression, isolation and blood pressure. The human-animal bond also helps to redirect attention to help improve therapeutic completion and outcome.

Incorporating animals into educational programs, physical and occupational treatments and mental health interventions is expanding rapidly. While some studies show efficacy, one must take caution and understand the study design. Many studies incorporating animals into programs lack a non-treatment control group; have insufficient number of study subjects; rely on self- reports instead of objective measures; lack long-term follow-up evaluation; no blind observations to control for unconscious bias of the researchers; and have not had a formal manual that describes treatment procedures, necessary for standardization and replication (Herzog, 2014). However, some studies are beginning to show positive results and professions are now incorporating animal-assisted therapy as a standard treatment plan, such as those in Occupational and Physical Therapy. Universities, governmental agencies and professional organizations are continuing to enhance research methods, and showing benefit among all ages, among those with physical and mental health challenges. These include a wide range of activities, including a trained therapy animal to improve reading comprehension for children or to provide emotional support for hospital patients, nursing home elders, or for victims during times of crisis.

Therapy animals are also used to improve therapeutic outcomes for those with developmental disability, Autism, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), addiction, victims of traumatic experiences, including but not limited to, child abuse and neglect, intimate partner violence, and youth violence. As animal-assisted activities expand among research and application, various professionals can help clients benefit by incorporating animals into programs and treatments.



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*The goal of therapy is not to explain things to a patient or client, but to provide them with an opportunity to understand and discover self-awareness.*

*J. DeCarli,  
Equine Empowerment Center*

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## Section 1: Assistance Animals (Service & Emotional Support)



Assistance animals are animals that are either trained to perform a specific task for an individual with disability or are not-trained, but designated by a mental health professional, to provide emotional support to a specific individual.

### 1.1 DESCRIPTION OF ASSISTANCE ANIMALS

<b>Service Animal</b>	A dog or miniature horse, “trained” to perform specific tasks for an individual with disability
<b>Emotional Support Animal (ESA)</b>	Any domestic “non-trained” animal, where a licensed mental health professional has designated that the specific animal provides emotional support to a specific individual with disability

### 1.2 ASSISTANCE ANIMAL REGULATION

	<b>Americans with Disability Act (ADA)</b>	<b>Air Carrier Access Act</b>	<b>Fair Housing Act</b>
<b>Service Animal</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Service Animal In-Training</b>	No	No	Yes
<b>Emotional Support Animal (ESA)</b>	No	Yes	Yes

### 1.3 ASSISTANCE ANIMALS PERMITTED LOCATION BY REGULATION

	<b>Service Animal</b>	<b>Service Animal In-Training</b>	<b>Emotional Support Animal (ESA)</b>
<b>Housing</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Hotels</b>	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>	No
<b>Airlines</b>	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>	Yes
<b>Public Transit</b>	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>	No
<b>Restaurants</b>	Yes	No <sup>1</sup>	No
<b>Kitchen Food Prep</b>	No	No	No
<b>Sterile Rooms</b>	No	No	No
<b>Jail/Prison Cells</b>	No	No	No
<b>Churches</b>	No	No	No
<b>Private Clubs</b>	No	No	No

<sup>1</sup>Can vary depending on company

### 1.4 ASSISTANCE ANIMAL CERTIFICATION

	Training	Proof of Training	Proof of Certification
<b>Service Animal</b>	Yes <sup>1</sup>	No	No
<b>Emotional Support Animal (ESA)</b>	No	No	No <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Trained to perform a specific task for an individual with disability

<sup>2</sup> Letter from licensed mental health professional designating that the specific animal provides emotional support for a designated individual with disability

### 1.5 ASSISTANCE ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

	Visible Identification	Verified Paper Identification
<b>Service Animal</b>	None	None
<b>Service Animal In-Training</b>	None	None
<b>Emotional Support animal (ESA)</b>	None	Yes <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Including a letter from licensed mental health professional designating that the specific animal provides emotional support for a designated individual with disability

### 1.6 QUESTIONS THAT CAN BE ASKED ABOUT AN INDIVIDUAL WITH AN ANIMAL

<b>1</b>	Is the animal required because of a disability?
<b>2</b>	What tasks or functions does the animal provide for you?
<b>3</b>	What has the animal been trained to do?
<b>4</b>	Would you describe how the animal performs this task or function for you?
<p><b>Note:</b> Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), the following questions are not allowed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can your pet demonstrate these tasks or functions?</li> <li>• What type or severity of disability do you have?</li> </ul>	

### 1.7 RESOURCES

- FAIR HOUSING ACT: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development**  
[https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_opp/assistance\\_animals](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_opp/assistance_animals)
- AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA): U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division**  
[https://www.ada.gov/service\\_animals\\_2010.htm](https://www.ada.gov/service_animals_2010.htm)
- AIR CARRIERS ACCESS ACT: U.S. Department of Transportation**
  - Service Animals & Emotional Support Animals (ESA) – Includes airlines staff training video**  
<https://www.transportation.gov/individuals/aviation-consumer-protection/service-animals-including-emotional-support-animals>
  - Service Animal Guidance**  
[https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/20030509\\_1.pdf](https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/20030509_1.pdf)

c. **Air Travel With Animals – Brochure (pdf)**

[https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/AirTravel\\_with\\_ServiceAnimals-TriFold.pdf](https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/docs/AirTravel_with_ServiceAnimals-TriFold.pdf)

4. **ADA INFORMATION & GUIDANCE: Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals**

<https://adata.org/publication/service-animals-booklet>

5. **MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONA’S ROLE IN EVALUATING THE NEED FOR EMOTIONAL SUPPORT ANIMALS – (video)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0G3L46jpXE&feature=youtu.be>



## Section 2: Animal-Assisted Interactions (AAI)



Animal-Assisted Interactions (AAI) are structured and goal-oriented interactions that incorporate therapy animals into health and human services and education, to improve traditional therapy and educational activities. AAI’s differ greatly from assistance animals that are regulated to provide service or emotional. AAI’s include Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA), Animal Assisted Education (AAE), and Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT).

### 2.1 TYPES OF ANIMALS USED FOR AAI’S

Depending on the therapeutic approach, the following domesticated animals are used for AAI’s		
Dogs	Guinea Pigs	Miniature Horses
Cats	Birds	Cows
Rabbits	Rats	Goats
Gerbils	Horses	Chickens

**Note:** Non-domesticated animals are not well socialized, unpredictable and can cause harm to others, therefor are not recommended for AAI’s

### 2.2 GUIDELINES FOR INCORPORATING THERAPY ANIMALS INTO AAI’S<sup>1</sup>

Basic Requirements of Animal	Preparation of Animal	Handler Guidelines
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent Temperament</li> <li>• Calm &amp; gentle around people</li> <li>• Does not react to unusual sights, sounds, smell</li> <li>• Obedient &amp; follows directions</li> <li>• Maintains self-control after play</li> <li>• Ability to sit quietly for extended periods</li> <li>• Navigate through crowded environments</li> <li>• Attentive to handler</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certification-obedience training</li> <li>• Walk comfortably on leash</li> <li>• Sit, stay, come &amp; lie down on command</li> <li>• Ability to ignore a neutral dog</li> <li>• Maintains self-control</li> <li>• Refrain from aggressive responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect animal</li> <li>• Remove from stressful situations</li> <li>• Provide animal with breaks, walks, play time – with favorite toys, etc.</li> <li>• Have fresh water available at all times</li> <li>• Maintain grooming</li> <li>• Establish a safe space away from stimulation during sessions</li> <li>• Generally, chooses the most appropriate therapy animal for specific client and/or treatment</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Training resource: [petpartners.org](http://petpartners.org)

### 2.3 ANIMAL WELLNESS – AVMA GUIDELINES FOR AAI’S

Veterinarians play a vital role in ensuring the health and well-being of the animals and humans involved in AAI’s. Common concerns among veterinarians are zoonotic disease risk and behavioral problems of the animal. For this reason, it is recommended that veterinarians be actively involved in AAI programs to ensure the health and welfare of the animal and humans involved. The American Veterinary Medical

Association (AVMA) provide strategies for an effective wellness program to provide assurance that animals involved in AAI’s are healthy (reducing bi-directional risk of zoonotic transmission), behaviorally appropriate for the specific AAI program, and protected from being harmed by participating in the AAI program. In part, the AVMA has updated AAI preventive medical strategies and preventive behavioral strategies for animals participating in AAI’s, which can be accessed online at the following link

[<https://www.avma.org/KB/Policies/Pages/Animal-Assisted-Interventions-Guidelines.aspx>].

**2.4 PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED WITH LEADING AAI’S**

<b>Handler</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The human that cares for and leads the animal(s)</li> <li>• Also trained for ensuring the needs of the animal(s)</li> </ul>
<b>Therapy Animal Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handler</li> <li>• Trained Animal</li> </ul>
<b>Educator</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mental health professional</li> <li>• Physical or Occupational Therapist</li> <li>• Speech-Language Pathologist</li> <li>• Teacher, Librarian, etc.</li> </ul>

**2.5 CATEGORIES OF AAI’S**

<b>Animal-Assisted Education (AAE)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA)<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT)<sup>2</sup></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal-Assisted Reading Program</li> <li>• Humane Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal-Assisted Crisis Response</li> <li>• Therapy Animal Hospital Visit</li> <li>• Therapy Animal Nursing Home Visit</li> <li>• AAA for At-risk or Delinquent Youth</li> <li>• Stress Reduction – Airports &amp; University</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Animal-Assisted Psychotherapy</li> <li>• Animal-Assisted Social Work</li> <li>• Animal-Assisted Physical Therapy</li> <li>• Animal-Assisted Speech Therapy</li> <li>• Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model</li> </ul>

<sup>(1)</sup> Informal activities with trained therapy animals

<sup>(2)</sup> Formal activities with trained therapy animals

**2.6 AAI’S APPLIED TO EDUCATION PROFESSION**

Incorporating a trained therapy animal in an educational setting such as in a classroom, school activity, or library has been shown to have a calming effect among students, to increasing academic participation and performance, stress reduction in the classroom, improving test-taking and listening skills, building self-confidence and empathy, to bullying prevention (Daly, 2010; Jalongo, 2004; Thompson, 2003). Similarly, having therapy animals in educational settings, including college campuses, has also shown to reduce blood pressure, anxiety, and depression, and improve interaction among students and teachers. In addition to academics, animals are also used in classrooms, school assembly and libraries on humane education, regarding empathy and protection of human-animal interaction. There are national training organizations

that providing training of animals such as Pet Partners. The National Education Association and the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals provide programs and resources. See **Section-3 (Animal-Assisted Reading Program)** and **Section-4 (Humane Education)** for further application.

## 2.7 AAI'S APPLIED TO SPEECH AND LANGUAGE THERAPY PROFESSION

Incorporating a trained therapy animal into traditional speech and language therapy improves participation and motivation of the client. Animal-assisted speech therapy is planned, goal-oriented and evaluated. It is provided by a licensed speech-language pathologist, to help improve a patient's treatment plan. Sometimes they are used to reduce anxiety of the client, sometimes used to be part of the treatment strategy, such as speaking a command to the animal, where the animal has been trained to respond with correct speech. Incorporating animals into speech therapy has been shown to enhance traditional speech and language therapies (Macauley, 2006). See **Section-5 (Animal-Assisted Speech Therapy and Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model)** for further application.

## 2.8 AAI'S APPLIED TO OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY AND PHYSICAL THERAPY PROFESSIONS

Animals are incorporated into occupational therapy and physical therapy treatment plans through AAT – discussed in Section-5. Incorporating animals into therapy, is becoming more common due to its ability to improve treatment outcomes. Both the American Occupational Therapy Association (ATOA) and the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) recognize Animal-assisted interactions and interventions as a formal method of treatment. Trained animals are incorporated into therapy by a certified Occupational Therapist or certified Physical Therapist. It is shown that trained therapy animals help to improve motivation of the patient to participate in treatment and rehabilitation from disability or injury (Braun, 2009). See **Section-5 (Animal-Assisted Physical Therapy and Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model)** for further application.

## 2.9 AAI'S APPLIED TO MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSION

Incorporating specially trained therapy animals into traditional psychotherapy has shown to enhance traditional therapy strategies. The trained therapy animal is part of the clinical mental health treatment session. Licensed mental health professionals (Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, etc.) work directly with the client, trained therapy animal and the animal handler. The human-animal bond helps divert attention, reduce stress and anxiety, and improve self-regulation, and boundaries. It is beneficial for individual or group therapy, and one or more animals can be used to improve treatment outcomes. It has been shown to improve outcomes for treatment for clients with depression, addiction, schizophrenia, autism, other behavioral issues and victims of abuse and trauma (Kamioka, 2014; Fine, 2010; Stewart, 2016; Stewart, 2013). Mental health professionals are also involved in Animal-Assisted Interactions, in Animal-Assisted Social Work, where licensed mental health professionals provide pet loss and grief counseling and human-animal abuse prevention and reporting. It also provides veterinarian hospital staff with therapy to reduce compassion fatigue in workplace wellness, and also to promote health and overall wellness to those who work at animal hospitals and clinics. To establish certification training, the Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model provides training for graduate students studying social work, and marriage and family therapy in the mental health professions. See **Section-5 (Animal-Assisted Psychotherapy and Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model)** for further application.

### **2.10 AAI'S APPLIED TO HEALTHCARE PROFESSION (other than Occupational and Physical Therapy)**

Trained therapy animals are used in AAA, where animal handlers and the animal visit hospitals, both inpatient and outpatient, hospice and nursing homes. This is planned and goal oriented, where trained therapy animals provide an informal interaction among patients. It is coordinated with the animal handler and healthcare professional or other service provider. When the therapy animal visits a hospital or nursing home, it helps to reduce anxiety and blood pressure, pain and emotional stress (especially for surgical patients), and improves feelings of overall wellness (Kathie, 2007; Marcus, 2012; Sarpell, 2010). See **Section-4 (Animal-Assisted Activities)** for further application.

### **2.11 AAI'S APPLIED TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES/FIRST RESPONDERS PROFESSIONS**

As part of AAA, trained therapy animals are taken, by their handlers to victims of trauma to help provide comfort and emotional support to victims and responders (Chandler, 2012). Animal handlers are also trained and then recruited by organizations to provide service. Many therapy animal handlers provide service directly to local emergency medical services, such as fire, law enforcement and other local, state and federal agencies. Because therapy animals help to reduce anxiety and blood pressure, as well as emotional stress, these are helpful to victims of trauma, including fire, school shooting, suicide, natural disasters, relationship or family violence, and other community crises (Graham, 2009; Eaton-Stull, 2015). Animals and their handler are trained accordingly to handle working in crisis situations to cope with stressful environments, while ensuring safety of the animal and handler (National Standards Committee for Animal-Assisted Crisis Response, 2010). See **Section-4 (Animal-Assisted Activities)** for further application.

### **2.12 AAI'S APPLIED TO PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSION**

The efficacy of the human-animal bond provides the public health profession with a method to improve public health prevention interventions. While public health is population based, AAA can be a beneficial strategy for health educators, program planners and epidemiologists to incorporate into levels of prevention strategies, including but not limited to injury and violence prevention programs (youth and school violence, suicide, drugs and addiction, etc.), to unintentional injury programs (Kamioka, 2014; Fine, 2010). The human-animal bond has a range of opportunity to improve public health interventions and planning, as incorporating animals can help divert attention, reduce stress and anxiety, improve self-regulation, and self-confidence and boundaries. It can provide a benefit to community wellness, school-based programs, violence prevention and health education program planning. In addition, trained therapy animals can also be incorporated into workplace wellness programs, including both private and public agencies, which can help reduce stress and sick-days, and improve moral, productivity and overall wellness in the workplace. Animal-Assisted Therapy, can also be considered and applied to the development of public health interventions, research, and evaluation, especially in the area of intentional injury, such as youth and school violence, drugs, addiction, etc. (Van Der Kolk, 2014; Thompson, 2003; Yorke, 2008). See **Section-4 (Animal-Assisted Activities)** and **Section-5 (Animal-Assisted Therapy)** for further application.

### 2.13 AAI'S APPLIED TO VETERINARY PROFESSION

The human-animal bond can benefit the veterinary profession in several areas where veterinarians, veterinary technicians and animal-hospital staff might not have specific training to provide. First, among Animal-Assisted Social Work, provides pet loss and grief counseling to animal owners at animal hospitals and clinics. It can also assist with human-animal abuse and reporting. Animal-Assisted Social Work, can also help veterinarians and animal hospital staff with addressing compassion fatigue and promoting overall health and wellness among the clinic and administrative staff (Stewart, 2013; Fine, 2010). Secondly, the Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional Service Model, provides professional certification training for veterinarian technician and assistants. It provides an opportunity for those in training to learn of the efficacy and services of Animal-Assisted Therapy and Animal-assisted interventions (Fine, 2010). See **Section-5 (Animal-Assisted Therapy)** for further application.

**2.14 PROFESSION BY APPLICATION, PURPOSE AND TYPE OF AAI**

PROFESSION	APPLICATION	PURPOSE	TYPE	AAI SUB-CATEGORY
<b>Education</b>	School Assembly (Elementary) • Classroom • Library	Improves: • Reading ability • Comprehension • Empathy	AAE <sup>1</sup>	Animal-Assisted Reading Program
	University	Stress reduction	AAA <sup>2</sup>	Humane Education Stress Reduction - University
<b>Speech Pathology</b>	School (Elementary)	• Improves speech therapy • Reduces anxiety	AAT <sup>3</sup>	Animal-Assisted Speech Therapy
	Professional Training - University	Speech-Language Pathologist Certificate Training	AAT <sup>3</sup>	Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model
<b>Physical &amp; Occupational Therapy (PT/OT)</b>	Hospital/Clinic Based	• Enhances PT & OT Therapy • Reduces sensation of pain	AAT <sup>3</sup>	Animal-Assisted Physical Therapy
	Professional Technical Level Training - University	PT/OT Certificate Training		Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model
<b>Mental Health</b>	Clinical Practice • Mental Health • Social Work	• Enhances traditional therapy • Improves self-worth, communication, self-regulation, socialization, trust, boundaries • Reduces anxiety, stress & diverts attention	AAT <sup>3</sup>	Animal-Assisted Psychotherapy Animal-Assisted Social Work
	Professional Training - University	Certificate Training • Psychology Intern • MFT Intern • Social Work Intern		Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model
<b>Healthcare (other than PT &amp; OT)</b>	• Hospital/Clinic • Inpatient/outpatient • Hospice • Nursing Home	• Reduces blood pressure & anxiety • Improves feelings of wellness • Reduction of pain & emotional stress for surgery (pre-post)	AAA <sup>2</sup>	Animal-Assisted Hospital Visit Animal-Assisted Nursing Home Visit
	Community Crisis-Benefits: • Victims • Responders	Provides comfort, stress-relief and emotional support for victims & responders of community crisis (fire, school shooting, suicide, victims of crime, natural disasters, relationship/family violence)		AAA <sup>2</sup>
<b>Public Health</b>	Workplace Wellness Programs	Reduces stress & sick-days Improves moral, productivity & overall wellness	AAA <sup>2</sup>	Stress Reduction (Note: Include additional section-workplace wellness)
	Injury & Violence Prevention & Education Programs (Youth/school violence, suicide, etc.)	• Community wellness • School-based & community • Violence prevention • Program application		AAA for At-Risk or Delinquent Youth
<b>Veterinary</b>	Veterinary Hospital-Service	• Pet Loss & Grief Counseling • Human-Animal Abuse	AAT <sup>3</sup>	Animal-Assisted Social Work
	Veterinary Hospital – Medical & Staff	• Compassion fatigue • Promote health & wellness		
	Professional Technical Level Training - University	Certificate – Veterinary Technician/Assistant Training Certificate		Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model

<sup>1</sup> AAE (Animal-Assisted Education)

<sup>2</sup> AAA (Animal-Assisted Activities)

<sup>3</sup> AAT (Animal-Assisted Therapy)

## Section 3: Animal-Assisted Education (AAE)



Animal-Assisted Education (AAE) is a goal-oriented, planned and structured intervention, incorporating therapy animals into education. AAE's are delivered by an educational or service professional. Progress is measured and documented. The purpose of AAE's are to improve academic goals, social skills and cognitive functioning. AAE's include Animal-Assisted Reading Program and Humane Education.

### 3.1 AVMA DEFINITION FOR AAE'S

The AVMA provides the following definition:

"Animal-assisted education (AAE) is a planned and structured intervention directed and/or delivered by an educational and related service professional with specific academic or educational goals." (American Veterinary Medical Association, 2019).

### 3.2 ANIMAL-ASSISTED READING PROGRAM

Animal-Assisted Reading Program, incorporates a trained therapy dog into a reading activity, where a child practices reading skills by reading either to the animal or reads with the animal by their side. The animal is first introduced to the student(s) before the program begins. These programs are provided at libraries, classrooms (usually elementary), and after-school programs. It can be individual or small group. The purpose of the reading program is to improve reading fluency and comprehension.

### 3.3 READING PROGRAM – ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Organizations	Website
Animal Health Foundation	<a href="https://www.animalhealthfoundation.net/how-we-help/read.html">https://www.animalhealthfoundation.net/how-we-help/read.html</a>
High Desert Obedience Club	<a href="http://highdesertobedienceclub.org/">http://highdesertobedienceclub.org/</a>
Orange County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals	<a href="http://www.ocspca.com/">http://www.ocspca.com/</a>
Paws To Heal	<a href="http://pawstoheal.com/">http://pawstoheal.com/</a>
Intermountain Therapy Animals	<a href="http://therapyanimals.org/Home.html">http://therapyanimals.org/Home.html</a>

Programs & Resources	Website
Reading Educational Assistance Dogs (R.E.A.D.)	<a href="http://therapyanimals.org/California.html">http://therapyanimals.org/California.html</a>
Canine Literacy Program (OCSPCA)	<a href="http://www.ocspca.com/program/canine-literacy-program/">http://www.ocspca.com/program/canine-literacy-program/</a>
Read With Me	<a href="https://petpartners.org/read-with-me">https://petpartners.org/read-with-me</a>

### 3.4 HUMANE EDUCATION

Humane Education, teaches people to understand the consequences of their behavior and encourages the value of all living animals. These programs are presented to groups at schools, assembly, libraries, community centers, and community events. The purpose is to enhance empathy and build respect for all animals.

### 3.5 HUMANE EDUCATION – ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

<b>Organizations</b>	<b>Website</b>
Pet Partners	<a href="https://petpartners.org/">https://petpartners.org/</a>
Inland empire Pet Partners	<a href="http://hssbv.org/inland_empire_pet_partners">http://hssbv.org/inland_empire_pet_partners</a>
Orange County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals	<a href="http://www.ocspca.com/">http://www.ocspca.com/</a>

<b>Programs &amp; Resources</b>	<b>Website</b>
Pet Classroom	<a href="http://petclassroom.com/">http://petclassroom.com/</a>
OCSPCA Humane Education Program	<a href="http://www.ocspca.com/program/canine-literacy-program/">http://www.ocspca.com/program/canine-literacy-program/</a>
National Education Association	<a href="http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/pets-in-the-classroom.html">http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/pets-in-the-classroom.html</a>



## Section 4: Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA)



**Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA) are informal interventions that incorporates visitation of a trained therapy animals to improve motivation, education and/or recreation to enhance quality of life. It is hosted in a variety of environments, delivered by trained professionals, paraprofessionals or volunteers. AAA’s include Animal-Assisted Crisis Response, Therapy Animal Hospital Visit, Therapy Animal Nursing Home Visit, AAA for At-risk or Delinquent Youth, and Stress Reduction at Airports and University.**

### 4.1 AVMA DEFINITION FOR AAA’S

The AVMA provides the following definition:

*“Animal-assisted activities (AAA) provide opportunities for motivation, education, or recreation to enhance quality of life. Animal assisted activities are delivered in a variety of environments by specially trained professionals, paraprofessionals, or volunteers in association with animals that meet specific criteria.”* (American Veterinary Medical Association, 2019).

### 4.2 ANIMAL-ASSISTED CRISIS RESPONSE



Animal-Assisted Crisis Response, provides visitation of a trained therapy animal to provide comfort, stress-relief and emotional support to individuals in crisis. This can include community trauma, natural disasters, suicide, to family or relationship violence. The therapy animal provides stress relief and emotional support to both victims and among responders. Purdue University provides a [video](#) describing animal-assisted crisis response.

### 4.3 ANIMAL-ASSISTED CRISIS RESPONSE – ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Organizations	Website
National Crisis Response Canines	<a href="http://www.crisisresponsecanines.org/">http://www.crisisresponsecanines.org/</a>
HOPE Animal-Assisted Crisis Response	<a href="https://www.hopeaacr.org/">https://www.hopeaacr.org/</a>
Pet Partners – Animal Assisted Crisis Response	<a href="https://petpartners.org/act/aacr">https://petpartners.org/act/aacr</a>
National Voluntary Agencies Active in Disaster	<a href="https://www.nvoad.org/">https://www.nvoad.org/</a>
Therapy Dogs International	<a href="https://tdi-dog.org/OurPrograms.aspx?Page=DSRD+(Disaster+Stress+Relief+Dogs)">https://tdi-dog.org/OurPrograms.aspx?Page=DSRD+(Disaster+Stress+Relief+Dogs)</a>

Programs & Resources	Website
Mini Therapy Horses	<a href="https://www.minitherapyhorses.com">https://www.minitherapyhorses.com</a>
Animal-Assisted Crisis Response National Standards	<a href="https://www.hopeaacr.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/AACRNationalStandards7Mar10.pdf">https://www.hopeaacr.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/AACRNationalStandards7Mar10.pdf</a>
A Beginner’s Guide to Comfort Dogs (FEMA)	<a href="https://www.fema.gov/blog/2016-03-22/beginners-guide-comfort-dogs">https://www.fema.gov/blog/2016-03-22/beginners-guide-comfort-dogs</a>

#### 4.4 ANIMAL-ASSISTED ANIMAL HOSPITAL VISIT



Animal-Assisted Animal Hospital Visit, provides visitation of a trained therapy animal at general and children’s hospitals, inpatient and outpatient services and hospice (Marcus, 2012b). The therapy animal provides stress-relief, emotional support and improves overall well-being in the hospital environment. While there are many hospitals that utilize therapy animals in hospitals for various purposes, this [video](#) describes how Children’s Hospital Los Angeles incorporates therapy dogs.

#### 4.5 RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR ANIMALS IN HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

The Society for Healthcare Epidemiology of America (SHEA) provides facility management with recommendations for Animal-Assisted Activities, Service Animals, Personal Pets, and Research Animals at healthcare facilities. It also includes tables of diseases commonly transmitted and recommendations. Approved by SHEA, the [Animals in Healthcare Facilities GUIDELINES Pocket Guide](#), is available in electronic or hard copy versions. It can be ordered at the following link:

<https://www.guidelinecentral.com/shop/animals-in-healthcare-facilities-guidelines-pocket-card/>

#### 4.6 ANIMAL-ASSISTED HOSPITAL VISIT – ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Organizations	Website
Pet Partners	<a href="https://petpartners.org/">https://petpartners.org/</a>
Alliance of Therapy Dogs	<a href="https://www.therapydogs.com/">https://www.therapydogs.com/</a>
Therapy Dogs International	<a href="https://tdi-dog.org/">https://tdi-dog.org/</a>

  

Programs & Resources	Website
Mini Therapy Horses	<a href="https://www.minitherapyhorses.com">https://www.minitherapyhorses.com</a>
Love On 4 Paws	<a href="https://www.loveon4paws.org/">https://www.loveon4paws.org/</a>

#### 4.7 ANIMAL-ASSISTED NURSING HOME VISIT



Animal-Assisted Nursing Home Visit, provides visitation of a trained therapy animal at nursing homes. These are provided at various times, often weekly or on a regular basis, which provides interactive and stimulating activity. The display of affection raises spirits. The petting and playing increases physical activity and improves participation among residents, especially among those with limited mobility.

**4.8 ANIMAL-ASSISTED NURSING HOME VISIT – ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES**

<b>Organizations</b>	<b>Website</b>
Pet Partners	<a href="https://petpartners.org/">https://petpartners.org/</a>
Alliance of Therapy Dogs	<a href="https://www.therapydogs.com/">https://www.therapydogs.com/</a>
Therapy Dogs International	<a href="https://tdi-dog.org/">https://tdi-dog.org/</a>

<b>Programs &amp; Resources</b>	<b>Website</b>
Love on a Leash Angeles Valley Foothill Chapter	<a href="http://www.loveonaleash.org/Who-We-Are/">http://www.loveonaleash.org/Who-We-Are/</a>
Mini Therapy Horses	<a href="https://www.minitherapyhorses.com">https://www.minitherapyhorses.com</a>
Love On 4 Paws	<a href="https://www.loveon4paws.org/">https://www.loveon4paws.org/</a>

**4.9 AAA FOR AT-RISK OR DELINQUENT YOUTH**

AAA for At-risk or Delinquent Youth utilizes trained therapy animals to help build a closer connection between the teen and animal, where the human-animal bond helps to provide an opportunity for behavior change. Animals are non-judgmental and compassionate. Often among youth where adults have failed them or violated their personal boundaries, the therapy animal helps to bridge that gap in helping increase opportunity for behavioral treatment. It also helps to engage youth through animal welfare education and social-emotional learning. Animals are brought to a facility or sometimes the youth visit a farm. When youth spend time with animals, helps to decrease stress and hyper-arousal, antisocial behavior, while building trust in self and others, improving empathy and compassion and boundary control.

**4.10 AAA FOR AT-RISK OR DELINQUENT YOUTH – ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES**

<b>Organizations, Programs &amp; Resources</b>	<b>Website</b>
Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA)	<a href="http://spcala.com/programs-services/humane-education/about-humane-education/">http://spcala.com/programs-services/humane-education/about-humane-education/</a>
Coalition for At-Risk-Restoring Youth (CARRY)	<a href="http://foratriskyouth.org/program-descriptions">http://foratriskyouth.org/program-descriptions</a>
Therapy Animals Supporting Kids (TASK) Program	<a href="http://www.americanhumane.org/app/uploads/2016/08/therapy-animals-supporting-kids.pdf">http://www.americanhumane.org/app/uploads/2016/08/therapy-animals-supporting-kids.pdf</a>
Mini Therapy Horses	<a href="https://www.minitherapyhorses.com">https://www.minitherapyhorses.com</a>

**4.11 STRESS REDUCTION - AIRPORTS & UNIVERSITY**



Trained therapy animals are utilized to help reduce stress during exam week, as well as depression on college campuses. Similarly, therapy animals are utilized at airports to help reduce stress and enhance the airport experience for passengers.

**Video Resource:** <https://www.airportfoundation.org>

**4.12 STRESS REDUCTION – AIRPORTS & UNIVERSITY – ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES**

<b>Organizations</b>	<b>Website</b>
Pet Partners	<a href="https://petpartners.org/">https://petpartners.org/</a>
Alliance of Therapy Dogs	<a href="https://www.therapydogs.com/">https://www.therapydogs.com/</a>
Airport Foundation	<a href="http://airportfoundation.org/">http://airportfoundation.org/</a>

## Section 5: Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT)



Animal-Assisted Therapy is a formal, planned and goal-oriented, where a trained therapy animal is part of the therapeutic treatment. The animal enhances traditional treatment. AAT is delivered by a health or human service provider, ranging from a mental health professional, Speech-Language Pathologist, Physical or Occupational Therapist, Health Educator or other paraprofessional. AAT is provided to individuals as well as in a group setting. AAT helps to enhance existing treatment by promoting physical, social emotional and cognitive functioning. Categories includes Animal-Assisted Psychotherapy, Animal-Assisted Social Work, Animal-Assisted Physical Therapy, Animal-Assisted Speech Therapy and Animal-Assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model.

### 5.1 AVMA DEFINITION FOR AAT'S

The AVMA provides the following definition:

“Animal-assisted therapy (AAT) is a goal directed intervention in which an animal meeting specific criteria is an integral part of the treatment process. Animal-assisted therapy is delivered and/or directed by health or human service providers working within the scope of their profession. Animal-assisted therapy is designed to promote improvement in human physical, social, emotional, or cognitive function. Animal-assisted therapy is provided in a variety of settings, and may be group or individual in nature. The process is documented and evaluated.” (American Veterinary Medical Association, 2019).<sup>1</sup>

### 5.2 ANIMAL-ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY



Trained therapy animals are incorporated into counseling sessions to help enhance traditional forms of psychotherapy. Sessions include the client, therapy animal, the handler and a licensed mental health professional.

Incorporating therapy animals into therapy techniques, helps to motivate the client and improve therapy outcomes. Animals are non-judgmental, empathetic and affectionate, which is helpful for clients who have had traumatic experiences in their life. Animals provide the ability for one to recognize one's own anxiety and social skills and how one's behaviors affects others. They can help motivate the client to open up and express their feelings. Animals can be used individually or with a group of animals (trained dogs, horses and miniature horses, etc.). Animals can also be matched with a specific client. For example, a client who might have had personal boundary violations, is paired with an animal who has been rescued or physically abused. This improves the ability of the client to relate to the animal. Animals help to reduce the physiological and psychological stress of talking about trauma. They can lower heart rates, helping the client to be less anxious during the session. Animals also increases social interactions and self-esteem, as well as building trust in self and others.

Therapy animals can be beneficial when treating the effects of traumatic experiences, such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), youth violence, child abuse and neglect,

physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and other boundary violations that often result in PTSD, anxiety, substance abuse and addiction, depression, re-traumatization, suicidal ideation, need to improve self-esteem and social skills, etc.

Therapy animals are incorporated in many ways depending on the therapeutic approach. These can include: 1) a client cuddling or petting an animal, while talking about their trauma or when simply talking to the therapist; 2) doing artwork about their experiences with the animal at their side; 3) spending time with an animal or haltering and/or walking a horse, helping the client to reduce anxiety or other approach; 4) executing an obstacle course with an animal, where the client tries to lead the animal across an object that is defined as an emotional barrier for the client, for example; 5) watching animals interact, such as a group of horses while discussion body language and non-verbal communication; 6) creating play scenarios with the animal; or 7) teaching the animal a new trick or skill.

### 5.3 ANIMAL-ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY – ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Organizations	Website
Society for Psychotherapy	<a href="https://societyforpsychotherapy.org/">https://societyforpsychotherapy.org/</a>
The National Psychologist	<a href="https://nationalpsychologist.com/">https://nationalpsychologist.com/</a>
Special Spirit, Inc. Equine Therapy Center	<a href="https://www.specialspirit.org/">https://www.specialspirit.org/</a>

### 5.4 ANIMAL-ASSISTED SOCIAL WORK



Animal-Assisted Social Work is a two-client system: the human client and the veterinary medical and support staff. Social workers can contribute to 1) the human-animal bond relationship by providing pet-loss and grief counseling/advance directive planning for pet handlers and owners; 2) the link between human-animal abuse (such as animal abuse, intimate partner violence, child abuse, elder maltreatment, etc.); 3) promoting health and wellness to the human and animal; 4) providing veterinary medical and support staff with reducing compassion fatigue as well as improving moral within staff development of the veterinary staff.

In addition, social workers (including other mental health professionals), have been trained in how to identify and treat emotional trauma. They are also trained in knowing how and when to report certain forms of trauma such as child abuse, for example. This training and experience can bring benefits to veterinary staff and to veterinary staff training for those on how to handle pet-loss and grief. Social workers and other mental health professionals can obtain animal-assisted certification, in addition to their traditional professional licensure in counseling. The University of Tennessee provides a [video](#) describing animal-assisted social work and related certification.

### 5.5 ANIMAL-ASSISTED SOCIAL WORK - ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Organizations	Website
Pet Loss Support Directory	<a href="http://aplb.org/support/groups/california.html">http://aplb.org/support/groups/california.html</a>
Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement	<a href="https://www.aplb.org/">https://www.aplb.org/</a>
The International Association for Animal Hospice and Palliative Care	<a href="https://www.iaahpc.org/">https://www.iaahpc.org/</a>
Animals & Society Institute (Degrees, certificates & specializations on human-animal studies)	<a href="https://www.animalsandsociety.org/human-animal-studies/degree-programs/">https://www.animalsandsociety.org/human-animal-studies/degree-programs/</a>

### 5.6 ANIMAL-ASSISTED PHYSICAL THERAPY



Trained therapy animals are incorporated into physical therapy as well as occupational therapy to improve existing treatment and rehabilitation from injury, developmental disability, impairments or mental health problems. Various types of therapy animals can be incorporated into various settings to meet individual needs.

Animals provide a benefit to enhance treatment to improve neuromusculoskeletal abilities (strength, endurance, range of motion), motor skills (fine and gross muscles movements), cognitive skills (multitasking, problem-solving, attention span), sensory functioning (visual, audio-perception, smell, taste, peripheral sensation), perceptual processing skills (spatial relations, body awareness, depth perception), respiratory functioning (positioning, blowing, diaphragm strength), communication skills, balance, and weight-bearing. Incorporating therapy animals into treatment has shown to improve rehabilitation and treatment outcomes. Studies have shown that the use of animals in treatment, releases of beta-endorphins and lymphocytes, contributing to generating positive feelings and reducing the perception of pain (Braun, Stangler, Narveson, & Pettingell, 2009). The Intermountain Therapy Animals provides a [video example](#) of how animal-assisted physical therapy is incorporated into rehabilitation of motor vehicle related injury of a child.

### 5.7 ANIMAL-ASSISTED PHYSICAL THERAPY - ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Organizations	Website
American Occupational Therapy Association	<a href="https://www.aota.org/">https://www.aota.org/</a>
American Physical Therapy Association	<a href="http://www.apta.org/">http://www.apta.org/</a>
Mini Therapy Horses	<a href="https://www.minitherapyhorses.com/">https://www.minitherapyhorses.com/</a>

### 5.8 ANIMAL-ASSISTED SPEECH THERAPY



Incorporating trained therapy animals into speech therapy, is not a separate type of therapy or service, but incorporates the animal into part of the clinical treatment plan. This is delivered by a licensed Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP). While dogs are mostly used, other animals can include rabbits, cats, horses, donkeys, sheep, goats and chickens.

Depending on the need, the animal can be used to calm a child down who might be anxious during the session. It can be incorporated as part of the treatment as the client speaks to the animal by providing commands. Where the trained animal responds with proper speech only. Sometimes the animal is used to gain interest to those who might not be interested in the session. The animal can also carry a saddle-pack with speech therapy cards which is then incorporated in various ways. Animal-assisted therapy is generally individual with individual trained therapy animals. However, an SLP might also take the client to a farm or barn with various animals, which motivates the client to speak of their experiences, while the SLP incorporates therapy accordingly. Animals increases motivation and participation of speech therapy sessions and also builds confidence in the client. An SLP, at Pawsitive Friendships, provides a [video](#), describing how trained therapy animals are incorporated into speech therapy treatment plans and sessions.

### 5.9 ANIMAL-ASSISTED SPEECH THERAPY - ORGANIZATIONS, PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

Organizations	Website
Therapy Dogs International	<a href="https://tdi-dog.org">https://tdi-dog.org</a>
Pet Partners	<a href="https://petpartners.org/">https://petpartners.org/</a>
Intermountain Therapy Animals	<a href="http://therapyanimals.org/Home.html">http://therapyanimals.org/Home.html</a>

### 5.10 ANIMAL-ASSISTED PARAPROFESSIONAL AAT SERVICE MODEL



The Animal-assisted Paraprofessional AAT Service Model focuses on paraprofessionals such as Veterinary Assistant/Technicians, Teacher Assistants, Mental Health Interns (Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Licensed Clinical Marriage and Family Therapist). The service model provides an opportunity for professional trainees who are interested in certification to incorporate animal-assisted therapy into their profession.



## Section 6: Equine-Assisted Interactions



Equine-Assisted Interactions, incorporates horses into various types of interventions. These interactions with horses can be applied similarly to those discussed with other animals, such as in Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA) with Therapy Animal Hospital Visit and AAA for At-risk or Delinquent Youth, as well as in Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT), including Animal-Assisted Psychotherapy, Animal-Assisted Physical (and Occupational) Therapy, and Animal-Assisted Speech Therapy. The therapeutic value of interacting with horses in various animal interactions, is their size, movement and emotional connection. Horses are incorporated into a range of animal interactions, including Equine-Assisted Activities (EAA), Equine-Assisted Therapies (EAT), Hippotherapy (HPOT), Equine-facilitates/assisted Psychotherapy (EEP/EAP), Equine-Assisted/facilitates learning, Therapeutic Carriage Driving (TCD), and Therapeutic Vaulting (TV).

### 6.1 EQUINE-ASSISTED INTERACTIONS – PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION ORGANIZATIONS

#### Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH)

[The Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International \(PATH\)](#) is a global authority, resource, advocate and certifying organization for equine-assisted activities and therapies. It promotes safety among equine-assisted activities and therapies for individuals with physical and emotional challenges and those with special needs. With PATH activities and therapies, the client is on the horse. It utilizes the motion of the horse as part of the therapeutic treatment in both physical and occupational therapies, in collaboration with a PATH Certified Equine Specialist.

#### American Hippotherapy Association

[The American Hippotherapy Association](#) provides educational resources and education for those in physical and occupational therapy, and speech language pathology, who incorporate the equine movement and equine environment to improve and enhance traditional treatment. The term hippotherapy refers to how physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology professionals apply evidenced-based practice and clinical reasoning that utilizes the movement of the horse as a therapy tool. It engages sensory, neuromotor and cognitive systems to enhance functional outcomes and treatment. Hippotherapy is highly regarded as a therapy tool by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA), American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), and the American Speech-Language and Hearing Association (ASHA). It must be noted that the term “Hippotherapy” service or program is not always used. In generally licensed professionals, such as Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, and Speech-Language Pathologists, refer to incorporating equine movement into their plans of care as a therapy tool.

#### Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association (EAGALA)

[The Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association \(EAGALA\)](#) is an organization that provides resources, education and certification of the EAGALA model. The Model is a team approach that includes the EAGALA Certified Equine Specialist, that works closely with a Licensed Mental Health Professional with the client within the environment of the horse. With EAGALA, the program is grounded, where the client is never on the horse. It can include one horse or several horses depending on the need. It enhances specific treatment, including a range of problem solving, including emotional issues, anxiety, etc.

## 6.2 EQUINE-ASSISTED ACTIVITIES



Equine-Assisted Activities (EAA) include clients, volunteers, participants, instructors and horses. The types of activities can include Therapeutic Vaulting (TV), mounted (on-horse) or ground (off-horse), demonstrations, horse shows or parades, stables management or horsemanship skills. The objectives include social, emotional, physical or cognitive well-being. It is shown to improve balance, muscle strength, range of motion, sensorimotor integration social skills and lowering blood pressure.

## 6.3 EQUINE-ASSISTED THERAPY (EAT)



Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT) incorporates horses and/or their environment to improve rehabilitation due to injury and disability. Treatment is performed by a medical professional. Rehabilitation goals are based on the needs of the patient. Treatment provides benefit to motor skills and balance, sensory functioning and neuromusculoskeletal ability, such as range of motion, strength and endurance.

## 6.4 HIPPO THERAPY (HPOT)



Hippotherapy (HPOT), utilizes the natural movement of a horse to improve traditional treatments for physical or occupational therapy, or speech therapy. While similar to (EAT), HPOT incorporates physical, occupational or speech therapy as part of an integrated program, shown to increase physical mobility of the client. HPOT is performed by a licensed physical, occupational or speech therapist. It can also be provided by physician's prescription and it is a common form of treatment recognized by the American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA) and the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), similarly as discussed in Section 5.7 (Animal-Assisted Physical Therapy). Differently than Animal-Assisted Physical Therapy, with other animals, taking advantage of the movement of the horse helps to improve healing processes. It engages sensory, neuromotor and cognitive systems, and promotes functional outcomes of traditional therapy. It provides benefit to muscle strength, motor coordination, posture and flexibility, socialization, communication, concentration and improves self-confidence and control of the client.

## 6.5 EQUINE-FACILITATED/ASSISTED PSYCHOTHERAPY



Trained horses are incorporated into the counseling session to improve traditional forms of psychotherapy. This is similar to the discussion in Section 5.2 (Animal-Assisted Psychotherapy), also conducted by a licensed mental health professional (clinical psychologist, licensed social worker, licensed marriage and family therapist), with emphasis on psychosocial and behavioral interaction but with a horse, as part of a traditional behavior-based treatment plan. When incorporating a horse into psychotherapy, the client is within the environment or the horse, not on-the horse, riding.

The use of a horse, versus other type of therapy-animal in psychotherapy, takes advantage of the intimidating size the animal, which allows clients to gain trust in the animal as well

as builds self-confidence. Using a horse, also and most significantly, takes advantage of the it's emotional perception from being a prey animal. The horse helps to "ground" a client in the moment. Not worrying about yesterday, trauma, or tomorrow, but rather helps to ground the client into the moment with the horse. The horse also provides immediate feedback, such as if the client is tense or anxious, the horse will mirror how the client feels, through its body language (Birke, 2011; Krueger, 2011; Lentini, 2008). The horse will also respond based on body language This helps the therapist to provide such biofeedback to help the client learn about their own feeling and reactions.

Incorporating a horse, or horses, into psychotherapy can improve treatments for Autism, developmental delay or disability, learning disorders, emotional or behavioral challenges, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, addiction, terminal illness, eating disorders, at-risk youth, etc.

### 6.6 EQUINE-FACILITATED/ASSISTED LEARNING



Equine-Facilitates/Assisted Learning incorporates treatment activities within the horse's environment. It is a goal-oriented approach, experiential, that promotes the development of life skills, including educational, professional and personal goals. Being experiential, the client learns by interacting with the horse or horses, which they receive immediate, physical, and observable feedback as part of the learning process. It helps to improve personal growth, trust, personal boundaries, problem-solving skills, self-confidence, communication, empathy, self-esteem, teamwork, interpersonal relationships, tolerance for stress, etc.

### 6.7 THERAPEUTIC CARRIAGE DRIVING (TCD)



Therapeutic carriage driving (TCD) provides an opportunity for clients with physical, cognitive, emotional or sensory challenges, or other physical, balance or other limitations, to connect, communicate and control the horse while driving from a carriage seat or wheelchair within a modified carriage. This offers an alternative to a riding approach. It provides improved coordination, strength, posture, visual perception, cause and effect relationships and communication.

### 6.8 THERAPEUTIC VAULTING (TV)



Therapeutic vaulting (TV) utilizes the horse as a method where the client performs movements on and around the horse. Movements are often provided with the client on the horse, with assistance depending on disability, while the horse handler, maintains control of the horse. Depending on the needs of the client, TV activities can include sitting on the horse with arms outward, kneeling or standing on the horse, sitting on the horse forward or backward, or mounting and dismounting. The natural movement of the horse, helps to improve strength and flexibility, focus, coordination, balance, self-confidence and motor skills. These improvements can benefit those with sensory processing challenges, developmental disabilities, perceptual disorders, Autism, learning disabilities, physical challenges (i.e. neurological, motor skills), etc. Qualifications for TV programs include training and certification by PATH International and through the American Vaulting Association.



## Section 7: References, Books and Resources

### 7.1 REFERENCES

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### 7.3 RESOURCES

- International Association of Human-Animal Interaction Organizations <http://iahaio.org>
- International Society for Anthrozoology <http://www.isaz.net>
- Animal Assisted Intervention International (AAII) <https://aai-int.org/>
- Human Animal Bond Research Institute <https://habri.org/>
- Human Animal Bond Association <https://humananimalbond.net/>
- Animals & Society Institute <https://www.animalsandsociety.org/>
- Pet Partners <https://petpartners.org/>