



From the Desk of the Executive Director

Reflecting over this past year, I realize how much Equine Assisted Development (EAD) has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, however, differently than might be expected. While we served a variety of clients and organizations this year, we've seen therapists needing our services themselves, more than ever before. EAD has had a positive impact on everyone who has reached out for support, as we too have struggled through the confusion of social isolation and remote visits instead of face-to-face encounters.

At one point this year, it seemed as if adults were learning to live life as children again. Children are subject to the schedules set by the adults around them. Suddenly, adults were having to adjust daily to confusing messages and ever changing restrictions. In the midst of confusion, anxiety and fear became common feelings for many, a reoccurring theme during our horse therapy sessions. While group programs and summer camps were limited, our stable remained open to bring a sense of comfort, and hope to those who came. We helped people navigate sudden changes in family life and unexpected career changes.

Throughout the year, our volunteers regularly reported how they were benefiting simply by being around horses that need daily care and feeding. Our commitment to mental health awareness has only deepened and we've used this time to dig in and study other ways our horses can be used for change. One thing is for certain, whether it's the joy of one visit or a series of sessions, horses help us push through the overwhelming job of life and bring a sense of normalcy in the midst of the uncertain. Peace,

Deb VanderBand

Deb VanderBand | Founder & Executive Director

About EAD

EAD is a faith based, non-profit, farm in the city that provides EAGALA certified horse therapy services to those who are hurting.

Who We Serve

- **Diverse Communities**
vulnerable and at-risk youth, teens and adults
- **Trauma Survivors** trafficked, domestic and other forms of abuse
- **Mental Health** children, adolescents, adults and providers
- **Students & Educators** public/private schools and universities
- **Assisted Living** Dementia/Alzheimer's patients and respite care
- **Military** active duty, reserves, veterans and military families
- **First Responders** police, fire, EMT and medical professionals
- **Corporate** leadership and team building exercises



Trauma Treatment Center: 5 Year Expansion Plan

EAD strives to use therapy horses, resources and the farm's unique location to meet the ongoing needs of local families and individuals. EAD's expanded vision encompasses the following:

Equine Assisted Development will become a comprehensive trauma treatment center prioritizing horse therapy services, and expand programming to include: art therapy, nature therapy, traditional therapy, EMDR therapy, and coaching.

EAD's current goal is to raise \$5 million in five years.

For more information, visit: www.EquineAssistedDev.org.



Stories & Testimonials

"I am the mother of 7 children, all with unique personalities and needs. My daughter, Faith (not her real name), experienced some very traumatic events that changed her in a short period of time. She was diagnosed afterward with depression, anxiety, an eating disorder, a sleeping disorder, and other stress related disorders. We have sought several different therapy methods, however none have been as successful as the therapy provided by Equine Assisted Development.

We were told by Deb, our equine therapist, that horses can sense certain things about a person's emotional state and that horses will react to what they perceive about the person handling them. We saw a time when Faith was so full of fear the horses surrounded her and wouldn't allow anyone to get near her. Deb taught her to relax, trust the horses, show them respect, and the horses will reciprocate. I watched my daughter gain confidence in the horses and in herself as time progressed.

Faith made a breakthrough, after many successful sessions, to eating normally, sleeping in her own room, smiling, laughing, being able to attend school and social events again, and being able to leave the safety of mom. My daughter has been able to maintain these new abilities across several situations that previously would have sent her into crisis mode. My family recommends this organization regularly to friends and coworkers dealing with any sensory based, anxiety or stress-based issues." - A grateful mother

Andrea (not her real name) came to Equine Assisted Development (EAD) after four years of counseling. She is in her forties and had spent those years trying to deal with the trauma of incest and sexual abuse. This September Andrea completed six months of sessions with therapy horses. When asked to draw a picture of how she feels about the horses at EAD, she drew a picture of gray clouds in the sky, but also a bright rainbow.

Her equine therapist has seen great changes in her. She describes Andrea as calm, confident, peaceful, without the outward, physical signs of stress that showed the world how she has struggled through life. Andrea made some changes during her 6 months of equine therapy. She left an abusive home, moved into a group home, and got her job back. She is adjusting to changes now rather than simply trying to survive. Rather than being self-focused and self-preserving, she can now say "I'm others-focused."
- Story shared with permission



Observations & Fun Facts

"I think the experience of equine therapy is the perfect complement to traditional talk therapy as it marries what you talk about and 'learn' in session with true in-person experiences. That's the beauty of experiential therapy techniques - they help solidify lessons and tools in the client's mind. Additionally, many people learn better through hands-on activities, and equine therapy allows for this along with deeper discussions during their follow-up traditional talk therapy sessions."

- Tierney Mosier | MSW Graduate Student & EAD Marketing Intern

Did You Know?

600+ lives are impacted through free programs each year!
EAD houses 8 therapy horses, some have been rescued!
1 therapy horse can work with **128+** people each month!