



## TRIPLE H EQUITHERAPY CENTER

*Horses Helping the Handicapped, Inc.*

Triple H programs fill a serious gap for the underserved disabled community by offering rehabilitative, recreational, educational, entertaining and joyful experiences and opportunities to socialize with other disabled participants and able bodied individuals. The participants benefit from specific objectives, individually prescribed, which include improving individual physical abilities, visual and auditory perception, self-image and character while growing in personal responsibility and reducing inappropriate or self-destructive behavior.



**The mission of Triple H Equitherapy is to provide children and adults with disabilities, wounded warriors and at-risk youth nationally accredited equine assisted horsemanship programs, in a safe Hill Country environment.**

Horses Helping the Handicapped Inc, (dba Triple H Equitherapy Center) incorporated in Texas in 1995 and received nonprofit 501(c)3 IRS status in 1996. We have four sessions; eight to 12 lessons each, in the fall, winter, spring and summer. Triple H provides equitherapy for 160+ clients each year with the support of over 100 volunteers. Located in Bandera County, Triple H provides services to clients from Bandera, Bexar, Kendall, Medina and Kerr and the greater Hill Country area. We received the designation of “Outstanding Provider of Services for the Disabled” in Bandera County twice since 1999.



Triple H is located on a 120-acre ranch, studded with oak trees and crossed by a small creek, about 20 miles Northwest of San Antonio, Texas. It is equipped with a large barn with 17 horse stalls, three outdoor arenas, wheelchair mounting ramp built to ADA standards, a “bunkhouse” office/training center which is wheelchair- accessible. It has a disabled access restroom, training room, tack room, small kitchen and office. Currently Triple H has 21 horses either in active program participation or in training.

Triple H Equitherapy Center has, for the past decade, been a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship, International (PATH, Int'l.) Premier Therapeutic Riding Center. In March of 2008, Triple H once again was awarded a rare perfect rating of “100% compliance” with industry standards for program safety and professionalism in a PATH inspection. At this time, we are the only fully accredited nonprofit PATH center in the San Antonio area.

All instructors who teach at Triple H Equitherapy Center are certified through PATH and they complete continuing education training to remain current in their field. The program staff includes five registered PATH instructors and six Equine Specialists. Our “From Fear to Responsibility”, Work-to-Ride curriculum has been presented at the PATH National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, at the Equine Facilitated Mental Health “Horses and Healing” Conference in Temple, New Hampshire and at the Lone Star Therapeutic Equestrian Network (LSTEN) annual meeting in Tyler, Texas.



Triple H programs improve the lives of physically and emotionally challenged children and adults through the therapeutic benefits of the unique interaction between horse and man.

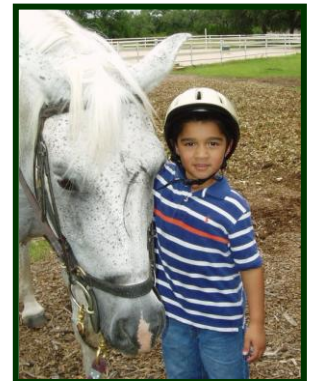


Our clients come to us with a diverse range of disabilities: among them are physical (multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, spina bifida, congenital heart conditions, auditory impairments, orthopedic impairments, vision impaired, war related injuries), cognitive (intellectual developmental disabilities, autism, Down Syndrome, traumatic brain injury, learning disabilities, mental disorders), emotional (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, psychological disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, psychological trauma, emotional disorders), and social (behavior disorders, neglect and abuse and social disorders). We regularly receive referrals from special education directors, doctors and therapists in our service area and therefore we are constantly working toward the expansion of our programs in order to provide service opportunities for those in need.

Riding encourages cognitive activity, correct muscle tone, gross and fine motor skills, physical stamina, sensory reception, proper posture, emotional stability, self-esteem, vocalization, life and social skills, and lots of smiles. Our equitherapy programs directly improve the quality of life for those with mental, physical and emotional challenges by helping them to be healthy and productive members of the communities in which they live. The enjoyment of riding also provides an organized social and recreational activity for children and adults who may not often be included in community social organizations.

## **OUR PROGRAMS**

The benefits of therapeutic riding and equine assisted therapy have been recognized for many years. Each rider is given an opportunity to experience success and pride in his or her accomplishments as well as unconditional acceptance by their horse, the staff, and the volunteers. The participants benefit from equitherapy in line with specific objectives unique to each client. The horse is the motivator that encourages the client to work longer and harder at therapy than in a traditional classroom or clinical setting. The healing interaction between horses, riders, and those who help them is at the center of all our programs.



Our **“Hooves, Hearts and Heroes”** school based program uses an integrated curriculum as an extension of the standard special education curriculum. Many students from the special education departments of the Boerne and Bandera ISD school systems come to our Center to participate in this program. Admissions Review and Exit evaluations involving the Director of Special Education, the classroom Special Education teacher, parents and appropriate diagnosticians are conducted for each prospective client. The students then progress through our therapeutic horseback riding program and participate in equine facilitated learning lessons that are fine tuned to their special needs. Student progress is evaluated after each lesson and future lessons are adjusted as necessary so as to provide individualized instruction. Equitherapy is utilized as one more additional approach to fulfill the child’s special physical and mental needs, and aids in their academic successes. Triple H has provided this program for the Boerne and Bandera Independent School Districts for many years and now is expanding the program out to North Side ISD.



Our **“From Fear to Responsibility” Program** is a collaborative effort with local school districts and other agencies for troubled and abused “at risk” youth. Under the counseling and recommendation of therapists, counselors and case managers, Triple H gives children and youth of school age, an opportunity to participate in a proactive program where they develop character and growth in personal responsibility, as they learn to ride and care for their assigned program horse. The goal is to develop a work ethic and encourage positive values essential to good citizenship by placing children and youth in situations where they must earn the trust and respect of a powerful prey animal, the horse. The youthful participants learn self-discipline, a sense of responsibility and self-confidence. The horse and its rider form a bond that changes the child by affecting his/her attitudes and behavior.



In our **“Riding to Independence” Program**,

clients who suffer from various physical, emotional and social challenges participate in therapeutic horseback riding under professional instruction which reflects their individual therapeutic needs. Adults and children participate by referral from personal physicians and therapists, local hospitals, schools, youth service organizations and clinics. This referral procedure creates a large group of privately contracted participants who are quite diversified. The program participants are divided into program classes according to age,

ability and interests. Each rider’s objectives are individually set by the therapeutic riding teams and are reinforced by the use of a rider directed curriculum, educational games and reinforced by trail ride experiences. Triple H has expanded this program so as to provide services to those who have participated with us before in our school based programs and other children and youth programs. Clients can then return, after their session within another program such as Hooves, Hearts & Heroes, to continue their equine assisted therapy.

**“Way of Equus” Program** is an equine facilitated psychotherapy program that serves children, youth and adults who suffer from psychological trauma and emotional and mental disorder. Upon a thorough review of the client’s needs, a programmed set of “ground based” lessons are formulated for each client. Our Equine Specialist and Psychotherapist/Licensed Professional Counselor participate each activity under the supervision of our Medical Director and encourage the client to express his or her emotions in a psychologically safe environment. Each client completes a series of activities, with extended service provided when needed, with emphasis on problem solving, communication, social skills, anger management and behavior improvement, social reintegration and the overall improvement of mental and emotional health.

### **Children’s Opportunities in Leadership Training & Service (COLTS)**

**Volunteer Program** is provided as an opportunity for growth for our *Open the Gate* Project participants and other youthful volunteers. As program volunteers who provide assistance to our horses, disabled clients and to the overall ranch facility, the participants develop character and self-reliance. Each activity is organized, performed under adult supervision and founded on traditional values of respect and responsibility. Our COLTS volunteer program identifies, develops, and promotes leadership skills as we engage children/youth in a program geared to develop self-esteem and self-worth through volunteer community service and outdoor recreational activities. We also have local youth organizations assisting as volunteers such as the Boy Scouts of America, 4-H Youth Programs, college and university programs and church youth groups so our program participants will be able to socialize positively with their peers and enjoy the gift of giving back to their community. The healing interaction between horses, riders, and those who help them is at the center of all our programs.



## OUR PROJECTS



The Triple H **“Open the Gate” Project** for children and youth provides equine facilitated psychotherapy, equine assisted mental health interventions and therapeutic horse back riding for children and youth who suffer from the corrosive effects of emotional and mental disorders. Our “Open the Gate” Project encompasses four distinct programs that are offered at Triple H: “Way of Equus”, “From Fear to Responsibility”, “Riding to Independence” and our “COLTS” Youth Volunteer Program. The children and youth within this project come from underserved rural communities within the counties of northern Bexar, Bandera, Kendall, Kerr and Medina Counties. Our “Open the Gate” Project provides much needed mental health assistance for at-risk children/youth that have suffered from emotional and mental health issues.

The Triple H **“Horses for Heroes” Project** encompasses equine facilitated mental health, therapeutic riding and driving and recreational equine activities within our programs such as Riding to Independence, Wheels of Freedom, Way of Equus and COLTS as adult supervisors. The Horses for Heroes Project has the primary goal of easing the veteran’s transition back into family and into every day life by providing equine facilitated activities that improve their physical, mental and social well-being. The equine experiences emphasize the unique bond between horse and man and that encourage clients to confront and deal with the reality of their lives. The focus is to provide physical and cognitive behavioral therapy for veterans and their families that encourage clients to confront both their physical issues and emotional issues and apply problem solving, creative thinking, teamwork, and non-verbal communications that rebuild basic human capabilities. The program objectives emphasize a guiding principal of recovery to restore empowerment and gain control in ones life. Recovery takes place within the context of relationships and not in isolation. With the assistance of an equine friend, veterans and their families are given the opportunity to progressively fulfill their basic human needs trust, autonomy, initiative, confidence, identity and intimacy. Within our Horses for Heroes Project, both the veteran and his or her family have the opportunity to enjoy the natural companionship of our horses, in the beautiful Texas Hill Country, within a non-clinical ranch setting, as they enjoy the company of family and new friends.



### **Triple H Equitherapy Center**

**Bringing health and wholeness to those with disabilities through the magic of horses!**

