



Executive Director Report

Well, we are well overdue for another news letter... I cannot believe that we are in our ninth year already - the staff at EquiTeam has been so busy with all aspects of our organization that we are not sure where the time goes. Please allow me to share some of our experiences from the past year.

EquiTeam is busier than ever, meeting with up to 60 individuals each week for therapeutic services/intervention. We work with these clients through individual, sibling, family or group settings with each session occurring for one hour (90-minutes for group sessions). Clients come to EquiTeam with a multitude of different issues and challenges. These challenges include but are not limited to victims of child abuse and neglect (physical, sexual and emotional abuse), attachment disorganization, PTSD, anger management issues, anxiety, depression, grief, lack of direction, low self-esteem, relationship issues, substance abuse, as well as Autism Spectrum Disorder. EquiTeam operates very much like an outpatient therapy office however our services are conducted in a horse arena rather than an office! To learn more about the Equine Assisted Psychotherapy/Learning process, please refer to the article later in this newsletter titled "What Exactly Does EquiTeam Do?"

Due to significant work with clientele that have experienced complex trauma through horrific physical and sexual abuse, I have been working directly with world renowned doctor and creator of Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy, Dr. Daniel Hughes, in order to become a certified specialist for this population. This method, used in conjunction with Equine Assisted Psychotherapy, has helped and continues to help children (as young as 3 years old), adolescents and even adults work through their past trauma and learn to effectively obtain and maintain healthy connections/relationships.

In addition to our ongoing successes with our programming, EquiTeam has been working diligently in increasing awareness and effective marketing of the organization as funding is an ever ongoing process, especially with the organizational growth that we are experiencing. A new Equine Specialist, Michele Schraf, has joined the EquiTeam staff and it is expected that current staff member Juliana Lau will move into the Mental Health Professional role Spring 2016. With additional staff and increased responsibility of current staff members EquiTeam Support Services must secure an additional \$50,000 annually in order to support organizational growth. Please consider an annual donation to EquiTeam



Support Services, supporting this local non-profit organization (registered as a charitable organization in PA and MD). Complete and return the enclosed donation card – EquiTeam thanks you in advance for your support.

We pride ourselves in operating with the highest levels of professionalism and in providing the best possible services to our clientele. All of EquiTeam's staff is certified through EAGALA (Equine Assisted Growth and Learning Association) with myself and Michele Schraf holding ADVANCED certification. In addition to these qualifications, EquiTeam itself has been recognized as a Distinguished Program Member through EAGALA. There are approximately 700 EAGALA programs worldwide with only 11 organizations reaching the standards to become a Distinguished Program. This ultimately places EquiTeam in the top 1% of EAGALA certified organizations in the world.

Please enjoy the remainder of this newsletter - thank you for taking the time to read our stories and learn more about our organizations.

All the best,

Ellie Williams, MS, NCC, LPC, BCPC
Executive Director

Racing for Autism 5K/10K Walk-Run

Saturday, October 17th

**Registration is Now Online at:
www.runsignup.com/Equiteam**



Please join us for the second annual EquiTeam Support Services Racing for Autism 5k/10k Walk/Run! This family-friendly event will feature a 5k run, 5k walk, 10k run, and FREE Kid's Fun Run! All courses will occur around the beautiful South Branch Farms and York County Heritage Rail Trail.

NEW this year – chip timing for the 5k and 10k runs!

Our Two Legged Staff

Ellie Williams, MS NCC LPC BCPC / EAGALA Advanced Certified

Apart from being the Executive Director for EquiTeam since its inception in 2007, Ellie is EquiTeams' primary therapist and attachment specialist. Ellie combines her two passions – the love of helping others and her love of horses. Ellie works long hours working diligently, not only providing effective therapeutic services to her clients, but to run a top notch and professional organization.

Marian Hamilton – Co-Founder/ EAGALA Certified Equine Specialist / Administrator

Marian has given most of the last decade to this organization, working the first three years pro-bono in order to obtain the necessary outcomes to secure contracts and ongoing funding. Marian continues to give back to the community by sharing her farm and animals with the population served by EquiTeam. In addition to direct client contact, Marian spends many hours behind the scenes ensuring that the facility is in perfect working order as well as assisting with administrative duties.

Juliana Lau – EAGALA Certified Mental Health professional / Barn Manager

Juliana continues to show dedication to EquiTeam. She has been with our organization for more than five years in one capacity or another. Her journey started as an intern where she completed two summers in this capacity while finishing her undergraduate degree. After graduation Juliana took on the task of Barn Manager and Equine Specialist while she continued with Graduate school to obtain qualifications necessary to move into the Mental Health role. She continues to work hard to become an exceptional practitioner, working endless hours and regularly going above and beyond, exhibiting what it takes to be a true team member.



So Many times We Are Asked... What Exactly Does EquiTeam Do?

A question that does not have a simple answer, and also much of what goes on at EquiTeam is confidential and therefore cannot be discussed. EquiTeam Support Services is a non-profit, outpatient therapy organization, providing services to residents of York County and surrounding areas that are seeking mental wellness as well as emotional and behavioral stability.

EquiTeam, however, uses horses (not ridden) as part of our professional team. Hence, we provide, Equine Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP) and Equine Assisted Learning (EAL).

Clients will learn about themselves and others by participating in activities with the horses, and then processing (or discussing) with our mental health professional, feelings, behaviors and patterns. EAP/EAL is a powerful and effective approach that has an incredible impact on its participants.

The horses are an integral part of our therapeutic team. A horse is amazingly perceptive, he will give you an immediate reaction to any situation. Your reaction to the horse, and the horse's reaction to you will "show" you how to better communicate and interact with others to accomplish your personal goals. The mission of EquiTeam is to empower the client to make positive changes in his/her life.

EquiTeam offers the following programs.

EAP/EAL assists with a multitude of issues, including but not limited to: anxiety, AD/HD, behavioral issues, bullying, child abuse/ neglect,

communication problems, depression, disorganized attachment, low self-esteem, poor social skills, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, substance abuse and trauma. It is the goal of EquiTeam to decrease intrapersonal and somatic distress, create a cooperative interpersonal demeanor, reduce problematic social behaviors and decrease behavioral dysfunction.

Group EAL - There are endless ways to apply this approach for personal, professional and human development. EquiTeam is successfully using EAL with groups from Juvenile Probation, Residential facilities, organizations and schools. The debriefing process

seeks to bridge the horse activity from the arena back to "real life", inviting participants to reflect, analyze and apply new insights.

EAP /Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) – DDP is an integrated method of psychotherapy for the treatment of children and youth who manifest

serious psychological problems associated with complex trauma and serious failure to establish secure patterns of attachment. Attachment Issues/Disorganization stems from: Children with a history of physical, sexual, and/or emotional trauma, childhood neglect, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse and repeated placements (foster care, residential facilities etc.) Most of these clients reside in foster homes, adoptive homes and residential treatment centers. EquiTeams' DDP specialist, when

"I learned to be more positive and believe in myself. To have more respect in myself. To have more respect for others. More respect for family. To think before I do stuff that I know isn't right. I can believe in myself and be a better person"
- 15 y.o. boy



Two Legged Staff *continued*

Katie Fitzpatrick – EAGALA Certified Equine Specialist

A lifetime with horses has led Katie to expand her already impressive resume to include working for EquiTeam. We were thrilled when Katie joined our staff in 2012. She has a vast experience of equine behavior, breaking and training utilizing Natural Horsemanship as well as a personal interest in showing and driving miniature horses at the local and national level. Her successful riding and showing career, along with her extensive equine knowledge, makes her a wonderful addition to the EquiTeam family.

Michele Schraf – EAGALA Advanced Certified

We were excited to have Michele join our already impressive team. Not only is Michele an Advanced Certified practitioner, she has recently added EAGALA trainer to her resume. Michele focuses her work on ‘clean language’ which ensures the Equine Specialist provides non-judgmental observations. Michele is an avid horse lover and enjoys spending time with them in their natural environment.

appropriate, will utilize a combination of EAP and DDP .

Autism Program - Due to the increasing demand for treatment of children on the Autism Spectrum, EquiTeam created a program, utilizing the "Horse Boy Method" to effectively treat all children on the spectrum. It is the only part of the organizations programs that can involve riding (when appropriate) and is kept separate from EquiTeams' other programs. It is a three stage process that (1) creates the right environment for the child, (2) addresses sensory issues, which in turn allows for (3) perspective taking

and academics to be taught from the saddle; our certified backrider will ride with smaller children, older children will be on a long- line. EquiTeam provides a "yes environment" to address the following three core behavioral domains of children on the autism spectrum: Repetitive behaviors, social deficits and language abnormalities.

So, these are our programs - but no client or their situation is ever the same. Here at EquiTeam we constantly think outside the box and will tailor individual treatments to suit your needs.



" It helped me a lot with learning a lot of different things that I didn't know about myself. Horses have taught me to be patient and read what others are doing not just saying."

- 13 y.o. girl



" It helped me grow as a person and realize there is always a positive in a situation and to focus on the positive. The horses taught me through actions that you don't always have to do extra for people to love you and to stay positive and confident for a better future."

- 14 y.o. girl

School Groups



EquiTeam Support Services continues to maintain an 85% success rate of clientele completing treatment with improved mental health and behavioral stability. Because of this continued success, EquiTeam reached out to local school districts in order to collaborate and provide Equine Assisted Learning groups to middle school students in the Emotional/Learning Support classrooms. Sadly, due to significant budget cuts the schools were unable to add this service to their curriculum. EquiTeam believed so strongly in these groups that we personally sought out the necessary funding to ensure equine therapy to three local school districts. EquiTeam reached out to The Rotary Club of York as well as other local businesses and supporters. Through their belief in our program, The Rotary Club of York awarded

EquiTeam with a \$9000 grant which covers the majority of cost for these groups. Along with additional financial support from other donors 100% of funding has been obtained for 2015-16 school year.

EquiTeam will meet with each school district to identify a plan specific to the needs of their students. Groups to focus on self esteem, social skills, personal awareness, bully prevention, effective communication, and positive boundaries; just to name a few. The school group will take place one time per week, for approximately 90-minutes and will be over a period of eight weeks. Each school district will complete two groups, one group will occur in Fall 2015 and a second group in Spring 2016.

Following our treatment of groups from this upcoming school year, EquiTeam will provide outcomes (pre and post test outcome measures from the Youth Outcome Questionnaire and the Child and Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale) to each of the school districts in order obtain ongoing funding through the educational system.

Our sincere thanks go out The Rotary Club of York, Glatfelter Insurance Group, The Kinsley Foundation, and Nisha A. Kirk Foundation for believing in EquiTeam's mission and affording the students the opportunity to seek personal growth and development.



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Executive Director

Ellie Williams, MS, NCC, LPC, BCPC



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