

BASICS OF EQUINE-ASSISTED SERVICES

WHAT ARE EQUINE-ASSISTED SERVICES?

Any treatment that incorporates equine activities and/or the equine environment to achieve therapeutic goals.

SUBTYPES

- **Hippotherapy** = a treatment strategy using the movement of the horse to address impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities by a licensed health professional
- **Therapeutic riding** = instructors with knowledge of disabilities teaching riding skills & utilizing the inherent therapeutic value of the movement & overlying activities to improve skill development

WHAT IS TANDEM RIDING?

A treatment strategy where a therapist is mounted on the horse behind the client supporting them while facilitating the session.

GOALS OF TANDEM RIDING

- Promote protective reflexes
- Promote weightbearing through arms and legs
- Promote core rotation
- Promote bilateral coordination and reaching across midline
- Improve communication
- Disrupt abnormal flexor and extensor synergy patterns
- Promote engagement in cognitive activities



SESSIONS MAY INCLUDE MOVEMENTS LIKE

- Standing while walking over obstacles
- Continuous sit/stand transitions at a walk or trot
- Circling/weaving obstacles like barrels or cones
- Variety of reaching, grasping, & visual scanning activities
- Different sitting positions - forward, backward, or sideways

SESSIONS MAY INCLUDE ACTIVITIES LIKE

- Singing
- I-spy
- Catch
- Reaching for items
- Puzzles
- Hitting targets
- Identifying colors, shapes, or numbers
- Sorting items
- Shoe tying