# TABLE OF CONTENTS

About the EFT Resource ..................................................... 1
Introduction to Equine Facilitated Therapy ................................. 2
A Brief History of Equine Facilitated Therapy ............................... 3
Practical Applications: Weights and Measures ............................. 4
Practical Applications: Personal Space ..................................... 5
Practical Applications: Personal Hygiene ................................... 6
Practical Applications: Road Safety ....................................... 7
Practical Applications: Fear of the Dentist/Doctor ......................... 8
Other Forms of Practical Therapy ......................................... 9

www.eftresource.org

© 2012 White Lantern Film CIC. All rights reserved.
ABOUT THE EFT RESOURCE

Welcome to the Equine Facilitated Therapy Resource. This booklet accompanies a DVD and website to provide you with a wealth of information explaining about Equine Facilitated Therapy, or EFT for short. Browse through the booklet, watch the DVD, or visit the web site at www.eftresource.org where you can view content and search the database to find an organisation that can help you.

THE RESOURCE HISTORY

The resource began life after White Lantern Film Education CIC managed a series of digital training workshops at The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy (FCRT) for students throughout 2008 - 2010. From these workshops, and the time spent at the FCRT working with students and staff, the concept of a resource was explored and developed with the main objective ‘to improve communities and the lives of people with learning disabilities’.

The concept of the resource was to capture this unique therapy and create a DVD, web site and literature. The project uses real life experiences, uniting people with and without learning disabilities to create a comprehensive resource which will challenge negative stereotypes, improve lives and enable people with learning disabilities to live better within their communities.

The EFT Resource was supported by The Big Lottery Fund and we gratefully acknowledge the help and guidance received from The Fortune Centre of Riding therapy during the creation of the resource. For more information on White Lantern Film Education CIC please visit www.wlf-ed.org.
INTRODUCTION TO
EQUINE FACILITATED THERAPY

What is Equine Facilitated Therapy? In its simplest and most basic form it is using the presence of horses to develop an individual in some way. For horse-motivated people the horse is at the heart of the exchange of teaching and learning. If horses interest and motivate an individual, then learning about them provides a learning purpose.

The term Equine Facilitated Therapy is broad and one of many. For example:
• Equine Assisted Therapy
• Equine Assisted Learning
• Equine Facilitated Learning
• Equine Experiential Learning
• Equine Assisted Activities and Learning

This is due to the many different methodologies, practices, sessions, outputs and experiences different centres in the world would like their participants to gain and learn from. At the centre of each is the core value that a horse, under the right supervision and within the right environment, can develop an individual on a physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual level.

With the horse as an alternative seat of learning, individuals have an opportunity to gain a range of new life skills. Many naturally occurring routines and activities in an equine environment can act as the basis of new understanding. For example, feeding horses can become a matter of understanding weights, measurements and fractions; seeing leads to understanding. Learning to care for a horse can provide an incentive that becomes a personal achievement; for example, learning to wash a horse’s mane encourages people to become independent in their own hair washing, whilst grooming leads to a new foothold for discussing personal care. This resource delves deeper into what, why and how.
A BRIEF HISTORY OF
EQUINE FACILITATED THERAPY

The therapeutic value of riding for people with disabilities was well known to the Greeks as early as the 5th Century B.C.

Historians quote Hippocrates as saying, “Riding in clean air strengthens body muscles and keeps them in good form”.

In the first half of the 20th century Lis Hartel, an accomplished Danish horsewoman, was determined to ride independently again after polio left her unable to walk without the aid of crutches. Subsequently she brought attention to riding for people with disabilities when she won the silver medal for Dressage at the 1952 Helsinki Olympic Games.

The Riding for the Disabled Association was founded in England in 1965, then called the Advisory Council on Riding for the Disabled. At that time it focused almost entirely on people with physical disabilities.

In more recent times the value of horses for people – both riding and caring for horses – has become widely recognised throughout the world. Horses are known to make a valuable contribution in the fields of both mental and physical health and as an alternative seat of learning in education.

Today, worldwide collaboration between organisations and individuals whose objectives are philanthropic, scientific and educational in the field of equine assisted activities are brought together under HETI (The Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy International). HETI is a global organisation that forms worldwide links between countries, centres and individuals offering equine facilitated activities and assists in the development of new programmes worldwide. For further information on the historical background please visit their website – www.HETIfederation.org.
EXAMPLES OF THE PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS: WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Horse’s feed is measured using a scoop. The scoop may be full, half full or a quarter full according to the directions for making up a feed e.g. 1½ scoops of chaff. Students learn to recognise the different measurements using the scoop and how they relate to each other e.g. two halves make a whole. Students also learn that 1.5 = 1½, and 1.25 = 1¼.

Hay is measured using a weighing scale. Students learn to make up a three kilo hay net or a 2.5 kilo (or 2½ kilo) hay net, reading the weight from the scales. Students can then transfer this to their cooking sessions in their houses. They can read the directions in a recipe and measure out 1½ lb of flour using a weighing scale or 0.5 of a tablespoon of sugar by eye.
EXAMPLES OF THE PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS: PERSONAL SPACE

Students are often unaware of what is going on around them and expect others to look out for them. There may also get too close to people without realising that this is inappropriate behaviour. This can put them at risk in the community.

Like people, horses have their own personal space. They have preferences as to which other horses they do not mind coming close or sharing their hay with. If another horse, particularly one unknown to them, approaches too quickly or gets too close they can kick out to protect themselves. During riding sessions students are taught to keep a minimum of a horse’s length away from the horse in front to ensure that the horses do not kick each other or get stressed. Students are also taught not to rush up to them on the yard or get over excited when close to them as this may upset a horse, possibly resulting in a kick or a bite out of nervousness. Over time students start to take responsibility themselves for ensuring that they do not create stress for the horses by the way they ride them and work around them.

This concept of personal space can then be transferred when students are out and about in the community. Students are reminded that like the horses, people have their own personal space, particularly with people they do not know, and that getting too close to other people when queuing or walking along the pavement will make them feel uncomfortable. This helps the students to fit in with their community and follow the normal rules of social behaviour.
EXAMPLES OF THE PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS: PERSONAL HYGIENE

Students often arrive at the FCRT with limited abilities to keep themselves clean and tidy, and are unaware of the effects this may have on their health e.g. that not washing hands after going to the toilet can spread disease.

Students are taught how to look after the horses to ensure that the animals look smart and tidy and remain healthy. They are taught the correct type of brushes to use for grooming according to a horse’s coat thickness, not to use the same sponge to wash their eyes and dock (under the tail) area, to keep their hooves clean, and to use the right spray to maintain clean and tidy manes. They also learn how to wash a horse using the correct amount of shampoo and how to care for a horse if it has got very sweaty during exercise.

Using the basic rules of looking after a horse can then be transferred to looking after themselves. Students learn how to clean and wash themselves using the right items and lotions e.g. not to use the same flannel for their face as for the rest of their body, and to use the right hair shampoo and the right amount for their type of hair. Students take part in regular activities such as football and cycling and they relate the care they give to the horses after exercise to what they need to do themselves when they have exercised.
EXAMPLES OF THE PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS: ROAD SAFETY

Students are often unaware of traffic and how to cross roads safely, looking out for themselves and for their peers.

In riding sessions, exercises are included that involve the students riding in formation with other riders, e.g. threading the needle where horses and riders cross between each other in the centre of the school, or where they have to ‘pair up’ with another rider on the other side of the school and keep pace with them. In order to do this safely they must always keep an eye on where the other horses and riders are, and adjust their speed so that when they cross between other horses and riders they do not crash into them. Matching their speed to their ‘partner’ means they have to not only think about the speed they are travelling at but also to look out for what their ‘pair’ is doing so they can time manoeuvres together.

When out in the community, students learn to relate looking out for cars in order to cross the road safely, to watching out for other horses and riders when exercising in the school to avoid accidents. They also learn to think about not only what they have to do to keep safe but also to think about their fellow students and keeping them safe from accidents.
EXAMPLES OF THE PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS: FEAR OF THE DENTIST/DOCTOR

Many students arrive at the FCRT with a fear of the dentist and/or doctor. All the horses at the FCRT have regular vaccinations and dental check-ups and the vet is always called if there is any real concern about their health. Students are encouraged to watch and wherever possible assist the vet or the equine dentist. New horses are introduced carefully to the vet and equine dentist so that they learn to trust them. The students begin to understand that although some things the vet or equine dentist do to the horses must be scary for them and occasionally a bit painful, they see that the horses rarely make a fuss even when nervous. They can also see that the vet and the equine dentist do everything they can to make the sessions with the horses as calm and as pain-free as they possibly can do.

Staff can then discuss with the students that the horses instinctively cope with the stress of treatment from the vet and/or equine dentist even though, unlike people, they do not understand what is happening and that it is for their own good. They also talk about how a doctor or dentist will do everything possible to make any treatment as painless as possible. Like the horses, the students are then introduced to the doctor and dentist without treatment taking place and gradually, according to the reactions and needs of the individual, treatment can take place.
OTHER FORMS OF PRACTICAL THERAPY

The principles of Equine Facilitated Therapy can be applied to many other pursuits. Art, photography, cookery, smaller animals and sports can all be used instead of horses to achieve similar outcomes and opportunities. You can search through the directory to find organisations who can help and review the case studies below.

PETS AS THERAPY

Based in the UK, Pets As Therapy provides therapeutic visits to hospitals, hospices, special needs schools and a variety of other venues by volunteers with their own friendly, temperament-tested and vaccinated dogs and cats. Pets As Therapy aims to help people overcome feelings of isolation and loneliness by providing opportunities to play and learn from cats and dogs. Using small animals in this way, Pets As Therapy aims to breakdown negative barriers and provide companionship, understanding and affection which a small animal can provide unconditionally. We filmed at the Royal United Hospital in Bath as Pets As Therapy dog Muppet was in action; you can see what happened on the DVD or website.

THRIVE

England-based Thrive uses gardening to change the lives of disabled people. The organisation’s activities focus on championing the benefits of gardening to individuals as well as teaching techniques and practical applications so that anyone with a disability can take part and enjoy gardening. Gardening can help individuals accomplish many things: it can help rebuild a person’s strength after an accident or illness, and can provide a purposeful activity for someone coping with a difficult period in their life. We filmed participants at Thrive talking about their experiences; you can see what happened on the DVD or website.
We think media is for everyone and we want to encourage as wide an audience as possible to get involved with, learn about, and use digital media to capture and present the stories around them. The organisation has years of experience managing educational projects and activities, using the latest technology to improve the lives of individuals and communities.

THE FORTUNE CENTRE OF RIDING THERAPY
http://www.fortunecentre.org

The Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy’s mission is to enable horse-motivated students with special needs to relate more successfully to others and to have greater and more appropriate control over their own lives.

WINDRUSH FARM
http://www.windrushfarm.org

Windrush Farm is a non-profit, working horse farm that has been successfully helping children and adults with physical, emotional, and learning disabilities since 1964 in the United States of America.

WILSON COLLEGE
http://www.wilson.edu

Wilson College is an American independent college with a proud history preparing all of its graduates for fulfilling lives and professions, ethical leadership and humane stewardship of our communities and our world.