

EquATA Ltd

EquATA (Equine Assisted Therapy Association) is a not-for-profit organisation specialising in mental health therapy across Northamptonshire and neighbouring counties since July 2009.

The organisation combines the use of specially selected horses with a qualified mental health team to provide services for people requiring:

- Therapy for emotional, behavioural and mental health issues
- Personal development assistance to build confidence and self-esteem
- Management, leadership and team-working skills.

Therapy and learning services incorporate equine assisted psychotherapy and learning and certified therapists to assist with emotional and mental health issues including autism, ADHD, depression, bereavement, anxiety, anger management, learning difficulties, self-esteem issues, eating disorders and addictions.

The equine assisted learning and psychotherapy sessions include a mental health specialist, equine specialist and the horses. The sessions focus on providing clients with a fun, interactive and reflective learning experience, without mounting the horses.

The sessions help to:

- Develop self confidence
- Build self-esteem and independence
- Improve observational and communication skills
- Reduce stress and feelings of loneliness
- Encourage empathy and team work

- Promote responsibility
- Reduce anti-social behaviour
- Promote social integration
- Encourage mobility.

The certified therapists use a proven technique that provides experimental learning for autistic spectrum disorders and other developmental learning issues. Clients mount the horses only when they are ready to do so, accompanied by a therapist, or can experience contact with them through grooming and stroking. This physical sensation calms and relaxes clients and provides a sensory experience to help increase brain activity to encourage attention skills, focus and learning.

EquATA has recently incorporated an 8-12 week introduction to horse care course, where clients attend one day a week to help care for the therapy horses, learn horse care skills and access the therapy without attending a counseling sessions. The course combines experience, work ethic and therapy, with participants leaving the course with increased confidence and a certificate of participation.

The organisation takes a whole-family approach when working with autistic children, with siblings and parents encouraged to participate fully, strengthening family bonds.

EquATA is funded by the Big Lottery Fund, 3E, Northamptonshire Enterprise Ltd and Kettering Borough Council. It also receives funding from private organisations and individuals, and support from volunteer staff and fundraisers.

For further information on EquATA visit www.equata.org or email equata4all@ymail.com.