



EVALUATION PLAN

Leading With Horses | Equine Facilitated Psychotherapy

The “Leading With Horses” initiative will be evaluated quarterly to document its success in meeting its objectives and milestones and to assess its impact on the youth, families, or individuals it serves through treatment by mental health professionals. As discussed below, the evaluation is designed to ensure that: a) implementation will be monitored systematically and on an on-going basis; b) specific progress measures will be used to assess the quality and completeness of project activities; and c) specific progress measures will be aligned with the goals, targets and expected outcomes set forth in this application narrative so that progress towards achieving them can be accurately assessed.

We are currently seeking to contract with an external evaluator to ensure that an impartial evaluation is conducted on the Leading With Horses project. The qualified third party evaluator will provide objective summative and formative evaluation services for the grant program. Services will likely include: monitoring the consistency of scheduled appointments, schedule content and length, development of summative evaluation reports, development of the semi-annual progress report, and establishment of the formative evaluation system. The External Evaluator will collect and analyze all project data on a quarterly basis, reporting findings within one month of the close of each quarter. In this way, our project partners (whole person care professionals) and advisory board will have four opportunities annually to assess project success and make recommendations on any modifications that may be necessary. The advisory board, along with our project partners will finalize all modification actions.

The evaluation will include both formative (process) and summative (impact) performance measures. Formative evaluation methods will relate to the effectiveness of the project’s procedures, practices and activities in implementing the project and in meeting project milestones in conformance with the proposed timelines. A key purpose of the formative evaluation will be to collect, analyze, and disseminate data over the course of the project to help the project partners and SCR to stay “on track” in implementing project activities and to promote ongoing project improvement. To this end, formative evaluation data will be shared with our board of directors and advisory board on an ongoing basis throughout the project.

The key **formative evaluation** questions are: a) Are project partners (licensed mental health professionals) carrying out project activities (interactions with the horses) with fidelity to the proposed design and management plan—i.e. Has the project met its targets for implementing

project activities related to each goal and objective? Has the project met its annual targets coordinating delivery of counseling services, and engaging in parent outreach and related services? b) Has project staff used information effectively throughout the project—including formative evaluation data—for self-assessment and program improvement? c) Has the project met its targets regarding implementation of specific initiatives and public dissemination of project results? d) Are the project’s procedures, policies, and management effectively supporting the project in accomplishing its proposed activities and meeting its milestones? e) Do the policies and feedback mechanisms support ongoing review and program improvement?

Formative evaluation methods include frequent and ongoing interviews of counselors; structured observations of project activities and participation in counselor meetings; frequent reviews of project schedules and records; frequent reviews of documents and procedures used to advertise the project, reach out to parents/community and communicate with project partners and clients; questionnaires and survey instruments administered several times during the course of each year; and review of notes and interim reports prepared by SCR. Formative evaluation results will be included in Evaluator reports at least semi-annually. Formative evaluation results will also be shared with project partners, in writing and/or verbally, on a frequent basis. Formative evaluation data will be included in evaluation and year-end reports offered to our local Department of Education agencies.

Summative evaluation methods will address project implementation and consequent changes in client/patient outcomes.

Key summative evaluation questions are: *a)* is the program demonstrating measurable outcomes that connect participation in our program with long-term improvements in physical, social, emotional, spiritual and cognitive health. *b)* does the program have the ability to connect programmatic outputs with measurable, standardized, long-term impact metrics related to the health of those served

Summative evaluation will examine the impact of the project on:

- Increase in attendance and repeat attendance from both project partners and their clients.
- Behavioral factors, including analysis of behavior at home, work, school, social activities. Decrease in negative consequence or remedial action for youth.
- Aspirational and future success-related factors, including analysis of long and short-term goals in personal development, relationships, work and school achievements, and progress in overcoming or lessening of PTSD triggers.
- Ongoing research projects in place through collaboration with local universities; Gonzaga, and Washington State University.

Summative evaluation reports, including data and results, will be submitted to the project partners on an annual basis unless otherwise requested.

For each stated wellness objective, process measures, data collection methods, tools, and timelines are detailed on the chart below:

Objective	Process Measures	Data Tools	Timeline
Participating Mental Health professionals (Project Partners) will report at least 80% success rate due to the use of our program.	Observation by SCR staff	Survey Results Increased Attendance	Quarterly
At least 80% of parents surveyed will report measurable or significant progress in their home life due to the use of our program.	Observation by SCR Staff Monthly Support Group / optional meetings	Survey Results Repeat Attendance	Quarterly
At least 80% of patients/clients who visit report success or progress due to the use of counseling in our environment.	Observation by SCR Staff	Survey Results Repeat Attendance	Ongoing
The number of youth having <i>escalated</i> crisis intervention reduced significantly.		Data reports from counselors	Ongoing
A proven better understanding of mental health warning signs before crisis occurs.		Survey Results Written reports and research papers produced by Project Partners	Annual