

Nature and Horses: A quick reference of benefits for Deaf+Autism experiences
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Why Nature?

- ✓ Nature exposure reduces physiological measures of stress (for both parents and children)
- ✓ Nature exposure enhances creativity (beneficial for play and for problem-solving)
- ✓ Nature exposes us to the cycles of life (teaching us how to cope with transitions and with losses)
- ✓ Nature elicits fascination. Fascination elicits communication and relationships.
- ✓ Nature exposure teaches children about shapes, textures, science, and math.
- ✓ Nature exposure engages our senses (while also reducing likelihood of overstimulation).
- ✓ And MORE!

Why Horses?

- ✓ Horses have been demonstrated to be effective partners in the therapeutic treatment of autism, anxiety, depression, language learning and attentional disorders, eating disorders, behavioral difficulties, physical disabilities, trauma, divorce, disease, and grief.
- ✓ Horses teach us about the importance of emotional congruence (i.e. being honest about our struggles and vulnerabilities).
- ✓ Horses require clear leadership (paralleling the leadership of parenting).
- ✓ Horses support development of insight into relationship patterns.
- ✓ Horses support the development of self-esteem and confidence.
- ✓ Grooming, doing ground work, and riding horses supports the development of motor skills, organization, memory, and following directions.
- ✓ Horses support the development of healthy boundaries.
- ✓ And MORE!

References

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