



Why Use Horses?

Horses once held an extremely important place in many tribal cultures. Much has been lost, however, due to generational oppression – land loss, allotment and boarding school systems, termination and relocation, foster and adoptive placements, poverty, and substance abuse.

The horse program helps restore culture by reuniting tribal youth and adults with horses. It helps participants overcome fear and it helps them achieve an improved sense of confidence, respect, patience, responsibility, and commitment to others.

Testimonials

What a wonderful experience going to the ranch was for our kids...working with the horses brought a respect and calm to our kids that I hadn't seen before. It was wonderful to see this trust grow each few minutes they spent working with the horses and the volunteers. The experience was so rewarding that, months later, they are still begging to be brought back and connect with the horses again.

-- Tribal Staff Member

This process gives youth an opportunity to process trauma in their lives in a non-threatening and natural manner ... [she] attributed aspects of herself and her relationships to the horse, which allowed an outlet for unresolved grief and trauma.

--Tribal Staff Member

John Spence, MSW, Ph.D.

Native American Therapeutic Horsemanship, LLC
P.O. Box 561 • Sherwood, OR 97140
(503) 871-4299
jdougspace@msn.com

Native American Therapeutic Horsemanship

John Spence, MSW, Ph.D.
Gros Ventre/Sioux



Supporting
Native American
Youth and Veterans

Native American Therapeutic Horsemanship, LLC
P.O. Box 561 • Sherwood, OR 97140
(503) 871-4299
jdougspace@msn.com

The 7 Sacred Directions of the Horse

East, South, West & North
The 4 feet of a horse represent the
4 cardinal directions

The Above

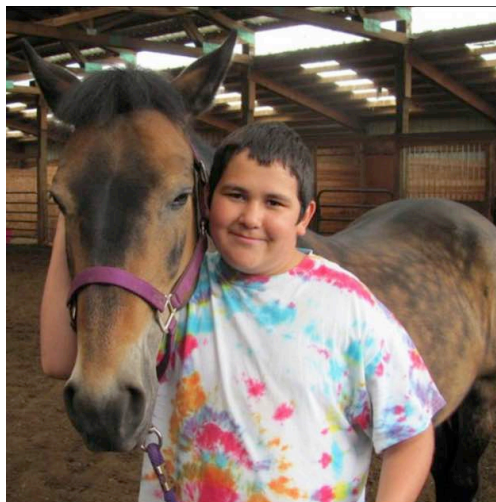
The ears of a horse point upward to
the Heavens, the Great Mystery

The Below

The tail of a horse points downward
to Mother Earth

The Center of All Things

The 7th Sacred Direction is the
Center, when a human and
the horse join



Curriculum for Native American Therapeutic Horsemanship

We begin with a circle, a traditional opening prayer,
introductions and expectations, and explain how horses
represent *The 7 Sacred Directions*.

The 4 Core Elements:

1. Learn equine behavior, safety, and how to establish trust with horses to overcome fear.
2. Learn in-hand work cleaning stalls, feeding, grooming, cleaning hooves, and leading prior to riding.
3. Learn bridling, saddling, mounting, reining, and riding to help bond with horses in an appropriate and safe manner.
4. Learn respect, patience, responsibility, self-confidence, and commitment to others through interaction with horses.

We provide a lot of encouragement and hands-on learning, and end with a circle to share what we felt and what we learned.

Our Reach:

Over 300 Native American youth have participated in workshops at three Oregon reservations (Warm Springs, Cow Creek & Umatilla), two urban Indian organizations (NARA and NAYA*) and Cedar Bough Youth Treatment Center. This program is made possible with the help of six different ranches in Oregon. We also work with adults, veterans, and foster children.

Participating Ranches:

- The Cochran Ranch at Warm Springs
- DD Ranch, Dallas
- Delta Ranch, Aumsville
- Heathervale Ranch, Independence
- Sycamore Lane Therapeutic Riding Academy, Oregon City
- Top Line Ranch, Estacada

* NARA: Native American Rehabilitations Association

