

Equine Assisted Services at Medicine River Ranch

Summer Session 2025

ENROLLING NEW PARTICIPANTS NOW!



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Summer 2025 Reminders & Rules

1. Youth Drop-Off & Arrival:

- **Drop-Off Location:** Please drop youth off at the Tack Room or Club House.
- **Timeliness:** Arrive at your scheduled group time. If you arrive early, wait in your car until staff signals for you to come out—therapy sessions or meetings may be in progress.
- **Parent Departure:** Parents are kindly asked to leave after drop-off so that youth have a confidential space to share, learn, and build independent relationships.
- **Check-In & Check-Out:** All youth must check in with a staff member upon arrival and check out at the end of their session.

2. Proper Gear:

- **Footwear:** When on the ranch please wear boots
- **Helmets:** Helmets will be available for your youth to use. We strongly encourage helmet use for safety. If you prefer your child not to wear a helmet, please sign and submit a helmet waiver. Without a signed waiver, we will do our best to enforce helmet use.

3. Safety & Conduct:

- **Follow Directions:** Always listen to and follow staff instructions.
- **EAS Horse Check-Out:** Outside of scheduled group time, horses must be checked out with Krystan Kalama. A horse cannot be removed from its pasture or pen without Krystan's knowledge—even with owner consent—unless the owner is present.
- **Horse Assignments:** Equine specialists determine assignments. While we aim to honor preferences, changes may be made for education or animal welfare. Please be flexible.
- **Riding Off Ranch:** Do not take horses off the ranch unless accompanied by a ranch hand or EAS staff member.
- **Teamwork & Respect:** Our Ranch, EAS Services, and all group activities operate as one team. If you have concerns about what's happening during a session, you must speak with a staff member instead of unilaterally leaving or riding separately. Triangulation and bypassing the chain of supervision will not be tolerated.

4. Environmental Respect:

- **Clean-Up:** Dispose of trash in designated receptacles.
- **Tack & Equipment:** Return and clean any items you use.

5. Issues or Concerns: If any issues arise, please contact Cynthia Iyall directly.

Thank you for your cooperation in creating a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment for our Summer 2025 experience on the ranch.

Equine Assisted Services Staff Contact Information

Please note: All group-related updates and discussions take place in our FB Messenger group, "River Riders & Brave Herd EAS at MRR Chat." For any urgent matters or concerns, please contact Cynthia Iyall directly.

Equine Assisted Services at MRR Staff

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role/ Title</i>	<i>Phone or Email</i>
Cynthia Iyall	EAS Center Administrator	(360)888-0754 cynthia.iyall@nisquallyhealth.org
Pauline Simmons	Program Manager	pauline.simmons@nisquallyhealth.org
Falcon Sison	Equine Specialist	falcon.sison@nisquallyhealth.org
Krystan Kalama	Equine Specialist	(360)972-5469 krystan.kalama@nisquallyhealth.org
Shaleen WhiteEagle	Riding Instructor/ Equine Specialist	(253)290-2199 shaleen.whiteeagle@nisquallyhealth.org
Kristal Vejar	Riding Instructor/ Equine Specialist	(253)290-3863 kristal.vejar@nisquallyhealth.org
Kelly Ferguson	Mental Health Therapist	(253)335-6013 bluebartherapygroup@gmail.com

Youth Prevention Group Schedule:

PONY PATHWAYS

Does not meet during Summer Session

BRAVE HERD

Ages: 7-11 Meets: Wednesday, 3–5 PM ES facilitator: Falcon Sison

RIVER RIDERS

Ages: 12-18 Meets: Thursday, 3–5 PM ES facilitator: Shaleen WhiteEagle & Kristal Vejar

(Please note: youth participating in summer youth or any summer work training at the ranch do not attend group during summer session)

Monthly Ranch Intensive

During the summer season, our Ranch Intensives will be Rez Rides, scheduled by riding level.

Youth Training

September 10th from 3-5pm- Mental Health First Aid

Other Events

End of Summer Fun Show TBD

BARN Theory

Belonging. Awareness. Relationships. Nature

Our seasonal themes reflect the natural cycles that have guided our Nisqually ancestors for generations. Each season offers a unique opportunity for growth, reflection, renewal, and connection, supporting our work with horses and our journey toward wellness.

Fall: Belonging

Theme: Connection, Empathy, Community, And Self-Belonging.

Horsemanship Focus: *Balance & Rhythm*

Wellness Initiative Module: DBT Distress Tolerance (*Distress Tolerance Equips youth with strategies to manage tough emotions and navigate challenging situations.*)

Youth Training: QPR Suicide Prevention & De-escalation

Winter: Awareness

Theme: Reflection, Transcendence, Integration, and Presence

Horsemanship Focus: Attunement & Responsiveness

Wellness Initiative Module: DBT Mindfulness (*Mindfulness teaches youth to stay present, observe their thoughts without judgment, and build emotional clarity.*)

Youth Training: Polyvagal/Nervous System Regulation

Spring: Relationships

Theme: Building Relationships with Others and Self, Mastery, and Renewal/Growth

Horsemanship Focus: Trust & Communication

Wellness Initiative Module: DBT Interpersonal Effectiveness (*Interpersonal Effectiveness helps youth express themselves clearly, set healthy boundaries, and build positive connections.*)

Youth Training: Motivational Interviewing & Restorative Justice Circle Keeping

Summer: Nature

Theme: Connecting to Our True Nature, Culture, the Natural World as Healer, and Generosity

Horsemanship Focus: Harmony with Nature

Wellness Initiative Module: DBT Emotional Regulation (*Emotional Regulation equips youth with strategies to understand and manage their emotions, drawing strength from nature's balance.*)

Youth Training: Mental Health First Aid

Seasonal Theme

Summer 2025: Nature

Season Dates: July 30th– September 21st, 2025

Overview:

This summer, our focus is on connecting with nature, culture, and our truest selves. Through horsemanship, wellness practices, and meaningful conversations, youth explore how the natural world can be a source of healing, guidance, and strength. We celebrate generosity, gratitude, and the interdependence between humans, horses, and the land.

Horsemanship Focus: *Harmony with Nature*

- Participate in trail rides, outdoor groundwork, and ranch chores to build awareness and connection with the land.
- Engage in quiet observation of herd behavior to understand natural communication and group dynamics.
- Practice calm, centered riding and horsemanship rooted in patience, attunement, and respect for the horse's natural instincts.

Wellness Initiative Module: *DBT Emotional Regulation*

- Learn to identify, understand, and manage emotions using tools inspired by the balance and rhythm of the natural world.
- Practice grounding skills and nature-based mindfulness techniques to stay centered in challenging moments.
- Reflect on how emotions arise and pass, much like weather patterns in nature.

Youth Training: *Mental Health First Aid*

Youth will work with a mental health clinician to learn how to support friends who may be struggling. They will practice recognizing signs of emotional distress and responding with care and empathy. The training also explores how kindness, generosity, and community support can help keep everyone mentally healthy.