

2017 Goals: The Little Dog Laughed Animal-Assisted Therapy

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Our Mission: To use the joy of dog training in support of behavioral therapy professionals in their effort to nurture empathy and non-violent problem-solving skills.

Goal 1: To create the infrastructure and resources to support expansion of services in the Portland Metro and surrounding areas.

We identified the following steps to achieve this goal:

1. Recruit, train and support more volunteer dog/handler teams so that we can meet existing demand in the Portland Metro area as well as expand into surrounding areas. Steps toward this goal to include but are not limited to:
 - Streamline and enhance the training/evaluation process so that four teams can be certified in six months or less.
 - Leverage video training capabilities whenever possible
 - Replace the existing apprenticeship requirement to demonstrate all 3 stages of intervention at a DV shelter with a single-day “lightning round” in an environment simulating the shelter.
 - Provide a strong support system for approved S.T.A.R. team handlers. To include:
 - Identify a suitable location and hold regular group practice sessions at least once a quarter, better if once a month or week.
 - Continue to identify presenters and content for 2-3 continuing education workshops to help S.T.A.R. teams stay on top of their game.
 - Encourage continuing education in related disciplines (scholarships to outside classes/events)
 - Continue refining the 3-ring binder training manual for S.T.A.R. team handlers
 - Document the lending libraries of books/videos/props.
2. **Create a sustainable financial plan.** Steps toward this goal to include but are not limited to:
 - Finalize a “Grant Application Kit” of up-to-date information for use by all members of the organization.
 - Formalize Policies defining:
 - Management of organizational monies (savings, checking, and credit)
 - Scholarship criteria
 - Guidelines for assessing the value of organizational participation in local fundraising and promotional events.
 - Donor relations, from thank-you to keeping the relationship alive with tidbits of news.

Goal 2: To create and nurture healthy relationships with client organizations

We identified the following steps to achieve this goal:

1. Define realistic **screening criteria** to be used in evaluating and prioritizing various types of potential client relationships.
 - Types of relationships to include but not be limited to:
 - On-going weekly visits at a specific facility, 1 or 2 children at a time (examples: DV shelters, residential treatment facilities, HomePlate outreach to older homeless youths) - typically over an extended period of time
 - Annually repeated short series of small group classes (example: elementary schools) or multi-week summer schools.
 - One-time events/sequences for larger groups (examples: Girl Scout summer camp; Adelante Chicas)
 - One-time very short duration meetings with pairs of children (BoyStrength)
2. Do not take on new clients until we have :
 - Applied the previously defined screening criteria AND
 - Verified that we have appropriately trained teams to support them.
3. Examine each client's method of connecting with at-risk youths, and where suitable create intervention models that support those methods.
 - Conduct limited-term Special Projects to experiment with and evaluate the effectiveness of new tactics. Examples:
 - Special Project: HomePlate - support (a) their focus on helping youths prepare for and move into jobs in the real world and (b) their support for immigrant Muslim women by creating a monthly dog-training job where the participants help train the dogs for short videos.
 - Special Project: BoyStrength - give "legs" to the non-violent message communicated during too-brief training sessions by creating a distributable video that expands and makes more explicit how training dogs with kindness is much like how one should treat people.
4. Provide clients and potential clients information that clarifies and validates our program.
 - Create a professionally filmed/edited videotape illustrating our process and linking what they see to their own priorities.
 - Create a brochure which succinctly describes in terminology appropriate for therapy professionals what our program does and does not do. This brochure will include the evidence-based assessment by Pacific University.

Goal 3: Continue to capture all forms, procedures, expenses, guidelines – EVERYTHING needed to intelligently guide others to replicate our program elsewhere.