Pineland Learning Center

• Our Mission:
  - Pineland Learning Center seeks to educate and empower students in a structured, safe, and supportive environment through a cooperative partnership with caregivers, sending school districts, and the community. Our individualized program values diversity and promotes independence and growth to transform our students into flexible, self-reliant, and productive lifelong learners prepared to meet the challenges of a dynamic global society.

PLC Programs

• Supervision, Support, Safety & Structure
• Students in K-12
  - K-12
    • Behavior Disabilities
    • Multiple Disabilities
  - 7-12
    • Autism
• Academics, Clinical Services, & Behavior Intervention

The Situation Prior & Decision to Use AAT

• Situation that Existed Prior…
  - Consultant with therapy dogs retired in 2012
  - Desire to Build Sustainable Program
• Decision to Use Animal Therapy
  - Complex, comorbid difficulties
  - Growing body of research support
  - Interest of Key Stakeholders
A Historical Perspective

Strategy: 3 Step Approach
1. Strategize
2. Team Recruitment & Development
3. Facility & Program Preparation

Implementation
Research/Planning
- Literature Review
- Consultation
- Program Vision Creation
- Readiness & Interest
- Administrative Support

Implementation
Therapy Team Creation
- Candidate Selection
- Bright & Beautiful Therapy Dogs
- Trainer Selection & Training
Paws for Pineland Team

Implementation

Campus & Program Preparation

Risk Identification & Management

- Informed Consent: Staff, Parents & Students
- Medical Information & Comfort
- Referral Process & Calendar
- Paws for Pineland Team Meetings
- Baseline Data & Feedback

Regardles of Training & Temperament

Identifying & Managing Risks

Always Pose a Risk
Risks

- Acknowledged inherent risk associated with animals working in public places
- Part of the planning process was considering risks and building capacity to manage these

Risk Management

Steps Taken to Manage Risk

- Research & Consultation with other program directors
- Intensive training for all teams
- Informed consent from staff, guardians, & students
- Liability Insurance Coverage
  - School
  - Bright & Beautiful Therapy dogs
- Handlers signed liability waivers
- Regular communication about dogs & their presence on campus

Program Elements & Planning

- Planning
  - Consent/Awareness Letters sent home
  - Referral Process
    - Individual
    - Class Visits
  - Service Calendar
    - 1/week
    - Up to 2 dogs
  - Informed Consent to Specific Students
Program Elements

• Social Emotional
  - Individual
  - Crisis Intervention
  - Classroom Visits

• Reading
  - Individual
  - Small Group

• Special Events
  - Trunk or Treat
  - Holiday Party
  - Book Fair

Impact of the Program

Monitoring Change

• Affect Monitoring
  • Feelings Check-in & Check-out

• School Connectedness
  • Baseline data gathered

• Reading achievement
  • Baseline data gathered

Monitoring Change

Eyewitness Accounts
Paws for Pineland
Futurecast
Pitfalls & Promises
Plans & Projections

Pitfalls & Promises

- Pitfalls
  - Scheduling conflicts & consistency
  - Differentiate between pets & working dogs
  - Need for continued support
- Promises
  - Joy
  - Breakthroughs with students, new experience
  - Growth, progress

Pitfalls, Promises, & Plans

- Plans:
  - Increase Teams
    - 1 new handler/dog team
    - New handlers
  - Incorporate into Reading Specialist Schedule
  - Club
  - Life Skills House
  - Community Visits
    - Local Veterans Home

Baxter’s Forecast
for AAT at Your Organization...

Mix of Clouds & Sun
Sunshine is Worth the Rain

Happiness
Growth & Progress
New Opportunities

Thank you for attending!

- Please contact me for more information:
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