How To Incorporate Vaulting Activities Into Your Program

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Why Vaulting?

- Vaulting games, positions and activities encourage clients to improve communication, team work, creativity and self-esteem in ways that we aren’t often able to achieve in typical therapeutic riding sessions.

- Only requires one horse for a group of clients, so ideal if you have a sudden lameness or weather that restricts horse usage or if you have a volunteer shortage.
Everyone can do it!

- You don’t have to have a draft horse that canters perfectly on the lunge line to incorporate vaulting activities into your program. Many of the activities can be done on a horse being led, and some can even be done in a saddle.
Spice things up!

• Adding a vaulting week once in a semester allows you to see how clients adapt to change, gets everyone out of the routine and fosters new relationships and skills

• Summer camps are a great place to try out vaulting activities
No horse? No problem!

• While performing positions on a moving horse provides the most input and benefits, almost all vaulting positions can be performed on a barrel- and it doesn’t have to be a fancy vaulting barrel. Regular barrels work just fine!

• Just make sure you have a volunteer holding the barrel steady
Basic Positions

- Basic Seat
- Mill
- Quad/Kneel/Box
- Tall Kneel
- Base Position
- Flag
- Candle
- Stand
- Clicks
- Scissors
- Dismount
Vaulting Games

• Unmounted Warm Up Games
  • Go Away, Come With
    • With the horse on a lunge line, or with a very capable leader, place the clients at cones on a 30 meter circle.
    • As the horse passes, tell the client to “Go Away” or “Come With”- If they are told to go away, they run around the circle in the opposite direction of the horse and try to beat the horse back to their cone. If you tell the client to go with, they go the same direction as the horse
Unmounted Warm Up Games

• Number Switch
  • With the horse on a lunge line, or with a very capable leader, place the clients at cones on a 30 meter circle.
  • Each client is given a number. If they can have a physical representation of their number, even better!
  • As the horse moves around the circle, tell two numbers to switch positions. They have to keep an awareness of the horse and move to the new cone safely.
Vaulting Games

• Unmounted Warm Up Games
  • Hula Hoop Slide
    • Have all the clients and volunteers hold hands in a circle. Place a Hula Hoop around one of the client’s arms. The Objective is to move the hula hoop around the circle without letting go of each other’s arms.
  • Pretzel
    • Have all of the clients hold hands in a circle with their arms crossed in front of them. Then have them turn around backwards without letting go of each other’s arm.
Unmounted Warm Up Games

• Match The Hoof Falls
  • Place one client at a safe distance from each of the horse’s legs.
  • Have them match their steps to the leg that they are standing by.
Vaulting Games

• Mounted Games
• Take A Guess

• One client is mounted on the horse. They can be performing positions while the rest of the clients work as a team to create a visual image. The mounted client has to guess what image the other clients are creating

• Movie Scenes
• Create an Animal
• Spell a Word
Mounted Games

• Memory Test
  • One client is mounted on the horse. The other clients take turns creating a sequence of positions for the mounted client to perform. They have to remember each position from the team members before them.
  • This works best if each client is on a barrel, and performs the positions along with the mounted client.
Vaulting Games

- Mounted Games
- Guess and Catch

- One client is mounted on the horse. The other clients are placed at cones on a 30 meter circle around the client. The mounted client has a ball. They think of an item within a topic, such as horse movies, breeds, colors, etc. The other clients have to guess what the item is. Whoever guesses correctly has the ball thrown to them.
Mounted Games

• Position Changes
  • These can be done on a horse (preferably a large draft, depending on the size of your riders!) or a barrel
    • Place 2-3 clients onto the horse. Have them switch their order without dismounting the horse.
      • Make sure and have LOTS of volunteer support and be aware of clients’ tactile sensitivities.