

HORSE KNOWING

EQUINE ASSISTED LEARNING



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine

Mental Wellbeing Coaching Program Facilitation Agreement

Date: _____

I hereby agree that I have read and understood this facilitation agreement and accompanying terms and conditions, and had the chance to ask any questions.

I hereby consent to myself / my young person participating in Horse Knowing sessions and am aware of the risks involved.

This agreement is made between: The Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine funded

Participant Name	
Parent name (if under 18)	
Signature Parent signature (if under 18)	
Address	
Email	
Phone	

and

Horse Knowing Equine Assisted Learning Facilitator & Coach - Melanie Downes.

We sometimes share anonymised data with researchers to support research and program evaluation. Please note that up until the point at which your data has been anonymised, you are able to withdraw consent for having your data included in the program evaluations by emailing horseknowing@proton.me (Melanie)

☐

I consent

☐

I do not consent

Both parties agree to the following:

Equine Assisted Learning Coaching Approach:

Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) is a coaching approach provides a hand's-on way to learn strategies and coping skills to meet life's challenges with more ease working in partnership with horses.

This Department of Agriculture funded EAL Program aims to support participants to work in partnership with the horse to reflect and recognise the strengths they have within (and where they can

find additional support if required) to achieve their aim or get themselves on the path to where they want to be towards achieving their main aim. This coaching process can help to manage stress, anxiety, and burnout, improve sleep and emotional regulation, build confidence and problem-solving skills, strengthen communication and decision-making, be with grief or loss in a supportive space and develop healthy boundaries and self-care routines

The EAL sessions will take place in an outside space (paddock, arena, stable yard) and a typical session lasts approximately one hour.

Primary client and participant:

Primary client is the funding body (Department of Agriculture) and the Participant is the individual attending the EAL session and directly engaging with the EAL Coach.

Coach role and responsibilities

The EAL Coach's role is to create a safe space for learning interactions with the horse/s and facilitate integration of experiential learning through reflection practices.

The EAL Coach will endeavour to ensure the safety of participants, horses, and visitors by acting immediately to prevent harm and resolve problems.

Horse role

The Horse's role is to be the horse as they are in their natural state; being present and constantly aware of their environment while responding to whatever is happening around them.

Participant role / personal responsibilities

I, as Participant, understand that I can engage with the process as much or as little as I feel comfortable. I acknowledge I can stop the process at any point during an EAL session.

I acknowledge that I have read and agreed with the Terms & Conditions as outlined (provided as a separate document).

The Participant takes full responsibility for developing and executing their own physical, mental, and emotional well-being, decisions, choices, actions, and results.

The EAL Coach will not be held accountable for any actions or inactions or for any direct or indirect effects of any services provided.

Participant commitment

As a Participant receiving full funding for this EAL Program I acknowledge the request to collect some data relating to my experience in order to contribute to the evaluation phase of this program and support future funding and research.

This includes:

- Completion of Registration (online or paper form) prior to starting the first coaching session.
- Contribute to a short reflective journal (some written notes / words or drawings relating to your session experience (which will be completed towards the end of each session)
- Completion of a program Evaluation form in the last week of the program.

Equine Assisted Learning is not Therapy

In an EAL session the focus is on what is happening here and now in the present moment for the Participant and how they can reflect on that to make positive changes for the future.

I as Participant (or parent / guardian) understand that the EAL Coach is not functioning as a licensed mental health professional and EAL facilitation is not intended as a replacement for professional medical advice, psychotherapy, counselling, treatment for mental illness, recovery from past abuse or other professional mental health services.

If I am currently under the care of a mental health professional, I will declare this on my registration form and, consult with him/her regarding working in an EAL context to ensure this individual is aware of the decision to proceed with the EAL facilitation relationship.

Confidentiality

The EAL Coach agrees to keep all information shared strictly confidential, and will never voluntarily disclose the EAL relationship with any participants without their prior consent, unless obligated by law to do so (e.g. in a situation where the participant safety or that of others may be at risk).

Equine Assisted Learning Program and Session Duration

This Department of Agriculture Funded EAL Program has been funded for an 8-week duration. Each Participant has been funded for 8 Individual one on one EAL sessions which will be offered weekly and take approximately one hour. Sessions will include facilitation with the horses and a short reflective journaling section as part of each week's content.

Participant's right to self-determination and choice will always be respected and they may at any point decide to stop the process and discontinue the session.

Facilitation Agreement and attendance

This facilitation agreement runs from the initial session until the final program session has been completed. No changes to the agreement may be made unless by mutual agreement between the EAL Coach and Participant.

Attendance: Participant attendance will be recorded for the funding body.

EAL Session Location

EAL sessions will take place at one of three locations: Horse Knowing EAL, Plodstown Mullingar, Better Together Therapy Riding Centre, Lilliput, Co. Westmeath or The Regional Equine Therapy Hub, Kilcloon, Co.Meath. Location eircodes will be shared with participants prior to their initial session.

Ground Rules

- All others at the centre without exception, people and animals, are to be treated with dignity and respect at all times.
- Shouting and running near the horses is not permitted, they may be startled unexpectedly which is not safe for those working near them.

- No unauthorised interaction with horses at the therapy centre is permitted, other than with those horses engaged in the EAL session. The therapy horses at the centre have very weighty and important roles to fulfil and when at rest, in their stables or on the pasture, we need to respect their right to uninterrupted rest time.
- Participants are expected to wear **appropriate sturdy footwear** with covered toes to avoid risk of foot injury from a horse accidentally treading on them, and **weather appropriate outer wear** (jacket, hats etc when necessary.)
- Anti-social behaviour will **NOT** be tolerated in any context and is grounds for terminating a session regardless of what stage the session is at.

Cancellation policy

We operate a strict 24-hour cancellation policy. Any unavoidable cancellation not notified 24 hours before the session will only be rescheduled where possible to do so. **If more than one session in the 8 weeks is missed you may risk forfeiting your place on the program.**

This is of particular importance as we need to plan for horse welfare needs in terms of their work schedule.

Data Protection

All personal data provided for the purposes of engaging with Horse Knowing for EAL services (Inc. name, address, and contact details) will be securely stored as per GDPR guidelines.

Liability

If the EAL Coach Melanie Downes cannot fulfil this facilitation agreement due to casualty, illness, emergency, act of God, or other causes beyond her control and cannot reschedule, Melanie Downes will only be reimbursed (by the funding body) for the sessions already delivered and shall have no further liability in respect to this facilitation agreement.

One last thing. . .

If you have any questions or wish to clarify any of the points in this EAL Facilitation Agreement before beginning work together please do touch base.

I look forward to introducing you (or your participant) to the horse/s and facilitating this experience with them for you!