



Services and Therapy
(also known as an equine-assisted activity)

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It's our philosophy that a developmentally disabled and deaf person is entitled to live dignified, fulfilling life.

We all strive to be self-reliant and productive members of society. In order to make this a reality for the deaf and developmentally disabled individuals, the Willie Ross Foundation provides programs and services that allow these individuals to live and work in environments that are as close to mainstream societal living as possible.

The goals and objectives of the Foundation are to address the needs of the multiple handicapped individuals who manifest serious behavioral excesses and deficits in addition to having a hearing impairment. Because of this, we have established a positive, protective living environment that provides rehabilitative services and nurturing support to adults who are severely challenged by a hearing impairment and severe behavior problems often associated with autism or other handicapping conditions.

The goal of our program is to offer individualized programs that promote continuous growth within the context of "normalization," a developmental model which emphasizes the least restrictive environment, this is known as **Picture Assisted Language Enhancement (P.A.L.E)**.

P.A.L.E was developed in order to provide teaching methods free of language barriers for working with individuals with very limited language skills, including those with hearing, motor or expressive aphasia disabilities.

The program utilizes a combination of actual pictures and pictorial images to help residents increase both their receptive and expressive language skills, including specific words, concepts, and more complete sentences while allowing our staff to teach a variety of independent living, recreation, and leisure skills to our clients.

Pictures and images are used to teach program residents daily living skills such as meal planning and preparation, calendars and planning, hygiene, chores, and playing sports. P.A.L.E promotes greater sign language ability, expression of personal choices and desires in a non-violent ways and better understanding of ideas - all the abilities that our clients require for independent living. P.A.L.E. is intended as an intermediate step with residents. As residents become more adept at signing words and concepts, the system is modified and incorporated less and less as the individual becomes more self-sufficient.

