

**Three day demonstration clinic...**

# **“Healing Power of Horses”**



## *Healing Power of Horses*

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013.*

*South Hedland Owners & Trainers Association*

*(S.H.O.A.T.A)*

*Source: North West Telegraph; Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

**26th, 27th & 28<sup>th</sup> March 2013.**

4 1/2 hours

Per. day/evening

# Healing Power of Horses

## Acknowledgement

I acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Owners of this country throughout Australia, and their connection to land and community. I pay my respect to them and their cultures, and to the Elders both past and present.

## Disclaimer

The report is not for distribution or reproduction without written consent from Kim Gentle.

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Gentle Transitions

All images and company logos within this report approved.

Due to client confidentiality, names of children have been withheld.

# Healing Power of Horses

## Contents

Pg.1.	Cover
Pg.2.	Acknowledgement & Disclaimer
Pg.3.	Content
Pg.4.	Definitions
Pg.5.	Executive Introduction
Pg.6.	1. Background Introduction
Pg.7.	1. Background Introduction Cont.
Pg.7	1. A. Background Introduction: - Participants
Pg.8.	1. B. Background Introduction: - Clinic Goals & Aims
Pg.9.	2. Day One:-Classroom Observations
	2. Day One:-Practical Observations
Pg.10.	2. Day One:-Practical Observations Cont.
Pg.11.	2. A. Day Two:-Classroom Observations.
	2. A. Day Two:-Practical Observations.
Pg.12.	2. A. Day Two:-Practical Observations Cont.
Pg.13.	2. B. Day Three:-Classroom Observations
	2. B. Day Three:-Practical Observations
Pg.14.	2. Day Three Images
Pg.15.	3. Summary
Pg.16.	3. A. Value
Pg.17.	3. B. Community Support
Pg.18.	3. C. YIC Report
Pg.19.	3. D. Steve Burke Training Report
Pg.20.	3. E. North West Telegraph Article

## Healing Power of Horses

### Definitions:

**Classroom:** *time is interactive and fun – with an emphasis on creating a safe fun environment to learn and grow in, activities are hands on to cater for all literacy levels & ages, supported by power point slides. It is in this environment whereby we introduce the herd mentality.*

**Equine:** *horse/pony*

**Herd Mentality:** *making decisions based upon knowledge that there is safety in numbers, the wellbeing and safety of the herd is the key driving force, it is **not** based upon an individual's selfish needs, but rather what's best for the herd. Similar to teamwork.*

**Horse Handler:** *person who is supervising safe handling of the horse, person has horsemanship sense/skills*

**Natural Horsemanship:** *colloquially know as horse whispering, is a collective term for a variety of horse training techniques. Techniques vary in their precise tenets but generally share same principals, developing a rapport with the horse using communication skills such as body language, energy which is derived from observation and understand of horses in a herd, either in the wild or in a paddock.*

**O.K Corral Equine Assisted Therapy & Learning:** *educates, promotes and supports professionals in the practice of authentic equine-assisted work. Authentic equine-assisted work honours and integrates natural horse and herd behaviour as a model for human mental & emotional health using the equine assisted philosophies developed by Greg Kersten, Founder of Equine Assisted Psychotherapy.*

**Practical:** *(activity with the horses) - **participants** learns skills to safely handle horses on the ground. Ground work sets the solid foundation to creating mutual trust & respect between horses and humans, which then transpires to human to human relationship.*

**Pack Mentality:** *although in a herd/group the individual needs/desires are the driving force, it's is based on an individual's selfish needs.*

**Round Yard:** *round 'corral' type enclosure that's purpose is to allow free movement of animal however contain it into a smaller more manageable space*

**S.H.O.A.T.A:** *South Hedland Owners & Trainers Association*

**Source:** *image supplied from & approval granted to publish*

**YIC:** *Youth Involvement Council*

## Healing Power of Horses

### Executive Introduction

**Kim Gentle** (*Accredited Equine Assisted Learning/Therapy with the **O.K Corral** program*) delivered to the Town of Port Hedland the unique opportunity to witness and experience the “Healing Powers of Horses” in conjunction with **Steve Burke** (*Steve Burke Training Method*).

This form of learning & therapy is new to the area and the aim was to promote awareness & start creating a unique program; one that is also based upon fun to stimulate **positive learning & positive changes** with the children, which can also transfer to adults.

You will read the background to the clinic & my observations during the event. Supported by letters from Steve Burke, Stacey Turale; Youth Involvement Council (YIC).

**This report demonstrates the amazing changes horses can bring about in a human.**



“There is something about the outside of a horse.....  
that is good for the inside of a man”

Winston Churchill

## Healing Power of Horses

### 1. Background Introduction

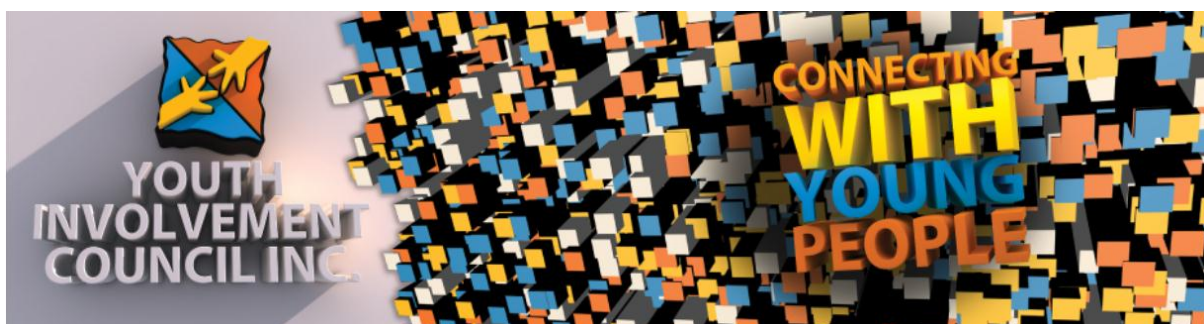
Youth Involvement Council (YIC) is the lead organisation providing programs to young people in Hedland and surrounding communities. YIC is managed by a diverse Board that consists of representatives from small business, government, Indigenous, industry and community members. YIC's programs aim to assist young people at risk, homeless (or at imminent risk of homelessness), disadvantaged or in need of general support to create improved educational and life pathways.

YIC has a long history within Hedland, of delivering recognised innovative programs and activities that are constantly evolving due to ever changing social issues, needs and resources within the Hedland community.

Six children, between the ages of 10-12 years of age, were identified by YIC Birds & Bees, co-ordinator, Stacey Turale as being at risk of becoming disconnected from the community.

*This three day clinic allowed for an innovative opportunity to engage with these children to plant a seed that would help to develop the following:*

- Positive outlook (attitude)
- Confidence
- Trust
- Respect
- Self-belief
- Positive social interactions opportunities



# Healing Power of Horses

## 1. Background Introduction Cont.

**Kim Gentle**, Accredited Equine Assisted learning/facilitator under the O.K Corral Program, (trained by founder and facilitator Greg Kersten) delivered to the Community of Port Hedland 1 key aspect of *“how horses have the amazing ability to create positive change in children at risk/disengaged with the community”*, in addition to **Steve Burke’s** Training Program focusing on natural horsemanship skills.

There are several reasons why horses are used to facilitate major positive changes in people:

- *Horses are honest & they won’t tolerate dishonesty.*
- *Horses are a direct metaphor reflective of your thoughts & emotions.*
- *Horses are non-verbal, non-threatening.*
- *Horses are able to bring your mindset to the now, therefore helping you to focus and not think about yesterday; tomorrow; the next minute, 5 minutes, 5 hours.*
- *Horses can be intimidating, frightening animals at time.*

Horses and humans when faced with trauma and pressure have the similar almost mirror reactions in dealing with this, they shutdown to feelings, emotions & conversations. They go into stay alive mode which can be represented by; anger; aggression; addictions; destructive actions & flight actions. The challenge is to overcome this pressure/stay alive mode, to breathe and bring the heart rate down, to be in a calm state thus allowing the switch, to engage critical thinking skills that will enable a person to overcome a challenging situation.



**Kim Gentle**

*Accredited Equine Assisted Therapy/Learning  
O.K. Corral Training Course  
Source: Peaskgrove Solutions &  
O.K. Corral*

**Healing Power of Horses**

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013  
S.H.O.A.T.A  
Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle  
“Mirror Image”*

**Steve Burke**

*Steve Burke Training Program  
Demonstration Clinic, March 2013  
S.H.O.A.T.A  
Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

# Healing Power of Horses

## 1. A Background Introduction: - Participants

- 6 identified children aged between 10 & 12 yrs. (4 girls and 2 boys)  
Selected by Stacey Turale; Birds & Bees Co-ordinator, Youth Involvement Council (YIC).
- 1 Youth Involvement Council Representative  
(Stacey Turale)
- 1 Regional Program Development Officer/Pilbara Regional Youth Justice Services  
(Lisa McMillian)
- Kim Gentle (Equine Assisted Therapy, OK Corral Series)
- Steve Burke (Steve Burke Training Method, Natural Horsemanship)
- 6 Horse Handlers  
(Sarah Smith, Sharon Cunningham, Margie Brown, Desk Friend, Fiona Ducats & Nyah Gibson)
- 14 General Volunteers  
(Including set up & dismantles of round yard, co-ordination meals, general help at event 2 hours in total per person)  
Excludes horse handlers
- 6 Horses  
(Pepper, Herman, Darcy, Sam, Tia, Aqua)



**Healing Power of Horses**

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013.*

*S.H.O.A.T.A*

*Source: North West Telegraph; Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

**“Horse Handlers”**



**Healing Power of Horses**

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013*

*S.H.O.A.T.A*

*Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

**“Horse Handlers”**



**Healing Power of Horses**

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013.*

*S.H.O.A.T.A*

*Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

*Future Stakeholder Participation: YIC & Corrective Services*



## Healing Power of Horses

### 1. B Background Introduction: - Clinic Goals & Outcomes.

- ✓ Understand & implement group/herd mentality & thinking, rather than pack mentality
- ✓ Challenge mindset & create changes
- ✓ Teambuilding/herd building challenges & changes
- ✓ Attitude exercises & changes
- ✓ Self-esteem exercises & changes
- ✓ Responsibility exercises & changes
- ✓ Commitment



### *Healing Power of Horses*

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013.*

*South Hedland Owners & Trainers Association*

*Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

*"Team Work"*

## Healing Power of Horses

### 2. DAY ONE: Classroom Observations

Children participating in the clinic had several emotions to deal with at this early stage: excitement, fear, shyness, scared, 'shame'. We needed to work with these emotions in the classroom before we could consider venturing out to the practical with the horses.

It was evident at the start of the session their behaviour resembled a "pack mentality". However by the end of the session the children were starting to gain respect for each other, themselves & adults; they were starting to demonstrate the beginning of a "herd mentality" in the manner which they spoke and acted. This was achieved thru various activities such as "get to know your buddy" as series of 5 question and answers of their buddy for the day which they had to present to the group.

When individuals were becoming distracted or losing focus (displaying pack mentality attitude) we interrupted the session by doing star jumps to help change the mind set and burn some energy. At first this was at the discretion by the leaders of the herd (Steve or Kim), this was a subtle way of teaching the children there are consequences/outcomes to their actions, both positive and negative. This was their introduction to start them thinking about their personal actions and the effects it can have upon others. When we felt star jumps were necessary throughout the first session, we started approaching the herd and asked them if this behaviour was good, to which they replied "no" and they agreed that star jumps were necessary, this was without blaming or shaming any particular child, it was lessening the pack mentality.

When working with horses becoming distracted can end up with an injury to the person, again this was emphasised in the classroom and as to why we need to focus and pay immediate attention to the now.

Five sessions of star jumps were required during day one.

### 2. DAY ONE: Practical Observations

The children were first asked to spend several minutes observing the horses and pick which one they believed best reflected them. From here the next task involved overcoming their fear of the horse, of which they all were at first. This exercise involved introducing yourself to your relevant horse handler, and then the child had to rub their belly on the horses shoulder area. By having the children do this rather than rub the horse with their hand it helps overcome the fear factor more effectively and slowly builds a stronger feeling of confidence and belief within the child. Whilst the child was overcoming their fear of horses, they were also learning in a subtle way trust in humans, that being the horse handler. At this stage we found the children were still somewhat shy and reserved with the handlers, but we weren't concerned.

## Healing Power of Horses

### 2. DAY ONE: Practical Observations Cont.

This “belly rub” exercise evolved into further activities based on this change in self-belief/confidence. From here the children then learnt a little basic horse husbandry; how to groom a horse.

The children also had to set up an obstacle course for the leading race, whereby the handler & child had to walk the horse thru a series of obstacles. The child was responsible for the leading and the handler ready to assist in difficult situations, if this should arise. The aim of this exercise was again to build confidence, belief & learn if you’re thinking negative the horse will mirror this thought & won’t go thru the obstacles. This was an exercise to demonstrate how horses reflect your thoughts and attitude. This exercise was also designed have some fun, as children learn quicker and achieve more when learning is enjoyable.

As the session progressed we witnessed subtle changes in the children, they started to verbally communicate with more confidence & ease with their handler. They were accepting both horse and human as their herd. The children started making direct eye contact with the handlers.

After the event, we sat around the arena and had dinner which comprised of individual salads & a roast beef sandwich. It was here I noticed the children opted for the sandwiches, so Steve & I made a point of eating a salad in front of them, without talking about food, but continuing to talk about the fun aspect of being involved with horses.



*Healing Power of Horses*  
*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013.*  
*South Hedland Owners & Trainers Association*  
*(S.H.O.A.T.A)*  
*Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*  
*“Over Coming Shame”*

## Healing Power of Horses

### 2. A DAY TWO: Classroom Observations

The session commenced with all classroom participants voicing a key learning of yesterday. At first some of the children were reluctant to answer, feeling that they would be wrong. After explaining there is no right or wrong answers, the children gained confidence & voiced their learning's which was encouraged by the herd mentality with a big well done clap! The children were then asked to select a different buddy for the session & again we started with getting to know your buddy with 5 different questions from the previous day and then they had to present this to the herd.

The children also learnt how a horse's brain works; the "stay-alive side" and the "thinking-side" and to be able to achieve a working relationship with your horse his brain needs to be on the thinking side, and then this was related back to humans with similarities and examples. We explained when a horse is in stay alive mode they are very hard and unsafe to work with, just like people, however when in thinking mode you can achieve great outcomes.

Two sessions of star jumps were conducted this day, proving that the herd mentality and attitude was starting to really form. During day two the children were asked when the thought star jumps were required, this making them accountable for their actions.

### 2. A DAY TWO: Practical Observations

The main practical with the horses involved; learning to read horse's body language; how the correct intent in your brain is crucial; and demonstrating the difference between the "stay alive side" and "thinking side". Also to look for an overall softness in the horse's body language and eye which means the horse is ready to become friends and work with you.

The children were shown this through the "spider web" exercise. One by one they ventured into the round yard with Steve to learn this method of communication and friendship. The aim is to have the horse follow you around the round yard being led by an invisible spider web. If you are too forceful with the spider web, it breaks and so does the relationship! Some of the children showed incredible skills with this exercise, their connection with the horse was magical. Others it took a little longer to obtain the same result, these children had emotional barriers such as fear, feeling silly or not as good as your peer, however the results for these particular children was of more significance. It was interesting to note how those children observing paid attention for the two hours.

## Healing Power of Horses

### 2. A DAY TWO: Practical Observations Cont.

The young male child, whom went first in this exercise from the 6 participants, had probably the most challenging time, he felt pressure, but was confident to have a go and lead the way. The pressure he faced, he dealt with by not running from his emotions, but rather working thru them and as he became at ease with this situation and relaxed, so did the horse and then they became a partnership, with the horse following him around on the invisible spider web. As we progressed thru this event, you could see this young boy feel a little embarrassed he didn't do this exercise as effectively as the others.

We used this opportunity to talk to the group about how this boy had really set the foundation for the task, therefore making it easier for the other herd members; that is what team/herd work is all about. This young boy then changed back to being in a positive frame of mind rather than one of feeling inadequate.

This time we did the obstacle course challenge and the children's confidence in them was significant enough the handlers didn't require to touch the horse and some children even were able to run and have the horse trotting behind on the lead line.

This exercises resulted in the children's confidence developing, they were talking more freely with everyone, engaging eye contact & their personalities were starting to shine thru. This is one of the most empowering exercises with your horse, to be able to have the animal that weights over 400kgs with a mind of its own follow you around with no restraining aids, purely because you have developed a mutual understanding without using the spoken word.

It was interesting to note that at dinner this night the children also ate the salads!

## Healing Power of Horses

### 2. B DAY THREE: Classroom Observations

The start of the session we again asked each child to voice one key learning from the previous day either classroom or practical. The biggest response was the spider web activity (day two practical summary). The children weren't shy or reluctant to respond; in fact they were eager to speak. I then opened up a discussion about dreaming and inspiration. I presented to the children some pictures of the fun stuff you can do with horses that are in my dream/vision book for equine therapy in Port Hedland & the Pilbara and asked if they would like to obtain horse skills of this level, a huge positive group response of yes was heard. The children then were asked if they would like to write in my book as this is the first step to bring this possibility alive. The result was overwhelming with around 30 minutes taken up with this activity, some children put pictures, others messages. This activity was also interesting as some children were scared about writing and spelling which emphasised the lower literacy levels in the community at an early age. But again these children overcame this fear and had a go; it's about empowering them and changing their mindset.

The session continued with a recap on key learning's the day before. Knowing they were going to perhaps have a ride on a horse as part of their practical, even with all this excitement, they showed the ability to start controlling their emotions, owning them!

No star jumps required!

### 2. D DAY THREE: Practical Observations

Today's first challenge was to revisit the spider web exercise, however this time Steve would be outside the round pen and the children's peers had to help the child in the round yard, by offering advice, tips, instruction. The object was to act as a herd/team. The overall result of this exercise had the desired outcome, to act as a herd, to help each other. The enthusiasm at times had to be curtailed! From here we end the session with a bit of fun and further confidence building, yes time to have a sit on your horse and be lead around the arena. The smile on the children's faces at this stage was fantastic, and when upon the horses back, they relaxed, talked freely with the horse handlers, it was a dream come true for them.

## Healing Power of Horses

### DAY THREE: Images



### *Healing Power of Horses*

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013.*

*S.H.O.A.T.A*

*Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

*“Positive Outcomes”*



### *Healing Power of Horses*

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013*

*S.H.O.A.T.A*

*Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

*“Night Riders”*



### *Healing Power of Horses*

*Demonstration Clinic, March 2013.*

*South Hedland Owners & Trainers Association  
(S.H.O.A.T.A)*

*Source: Steve Burke; YIC; Kim Gentle*

*“SMILE”*

## Healing Power of Horses

### 3. Summary

Over the 3 days the children participating showed enormous improvement in their attitude & behaviour. They handled change, they learnt to trust a complete stranger (horse handlers) and develop a relationship with them. The shyness had slowly dissolved within the children and their real characters started to shine. Some children faced their fears of horses and overcame this which again would have empowered them. In particular over the three days the young lady I worked with whom was about 9 years old, had to work with also the largest and most intimidating horse in the group, Herman. When she gained confidence in myself & the horse I took the time to explain how the horse is big & strong, he suffers from insecurity issues and his attitude is all bluff...I asked her if she knew of people like this, to which she replied that's a bit like some of the bullies at school. Wow what a connection this young girl made.

The oldest girl in the group was 12 years old. She had a broken toe! Her determination to not let this stop her from learning was just fantastic. Again she would have been the shiest child, but by the third day the confidence she had gained was incredible. It would have been easy for this girl to say "it's too hard with a broken toe", but her attitude to work with this disability so she didn't miss out on this clinic really emphasized the commitment from the children.

One of the young boys participating had such an attitude change that even his Principal at South Hedland Primary School noticed something very different about him and commented to the YIC representative Stacey how his behaviour and attitude was different. Ironically this was the young boy that had the first to attempt the spider web exercise!

Probably the most disappointing aspect of the 3 days was the lack of attendance at school by the children on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of the clinic. An additional subsequent outcome of this type of program potentially leads to better attendance/retention rates within schools by the students taking part in the program. As a no school, no 'horse play' type of policy/consequence could be developed and fairly enforced. As it is equally important to send a message that is supportive of teachers and parents that an education should be a priority.

Not many children would want to miss this chance or understanding horses & perhaps even adults too!!!



## Healing Power of Horses

### 3. A. Value

The 3 day Demonstration Clinic was very unique due to the community support and services donated to kick start Port Hedland. Due to the commitment by Kim Gentle & Steve Burke the clinic cost about \$100 from Kim's personal finances. Thanks to local business & some local individuals all required equipment; meals; drinks; accommodation; transport; classroom facility; Steve Burkes clinic fees were donated to the event, **total value \$12,112.** This in itself was a true reflection of the belief of the Healing Power of Horses in the Port Hedland community.

	<b>Total Cost</b>
Hire of 6 horses	\$1,800
Wages for horse handlers	\$360
Meals (excluding drinks)	\$300
Drinks (including ice)	\$300
Hire of lighting towers 3 days (Coates Hire)	\$1230
Co-ordinators fee	\$300
Steve Burke Accommodation (Includes continental breakfast at Best Western)	\$1250
Steve Burke Car Hire (Small car, Budget)	\$372
Steve Burke Training Fee	\$3,600
Steve Burke Flights	\$1,600
Steve Burke Travel Day	\$1,000
<b><u>Total Cost of Clinic Donated</u></b>	<b>\$12,112</b>

## Healing Power of Horses

### 3. B. Community Support

Thank you to the following for their contribution for making the Healing Power of Horses Clinic possible.



South Hedland Owners and Trainers Association  
(S.H.O.A.T.A)



STEVE BURKE TRAINING PROGRAM



Annie King Racing



Karousel Equestrian



Administration: PO Box 2543,  
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## DEMONSTRATION CLINIC REPORT

On the 26<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> of April the Youth Involvement Council (YIC) was given the opportunity to include some of our young clients in the Demonstration Clinic/Horsemanship Workshop delivered by Steve Burke and Kim Gentle. YIC is a non-Government community organisation that has been delivering essential services to disadvantaged and at risk youth for over 20 years.

YIC transported 5 clients to the workshop each day which started at 3pm and finished at around 8:30pm. Over the 3 days Steve and Kim worked with the youth doing different activities. The classroom environment work included teambuilding, confidence building, and theory and safety information about working with horses. After this 2 hour session was finished and the youth had proven to Steve that they had worked hard and took the workshop seriously we went out to the Shoata Stables to start the practical part of the workshop with the horses. Steve was very clear about his expectations from the youth during the workshop explaining appropriate and inappropriate behaviours and also making it clear that if they didn't engage in the activities then we wouldn't continue for the practical part of the session.

Personally I was very impressed with the content and delivery of these workshops. The clients we brought along had various needs and abilities and the workshop catered for these. Throughout the three days I observed a big change in the youth. Skills such as communication, listening and confidence all developed rapidly in a relatively short period of time. We were witnessing youth that have previously had trouble with regular school attendance and following simple directions to sitting through the 5 hour workshop fully engaged. The transformation was great to watch. Their confidence grew and the level of responsibility that they naturally took on with the horses was amazing. All of the youth attended every day of the workshop demonstrating that they understood the level of commitment that was required on their part to the program. This in itself is a great achievement as commitment and responsibility is something that can be lacking in youths at risk. I have not seen a program that so successfully develops skills such as confidence, responsibility, and respect work so quickly with youth. If we had a program such as this in Hedland on a consistent basis we could definitely assist our young people to access it. I have no doubt we would begin to see a faster change with the youth that we work with.

**Stacey Turale**

Birds & Bees Coordinator

CONNECTING  
WITH  
YOUNG  
PEOPLE

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Ph: (08) 9140 1468 Fax: (08) 9172 2591  
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Magic Mob  
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## Healing Power of Horses

### 3. D. Steve Burke Report

# STEVE BURKE

## TRAINING PROGRAM

In late march I held a three day horsemanship program in Port Hedland. I was very happy with how the program went with remarkable changes in the group of kids we had.

The program is designed to give kids self-confidence and a feeling of achievement in themselves. Over the three days the kids went from being naturally scared and hesitant around horses to becoming confident to catch a horse on their own and lead it through an obstacle course as well as brush and pat their horses all over. Its remarkable the changes witnessed in the kids that being around horses creates, the program facilitates this process... the main changes I witnessed was a huge change in calmness and desire to work as a team and help each other out. The kids all showed an ability to learn quickly and try the new activities with 100% effort

Steve Burke Training

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Mb: 0438 075 065



# Kids share healing power of horses

■ Mark Scott

Kim Gentle credits horses with saving her life.

In her early 30s, Ms Gentle was held captive in her own home for several months by an abusive former partner, forced to live day-to-day in survival mode before escaping with the help of her brother.

"It was an ordeal and it completely crushed my self-esteem and ability to trust people," she said.

"When I got out I started riding and hanging around horses again. They seemed to know what I needed, allowed me the freedom and security and got me back on track.

"It wasn't until I was around horses that I managed to rebuild a life and have faith and belief in people again."

Ms Gentle can't explain why horses affected her the way they did.

"It's hard to understand," she said. "They pick up on your feelings, you have to be honest around them, and when they start responding to you, it gives you that confidence boost that means so much."

Now, Ms Gentle wants to see the holistic healing power of horses offered to Hedland youths.

Last week, she and horsemanship trainer Steve Burke hosted a three-day workshop with children from the Youth Involvement Council at the South Hedland Owners and Trainers Association.

The group of youths spent each afternoon working with horses under the guidance of volunteer handlers, from first introducing themselves to the creatures right through to riding.

According to youth council Birds and Bees program co-ordinator Stacey Turale, who chose the children to be involved, the change in the youngsters over the three days was palpable.

"Even in the first session we could tell there was a massive difference in the kids," she said. "Their confidence grew immensely, even just spending half an hour with these horses. It was crazy."

"They were really scared to go



Kim Gentle introduces Amisha Corbett to Herman during a three-day workshop with children from the Youth Involvement Council. Pictures: Mark Scott

up (to the horses) to start with but after a while they got more confident, and the horses changed with the kids.

"These kids would never get this sort of opportunity. Most of them have never been around horses, they've never ridden or even touched one, and they loved it."

For Ms Gentle, working with horses offers a real opportunity to make a difference to Hedland youths.

"You see some of the things that go on out on the streets around here and it just breaks your heart," she said.

"These kids are naturals; they're

great kids once they get over their fear and rebuild their trust and self-belief. We need something like this in Port Hedland, something different."

Ms Gentle, who is qualified under the O.K. Corral equine-assisted work program, hopes to create a healing centre for local children and adults in Hedland.

"For the next 12 months we want a venue to keep doing more workshops like this with the kids, then after that the sky is the limit," she said. "If we can help one kid, save one kid from hurting someone or hurting themselves, then we're doing something good."



Nigel Edwards holds Pepper the horse.

