

# Welcome to Dreamcatcher™

**Dreamcatcher™ Nature Assisted Therapy is a Psychology Practice, 30 minutes east of Edmonton, on a beautiful 40-acre ranch. The tranquil setting boasts a holistic approach to healing; offering a wide variety of traditional and unique therapies to help children, youth and adults find healing, balance, and joy that contributes to their personal growth.**



**dreamcatcher™**  
nature assisted therapy

# Who Started it all?



Eileen Bona founded Dreamcatcher™ in 2003 after being inspired by her brother, John, who contracted Meningitis at 8 months old, leaving him with a severe brain injury. As a result, Eileen immersed herself in advocating for her brother. Her life-changing experiences prompted her to begin helping others who were also falling through the cracks. Eileen was curious as to what would occur when pairing an extremely vulnerable person whom has struggled to access the help they need, with an animal like a horse. Rain was the first horse at Dreamcatcher™ and when she first started Eileen had a lot to learn not only about equines but how to provide the proper therapy these populations desperately needed with the assistance of Rain.

More than 21 years later, Eileen has a wide range of different species of animals as the Dreamcatcher™ team's co-counsellors. From chickens to goats to horses, all species of animals have the ability to connect with us on a beautifully therapeutic level. Eileen believes there is no such thing as "too far gone" or "too difficult for therapy", as Dreamcatcher™'s wide variety of therapeutic methods are destined to help everyone, no matter the diagnosis. Eileen's specialization in helping children and youth with a variety of life issues and multiple mental health diagnoses, and more specifically brain related conditions, has not only evolved, but paid great dividends in terms of the progress of the individuals and families she has and is working with.



## What is Animal Assisted Therapy?

Animal Assisted Therapy is a qualified professional working with a certified animal to improve human functioning with identified and measured goals.



## Why Animal or Nature Assisted Therapy?

### **The Benefits of Animal and Nature Assisted Therapies include:**

- Increased client relaxation
- Increased willingness to talk
- Decreased resistance
- Apparent presence of unconditional love

### **Biological Effects of Animal Assisted Therapy:**

- Decreased Cortisol (Stress hormone), Decreased heart rate and blood pressure
- Increased beta endorphins (reduce physical pain) and dopamine (Key for motivation)



# Other Therapeutic Mediums:

Our Dreamcatcher™ Behaviour Interventionists and Therapists utilize a number of therapeutic mediums to meet the needs of all individuals, including but not limited to:

- Equine Facilitated Counselling
- Nature Assisted Therapy
- Traditional Talk Therapy
- Sand Tray Therapy
- Music Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Art Therapy
- EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing)

Dreamcatcher™ has 8 offices, as well as a heated barn, for those who do not wish to spend their 50-minute sessions outside – especially in the winter. From chicken coops, the goat pen, the back 40 pasture with the horses, or inside the barn playing games, clients are able to choose how they wish to spend their 50 minutes with their therapists.





## Fees for Services:

Behavioural Management: \$120.00 per 50-minute session

Counselling and Treatment:

- \$230.00 per 50-minute session
- \$275.00 per 50-minute session with Eileen Bona
- Discounts may be available when working with an Intern Therapist or a recently graduated Mental Health Therapist
- \$80.00 per hour per person for group therapy

Groups & Team Building: Price varies per service



## Our Funding Models:

- Direct Billing through Private Health Benefits such as Alberta Blue Cross, Canada Life, Co-Operators, etc.
- First Nations, Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB), and Indian Residential Schools (IRS): Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) & Jordan's Principle
- Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD)
- Children & Family Services (CFS) All Regions
- Military & First Responders Benefits (i.e., Veteran's Affairs, Victim Services)
- Employee & Family Assistance Plans
- Public Trustee
- Collaborative Service Deliveries (CSD's)
- Church Sponsorships
- Lawyer's Offices
- Good Neighbours Fund
- Boys and Girls Club: Big Brothers, Big Sisters
- Breaking Free Foundation
- Automotive Insurance Companies
- Subsidization: a sliding fee scale is available by application through our charity.



# Who Do We Help?

**Dreamcatcher™ works with people of all ages and backgrounds but specializes in the following areas:**

- Organic Brain Impairments such as Autism, FASD, and Other Developmental Delays
- Emotional and Behavioral Challenges
- Multiple Mental Health Diagnoses
- Limited Communication Ability
- Trauma/Abuse Histories
- Addictions
- Homeless / Transient
- History of Animal Abuse





# The Dream Team...

Our highly skilled and qualified staff also experience the wonders that await them at Dreamcatcher™ Ranch making it a healthy and rewarding place to work.

Our students, volunteers, interns and staff alike are compassionate and kind, prepared to help out wherever needed.

Together, we learn and experience the benefits of being teachable students ourselves, making us fit and ready to be and to serve others in partnership with our furry critters.





# Key Dream Team Members You Will Encounter...



## **Jess Mayhew B.H.Sc., Administrative Manager**

Jess graduated with her Bachelor's Degree in Addictions Counselling in 2009. She grew up in the Okanagan, with such a passion for children and animals that she knew she had to find some capacity to work with them together. She has a great love and respect for all species of animals. She has a particular fondness for reptiles of all sorts, especially snakes. From direct billing, booking appointments, helping to ensure your therapist is the best fit for you, greeting everyone who enters with a smile, to being the Dreamcatcher™'s chicken expert, Jess is a vital member of our Dream Team & we would not function without her! When phoning our office (780-809-1047), Jess' voice will be the first you hear!

## **Ashley Wolbeck, Intake Coordinator**

Ashley holds an Addictions and Community Service Diploma, Early Learning and Child Care Diploma, is a Certified Level 3 Early Childhood Educator, and has completed several Animal Assisted Therapy courses. As an education enthusiast with a deep-rooted interest for advancing her learning, Ashley completed an 8-week practicum in 2023 with Dreamcatcher™ during which she learned about Dreamcatcher's™ therapeutic practices, animal care and maintenance, and general operations. It is through this practicum that she uncovered a keen interest in the administrative side of Dreamcatcher™. Ashley's desire to improve the lives of others fits perfectly into her role of Intake Coordinator at Dreamcatcher™. Ashley feels a sense of purpose in this role as she works diligently to partner new clients with the therapist or behaviour interventionist that best suits the person's needs, presenting concerns, and goals. Ashley will eventually pursue a Bachelor of Social Work Degree where she will continue to grow and gain more knowledge in the field of mental health.





# Key Dream Team Members You Will Encounter...

## **Eileen Bona, M.Ed., Registered Psychologist, Director and Founder**

Eileen is a past Sessional Instructor of Introductory Psychology at King's University, and she designed Canada's first college-accredited course in Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT). She offered the only certification in AAT through Dreamcatcher™ and has now partnered with Lakeland College to offer the first college certificate in AAT in English in Canada. She is currently the President of the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association and has helped to develop the The National Canadian Standards in Animal-Assisted Human Services. Eileen presents the concept and techniques of AAT nationally at conferences and agency-level presentations. She provides intensive training in AAT in both Workshop and Internship formats at Dreamcatcher™ to national and international students as well as travels to help other organizations develop and implement their Animal Assisted programs.



## **Melonie Labrecque, M.A., Registered Psychologist, Senior Therapist**

Mel holds a Master of Counselling Degree and is a Registered Psychologist in Alberta. She has been involved in the area of psychology for over 10 years in a variety of settings with a variety of ages and mental health issues. In October 2012-2013 she was a practicum student with Dreamcatcher™ Nature-Assisted Therapy providing family and individual therapy to a variety of individuals with a range of presenting challenges and mental health concerns. Her passion for integrating animals into therapeutic practice ignited and took flight. Her love for animals and aim to heal and touch as many lives as possible found its path. Ages ranged from 2.5 years old to adults and a variety of mental health concerns such as: trauma, grief and loss, depression, anxiety, developmental delays, sensory disorders, emotional dysregulation, attachment disorders, FASD and witnesses of family addictions and violence. She primarily utilizes Animal and Nature Assisted Therapy and Traditional Talk therapy and integrates music, play and art-therapy medium based techniques.



# Key Dream Team Members You Will Encounter...

## **Reesa Lerner, MSW, Registered Clinical Social Worker**

Reesa is a registered Clinical Social Worker. Inspired by a beagle named Bailey, she has been researching and training in the Nature and Animal Assisted Therapy field since 2006. Reesa has been involved with Dreamcatcher™ since 2010. She specializes in working with teens and adults with complex needs including trauma, addictions, psychosis and especially those who have been marginalized. Her therapeutic approaches include cognitive-behavioural, strengths based, trauma-focused, nature and animal assisted. With her quick wit and down to earth personality she is a perfect fit for older teens and young adults.



## **Janine Kristensen, M.Ed., Registered Psychologist**

Janine holds a Master of Education with a Specialization in School and Clinical Child Psychology and a Bachelor of Science with Honors in Psychology. Animals have always had a special place in Janine's heart. She has fostered dogs with Paws for Life and volunteered with Little Bits Therapeutic Riding Association at the Whitemud Equine Learning Centre for several years. Volunteering at Little Bits opened her eyes to the beneficial impact horses can have on people with mental health diagnoses and physical disabilities. Janine has worked with children, youth and adults for over 11 years in group home care, working in different areas such as Addictions, Intervention, Family Support and High Risk programs. Janine provides psychological assessments and therapeutic interventions with her main theoretical framework rooted in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. She offers Play Therapy interventions and is learning how to integrate Animal Assisted Therapy into her therapeutic approach.





# Key Dream Team Members You Will Encounter...

## Kaeley Kereliuk, M.A, Registered Psychologist

In 2013 Kaeley obtained a Bachelor's degree in Child and Youth Care, and a Masters of Counselling Degree in 2016 through the City University of Seattle. She has recently pursued her Provisional Registration as a Psychologist in Alberta. Her previous experience is in group homes, community, and school settings working with children and youth ages 5-18 with complex needs. Kaeley completed her internship in 2015/2016 at The Be Brave Ranch (Little Warriors) where she was able to see how integrating different therapeutic approaches to therapy was valuable. Her love for nature and animals brought Kaeley to Dreamcatcher™ in early 2020 as one of our student therapists. She incorporates animal assisted, nature-assisted, music, art and play interventions into her therapy practice. Kaeley works most often from a trauma focused, strength based, and narrative lens.



## Kaytlyn Morris, MSW, Registered Social Worker

Since 2015, Kaytlyn has been a Registered Social Worker in Alberta. Kaytlyn has experience working with an intensive addiction and mental health outreach team, supporting the inner city's most vulnerable forensic and homeless population with concurrent disorders. She is competent in providing crisis intervention, safety planning and harm reduction strategies. She has also worked collaboratively with Child and Family Services, supporting children and their families through issues of domestic violence, gang affiliation, mental health, addictions, exploitation and parenting. She supports individuals to explore and connect to Indigenous culture and ceremonies. She is an advocate for families and their children, empowering them to overcome systemic barriers in order to nurture their basic needs. She also understands the importance of children and teens developing skills in regards to emotional regulation, relationship building, communication, stress tolerance and mindfulness.



# Key Dream Team Members You Will Encounter...



## **Sarah Nicholson, M.C., Mental Health Therapist**

In September 2023, Sarah began her internship placement with Dreamcatcher™ as a Master of Counselling Student through City University and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Applied Psychology from Concordia University. Sarah started her journey at Dreamcatcher™ during her undergraduate degree in 2016. She has since been working in the field of psychology with high-risk populations for 7 years, with various ages and mental health issues. Sarah utilizes a trauma-informed, client-centred and strength-based approach, and is trained in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. She also includes strategies from Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Solution-Focused Therapy and Narrative Therapy. She has experience working with children, youth and parents with anxiety, depression, self-harm, substance use, and interpersonal violence, and is competent in providing crisis intervention and safety planning. Sarah believes in the special healing power that nature and animals can provide and is passionate about incorporating both into her therapeutic practice. She believes that everyone can achieve a healthy and fulfilling life and is skilled at highlighting the strengths, goals, and values that each individual client has.

## **Samantha Bata, M.C., Intern Therapist**

Samantha is a current intern student at Dreamcatcher™ who is pursuing a Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology. Through this program, she has gained knowledge in various counselling methodologies, psychotherapeutic interventions, and crises and trauma counselling techniques. She is dedicated to encouraging personal growth and harmony in others while supporting clients in their journey towards greater well-being. She has a particular enthusiasm for the integration of nature and animal therapy to achieve this objective. Samantha's special interests include mindfulness-based interventions, existential therapy, and solution-focused therapy. Samantha began as a volunteer at Dreamcatcher™ in 2019, where she demonstrated her passion and dedication for caring for animals. She has a bachelor's degree in Sociology, has volunteered extensively with various social service organizations and has a background in American Sign Language (ASL).





# Key Dream Team Members You Will Encounter...



## **Joshua Tuason, Behavioural Interventionist**

Josh is a Behavioral Interventionist at Dreamcatcher™ who is pursuing his Master of Arts in Counselling Psychology at Yorkville University. He has a large background working with children and youth, supporting them with skill-building through social-emotional learning and integrating animal-assisted human services into practice, recognizing how animals are healing and provide a sense of comfort within practice. His modalities of practice and interest are using a two-eyed seeing approach, narrative therapy, person-centered therapy and solutions-focused therapy. Josh began his career as a Program Manager for a non-profit after-school program that offered free sports and recreation to children and youth in Edmonton, where he discovered his love of utilizing non-traditional methods in sessions. Recently he worked with schools as a Therapeutic Assistant for children and youth.

## **Liesel Wierenga, Behavioural Interventionist**

Liesel started out at Dreamcatcher™ in 2017 as a volunteer where she began feeding and caring for the animals. She advanced through the roles and became an animal handler, then Volunteer Coordinator, and now a Behavioural Interventionist. She is completing her degree in Therapeutic Recreation online through the University of Lethbridge which enables her to help others build social, emotional, physical, cognitive, spiritual and environmental skills through enjoyable and meaningful activities. She has worked with children, youth, adults and seniors in clinical settings, helping them find purpose and meaning to their lives through recreation and leisure.





# Meet The Critters

The 40 Acre Dreamcatcher™ property has provided homes for over 40 animals who were homeless, injured, or ill. With so many different species of animals, everyone is able to work with their favourite. Our specially screened and trained animals provide our clients with Animal Assisted Therapy as well as Equine Facilitated Counselling.

## What can working with animals do for you?

Realizing that an animal sees the true you and love what they see, provides a validating healing effect like no other. Working with and spending time with animals, can be critical on the realization of self as animals can assist clients in developing confidence and self-esteem, and provide a healthy mirror to truly see themselves and who they are.

**Animals also remind us to... PLAY!** Play is a child's natural form of expression and our animals know how to express themselves. Evolution recognizes the value of play and research shows that play helps us to develop social and cognitive skills. In play, there are no winners or losers, allowing the participants to just be. Playing with animals or in nature can help us to reconnect with the healing and joyful power of play.







# Who can access our services? Anyone!

Here at Dreamcatcher™, you do not require a diagnosis or a referral to access our services. We welcome everyone of all ages! As we know how difficult it can be to access the proper help you need, we provide our services to everyone. From those struggling with anxiety from the ongoing pandemic, to those with severe diagnoses, our wide variety of therapeutic mediums will ensure we are able to provide the services anyone seeks.

To access our services, please contact:

- Intake Coordinator: [intake@dreamcatcherassociation.com](mailto:intake@dreamcatcherassociation.com)
- Administrators/Main Office: [info@dreamcatcherassociation.com](mailto:info@dreamcatcherassociation.com) or call (780) 809-1047 ext. 1.

Jess or Ashley will be able to assist you in getting started.





# Other Aspects of Dreamcatcher™

Dreamcatcher™ also provides skill building, field trips, corporate team building, tourism experiences, and certification in Animal Assisted Services through our Animal Assisted Wellness Academy!

## **Furry Foundations, Fur & Fun Days, & Corporate Team Building**

We provide a variety of group activities such as recreational or therapeutic skill building day camps (furry foundations), field trips (fur & fun days), and corporate team building opportunities. Our group activities are tailored for each group based on type of group (e.g., therapeutic vs recreation), goals, budget, and age.

If you are interested in any of these activities, please email: [info@dreamcatcherassociation.com](mailto:info@dreamcatcherassociation.com)

## **Tourism Program**

Dreamcatcher™ Tourism program in 2020, and offers seasonal tourism experiences through the Spring and Summer months such as Animal or Nature Yoga, Time on the Land, Tropical Barn Breathing, Forest Bathing, and other special events. We also offer birthday parties, photography venue, and a pen paw pal program!

If you are interested in our tourism experiences, please email: [volunteer@dreamcatcherassociation.com](mailto:volunteer@dreamcatcherassociation.com)

## **Animal Assisted Wellness Academy**

Dreamcatcher™ Animal Assisted Wellness Academy has been officially offering certification in Animal Assisted Services (AAS) on a global scale for more than 15 years. This includes the development of AAS courses, college diplomas, training and certification for therapy animals, certification for professionals, internships, workshops, and seminars. We have successfully assisted educational facilities and individuals all over the world such as Japan and Holland to integrate animals into their practices.

Dreamcatcher™ is one of the leading organizations in Animal Assisted Therapy in Canada and is proud to teach others to the highest standards in the growing field of Animal Assisted Services.

Inquiries are welcomed by contacting Jess at 780.809.1047 ext 1 or emailing [info@dreamcatcherassociation.com](mailto:info@dreamcatcherassociation.com)



# Get Involved!

## Volunteer Program

One of the key aspects that make the Dreamcatcher™ programs successful are the many dedicated volunteers who commit their time and talents. These amazing individuals are an essential part to maintain its functions and the health of the animals that call Dreamcatcher™ their home.

If you are interested in volunteering with us, please email our Volunteer Coordinator [volunteer@dreamcatcherassociation.com](mailto:volunteer@dreamcatcherassociation.com)

## Practicum Placement

Over the years Dreamcatcher™ has been a practicum placement for many Child and Youth Care, Counselling, Psychology, and Social Work students.

If you are interested in exploring Animal Assisted Services as a possible career, please contact [eileen@dreamcatcherassociation.com](mailto:eileen@dreamcatcherassociation.com)  
Space is very limited.





# We Look Forward to Seeing You Soon!



For more information on services, please visit our website  
[www.dreamcatcherassociation.com](http://www.dreamcatcherassociation.com)

Or call our office at 780-809-1047 ext 1 to speak to  
our wonderful admin staff, Jess, for any  
inquiries regarding our services.