

Maggie Cammack

Mr. Speice

ISM 1

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Emotional Support

Assessment 8-Research

Date: 23 October 2018

Topic: Benefits of Therapy Dogs

MLA Citation: AKC. "Service Dog Vs. Therapy Dog: What's the Difference?" *American Kennel Club*, 13 Apr. 2017,
www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/a-therapy-dog-is-not-a-service-dog/.

Assessment:

The American Kennel Club addressed the controversy over the difference between therapy and service dogs, by explaining the difference in both services the dogs provide, and the laws that protect the owners. Service animals are regulated under the Americans with disabilities act, so the animals are allowed in any area that the owner is allowed. Therapy dogs; however, are not protected under this act, and most follow the rules set in place by businesses the owner wishes to enter. Task-wise, service dogs perform tasks in order to increase there owner's independence while therapy dogs perform emotional support tasks that are not specialized for one person (AKC).

For someone struggling with a mental illness, having something for emotional support would aid in coping with difficult situations. These people, with mental illness, may not have one

or more aspect of their lives hindered, so they cannot get a service animal to help them, but therapy animals can be used by anyone in order to limit stress and provide emotional support. School districts should have therapy animals on staff for students. This could result in reduced stress for students as petting animal such as dogs has a direct correlation with lowering heart rate and blood pressure (AKC). Starting a program in school districts to train therapy dogs for struggling students could improve the school environment. A goal for this year would be to propose a plan to Frisco ISD to starting having therapy animals in school during times of high stress such as when college applications are due or during April and May when standardized and advanced placement (AP) are taking place.

The training process for service and therapy dogs differs in intensity of the programs (AKC). For some interested in reaping the benefits of having a support animal therapy dogs can be trained without assistance of a certified trainer, which is required when training a service dog. Creating a website for people to learn therapy dog training techniques will how people to access to good, quality information regarding the best way to train their dogs. I want work with hospitals by bringing therapy animals to comfort children in the future. Starting a nonprofit may be a good option as there are some companies that do bring animals to hospitals it is not a common occurrence in North Texas. Although this is does not go along with dog training in particular, it still always for full involvement in the community and I would helping more people because the field of dog training is relatively small.

One problem that would need to be addressed if for therapy dog ownership is that they are not protected under the same laws (AKC). There are an abundance of problems in places such as airports because people are bringing a large variety of animals that may not have

certifications and claiming that they are emotional support. This causes people who need a therapy or service dogs to be turned away. Airlines should write distinct rules on what animals can and cannot be allowed on their plans, as well as require those wishing to bring their animals on the plan to show valid certification in order to protect those who need their animals. I would like to conduct research on the impact of using other animals such as pigs, miniature horses, and monkeys as therapy animals. They may provide some assistance but it seems unconventional and distracting to use those animals, so information regarding their benefits will be helpful to anyone looking to register an animal.

Overall, there is a lack of information regarding how to register an animal for therapy/emotional support. Creating a way for people to have access to this information is the overall goal, because everyone should be able do things on behalf of their own success. Reaching out to companies like US dog registry to learn more is something I want to do in the near future as helping people live there be life possible by any means is the ultimate goal.