

Oak Lawn has Therapy Dogs!! (in training)



How do we use them at OLCHS?

Luigi

- “Lives” each day in the Student Services with Social Worker Mr. Montes
- Students/staff could visit when needed
- Attends group sessions with social workers/counselors
- Dog could be “reserved” for classes to read to him, learn about dog hygiene, art therapy

Franklin

- “Lives” in the Main Office with Principal Dr. Lietz
- Dog would be a greeter/walk the halls
- Dog could be “reserved” for classes to read to him, learn about dog hygiene, art therapy
- Students/staff could visit when needed

Benefits of a Therapy Dog

For Mental Health:

- The simple act of petting animals releases an automatic relaxation response.
 - Humans interacting with animals have found that petting the animal promoted the release of serotonin, prolactin and oxytocin—all hormones that can play a part in elevating moods.
- Lowers anxiety and helps people relax.
- Provides comfort.
- Reduces loneliness.
- Increases mental stimulation.
- Can provide an escape or happy distraction.

For Physical Health:

- Lowers blood pressure and improves cardiovascular health.
- Reduces the amount of medications some people need.
- Breathing slows in those who are anxious.
- Releases many hormones such as Phenylethylamine which has the same effect as chocolate.
- Diminishes overall physical pain.
- For Children with Autism
 - Children with autism were engaged in significantly greater use of language as well as social interaction in their therapy sessions that incorporated animals compared to standard therapy sessions without them.



**Welcome
Luigi (left)
&
Franklin (right)**

Please note:

Students/Staff/Visitors will never be required to interact with the dogs, nor come in contact with them in a closed space.