



18<sup>th</sup> HETI Congress

# From Science to Practice

18-22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024  
Budapest, Hungary



HUNGARIAN  
RIDING



FOR THE DISABLED  
FEDERATION





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**18<sup>th</sup> HETI Congress**

# From Science to Practice

18-22<sup>nd</sup> June 2024  
Budapest, Hungary

## Programme and Abstract Book

The Hungarian Riding for Disabled Federation  
welcomes the participants of the 18<sup>th</sup> HETI Congress!

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## Kedves Résztevők!



Eljött a nagy nap, kezdődik a konferencia. A világ minden tájáról érkeztek előadások, poszterek. Összesen 29 országból vannak itt vendégeink, nem számítva azokat, akik interneten kívánják követni a konferenciát.

Két éven keresztül készültünk erre a napra, hogy találkozzunk ebben a csodálatos környezetben. Az eredeti épületet a magyar építész, Feketeházy János tervezte, aki ekkoriban a párizsi Eiffel-tornyot is jegyző Gustave Eiffel tervezőirodájának dolgozott. Innen ragadt rá az Eiffel név a csarnokra, melynek falai között valamikor mozdonyokat javítottak. Ezért is áll az előtérben egy régi, felújított mozdony. Ebben a gyönyörűen újjáépített épületkomplexumban más napokon a publikum operát, hangversenyt hallgat, esetleg balettet néz. Mától egy ideig a

lovasterápia tudományának ad otthont, hiszen a lovasterápia által nyújtott segítségről, fejlesztésről fogunk beszélni a következő négy napon.

Szerencsére a Magyar Kormány is mellénk állt, segítve a konferencia előkészítését és lebonyolítását. Ennek köszönhetően a mostani, 2024-es konferencia, ha nem is sokkal, de olcsóbb lett, mint az ezelőtt hat évvel megrendezett dublini rendezvény. Hála ennek a támogatásnak, megengedhettünk néhány luxust, aminek Önök most az élvezői lesznek.

Kívánok mindenkinek kellemes itt-tartózkodást, tartalmas, érdekes előadásokat, beszélgetéseket, és egy kis szórakozást is. Ismerjék meg a csodálatos fővárosunkat, Budapestet. A konferenciát június 22-én, szombaton a fóti intézetünkben zárjuk egy szakmai bemutatóval és egy fogadással, ahova mindenkit szeretettel várunk. Kellemes időtöltést kívánok Budapesten!

Budapest, 2024. június 18.

**Dr. Edvi Péter**  
elnök

## Dear Participants,



finally, the big day is here, the conference is about to begin. We received presentations and posters from all over the world. In total, there are guests from 29 countries, not including those who want to follow the conference online.

For two years, we have been preparing for this day to meet in this beautiful setting. The Hungarian architect János Feketeházy designed the original building, who at the time was working for Gustave Eiffel's design office, who also designed the Eiffel Tower in Paris, designed the original building. That's why there's an old, restored locomotive in the lobby. In this beautifully restored building complex, you can listen to opera, watch concerts or ballet performances. From today onwards, it will be home to the science of equine assisted therapy for a while, as over the next four days we will be talking about the help and development provided by equine assisted therapy and services.

We are pleased to announce that the Hungarian government has provided invaluable support in preparing and organising this year's conference. Consequently, the 2024 conference is more cost-effective compared to the Dublin event held six years ago. Thanks to this support, we are able to offer you several luxuries that will enhance your experience.

We hope you find your stay enjoyable, and the presentations, discussions, and events will be both meaningful and interesting. Take the opportunity to explore our beautiful capital, Budapest. The conference will conclude on Saturday, 22 June, with a professional demonstration and reception at our institute in Fót, to which everyone is warmly invited. Enjoy your time in Budapest!

Budapest, 18 June, 2024.

**Péter Edvi, Dr.**  
President



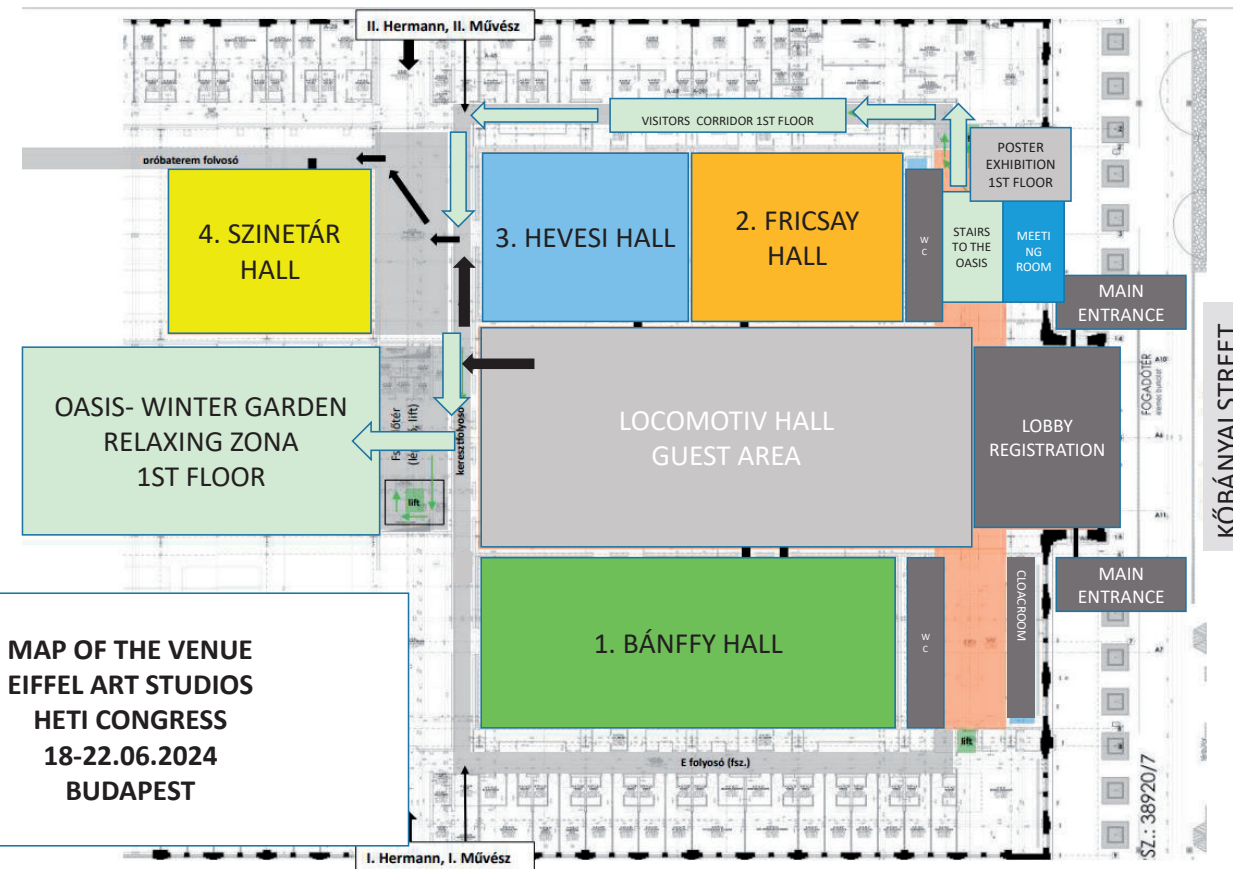
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# Table of Content

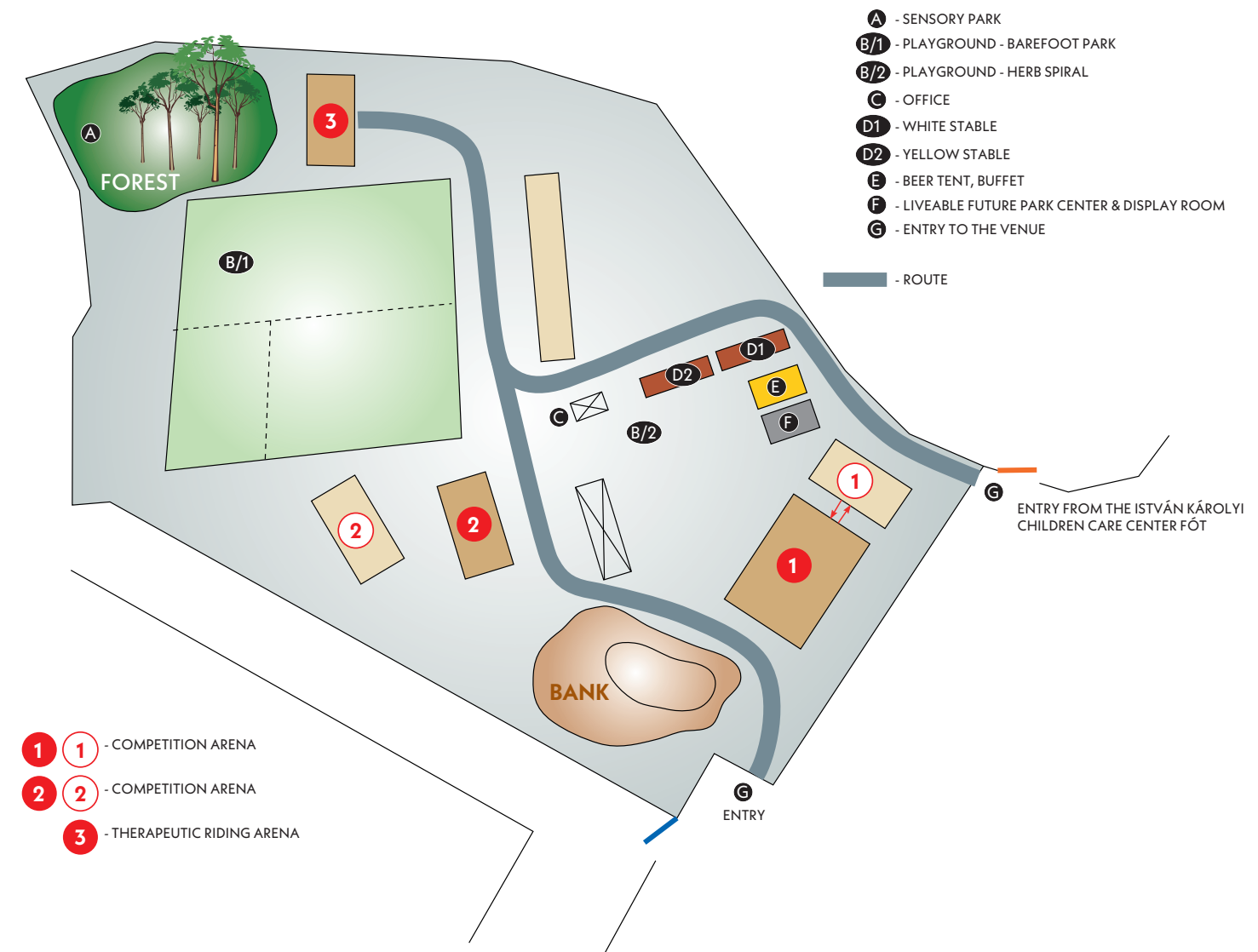
Greeting .....	4-5.
Eiffel Art Studios' Map .....	8.
Map of Therapeutic Riding and Education Center Fót .....	9.
Useful Information .....	10.
<b>ORAL PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS</b> .....	12.
Plenary Sessions .....	13.
Panel: Business .....	18.
Panel: Disabilities and Symptoms .....	20.
Panel: Education .....	32.
Panel: Horse Related .....	42.
Panel: Special Programme/Projects .....	56.
Panel: Sport .....	68.
Panel: Treatment Methods of Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy .....	70.
<b>POSTER PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS</b> .....	80.
Topic: Business .....	81.
Topic: Disabilities and Symptoms .....	84.
Topic: Education .....	92.
Topic: Horse Related .....	96.
Topic: Special Programme/Projects .....	98.
Topic: Treatment Methods of Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy .....	102.
<b>ROUND TABLE ABSTRACTS</b> .....	108.
<b>WORKSHOP ABSTRACTS</b> .....	112.
Index .....	115.
Introducing The Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation .....	118.
Fót-Budapest Map .....	119.

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## EIFFEL ART STUDIOS



## THERAPEUTIC RIDING AND EDUCATION CENTRE FÓT



# Useful information

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## USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

Ambulance: 104

Fire brigade: 105

Police: 107

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Hungarian prefix: +36

Taxi: +36 1 222 2222

Budapest Liszt Ferenc International Airport: +36 1 296 7000

Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: <https://konzinfo.mfa.gov.hu/en>

## USEFUL APPLICATION


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- description in English: <https://bkk.hu/en/tickets-and-passes/budapestgo/>
- Download from the App Store and Google Play.

A large circular graphic with a white border, filled with a blue-to-green gradient. The word 'Abstracts' is written in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

# Abstracts



# Oral Presentation Abstracts

## Plenary Session



# Equine assisted therapy in environmental psychological context

AUTHORS:

• Düll Andrea

ABSTRACT:

Environmental psychology works in the context of typically non-conscious interrelationship between humans and the built-natural-virtual environment, so the effects of equine assisted therapy working with horses (and other animals, e.g., dogs) and humans in the natural environment can be well understood in the context of environmental psychology. In the presentation, the environmental psychological processes taking place in the arenas of the relationship between horses and humans will be reviewed from the point of view of the socio-physical situation in the therapy. The purpose of the presentation is twofold: on the one hand, we want to inspire the environmental psychology research of equine assisted therapy processes, and on the other hand, we are convinced that the effectiveness of equine assisted therapy can be increased by raising awareness of the human-animal-environment interaction processes.

CV:

Andrea Düll

*PhD, DSc is an environmental psychologist, the founder of Hungarian environmental psychology, doctor of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, pro-environmental psychologist, director of the Institute of Human-Environment Transactions at Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, professor at the Department of Sociology and Communication at the Budapest University of Technology and Economics. She is credited with building the institutional system of environmental psychology in Hungary, developing its training system and introducing it as a discipline into environmental design. As a researcher, theorist, and practical consultant, she deals with all areas of human-environment interaction.*

# The portfolio of the Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation and options to manage the current and future challenges for non-profit organizations, especially in the central European region

AUTHORS:

• Peter Holzmüller

ABSTRACT::

The Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation is characterized by a clear professional separation of the disciplines and a simultaneous close cooperative networking of the four disciplines from the first stages of education. The post professional training with the common denominator medium horse is characterized by a high professional expertise and perspective.

Nonprofit organizations should already focus not only on the professional training and the cost-effective transfer of the specific service, but on the communication of values and development perspectives for their full-time and voluntary employees. The sincerely transported operational visions and missions as a foundation, as a motivation for recruiting and sustainable retention of top performers. The labor market is undergoing massive change, and NPOs will find themselves competing with industry, general business and medium-sized training companies for human resources in the future.

The key to success could come from the following three components – training, structural organization, and value transfer.

CV:

Peter Holzmüller

*Bavarian Red Cross  
Staff Office for Organizational Development and acting  
Head of the Integrated Rescue Control Center of the BRK  
Technical University of Munich  
Research associate in the Sociology of Diversity Group at  
the Technical University of Munich  
HRDF  
Chief instructor for hippotherapy of the Hungarian Riding  
for the Disabled Federation (MLTSZ) and member of the  
board of directors  
DKThR  
Member of the German Board of Trustees for Therapeutic  
Riding*

**QUALIFICATIONS:**  
*Specialist nurse intensive care / anesthesia.  
Physiotherapist specializing in pediatric neurology  
Mediator and conflict management trainer*

**PREVIOUS STATIONS:**  
*Traunstein District Hospital (Germany – Bavaria)  
Wasserburg District Hospital (Germany – Bavaria)  
Schön Clinic Vogtareuth (Germany – Bavaria)  
Orthopedic Children's Hospital Aschau (Germany –  
Bavaria)  
Southwest Hospital Association (Germany – Bavaria)  
Mainz University Hospital (Germany – Bavaria)  
University Hospital of the Technical University Munich  
(Germany – Bavaria)*



# "So you want to conduct a research project at my farm: what do we get out of that??"

## Bridging the gap: translating horse-human interaction research into practical applications

**AUTHORS:**

- Dr. Pebbles Turbeville
- Dr. Octavia Brown

**ABSTRACT:**

Recent years have witnessed a surge in research exploring the many aspects of horse-human interaction. However, there is a significant gap between the research findings and applying those findings in day-to-day situations that can benefit both horses and humans alike. Dr. Turbeville and Dr. Brown will review the interaction between researchers and equine assisted services staff, outlining practical strategies, lessons learned, and potential pitfalls of conducting research on-site at an active center.

**CV:**

Brown Octavia:  
*Dr. Octavia Brown is Professor Emeritus of Equine Studies at Centenary University, Hackettstown, NJ, USA. Born in England, Octavia Brown emigrated to the USA in 1964. She holds a Master of Education from Harvard University and was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters in 2008 by Centenary University. A founder of the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (now PATH International) in 1969, she is a PATH Master Instructor. In 1998 Octavia received PATH's James Brady Award for Lifetime Achievement. In 2022 she received the Humanitarian of the Year Award from the Equus Foundation and US Equestrian Federation. Dr. Brown is past president of the FRDI (now HETI).*

Turbeville Pebbles:  
*Dr. Pebbles Turbeville is the executive director of the Horses and Humans Research Foundation (HHRF). She holds a doctorate in Sports Management with an emphasis in leadership, a master's degree from NC State and a BA from Columbia College. She chaired the Equine and Sport Studies Department at St Andrews University in Laurinburg, NC where she was an associate professor teaching Therapeutic Horsemanship, Equine Studies and Sports Management courses as well as the therapeutic horsemanship director. In 2022 Pebbles received PATH Intl.'s James Brady Award for Lifetime Achievement in equine assisted services. She is PATH Intl. certified as an Advanced Instructor, a CTRI, and mentor.*



# Panel: Business

## Pilot project: socks as fundraising tool for an equine – assisted services center

#fundraisin | #sock | #financial sustainability

### AUTHORS:

- Claudia da Costa Mota, Master
- Luciana Mota da Silva, Specialist

### ABSTRACT:

The challenge of maintaining an equine-assisted services center for disadvantaged socio-economic level population is the reality of many social entrepreneurs. The high costs of equines, a highly qualified team, maintenance of space, adapted materials, and constant improvement require resources, so the non-profit and economical therapeutic centers maintain financial sustainability. Thus, the aim of this study was to diversify the sources of resources through the sale of products, which, in addition to being a means of promoting the cause, serves as a strategy for fundraising and facilitates establishing partnerships. The initial strategy was to create a product with an appeal for the cause, thus the socks with horse designs were created by a partner company with expertise in the given field, in addition to the partnership with the sock industry, a logistics center, display company, and commerce for sales. Six initial models were created, one with the theme of Down Syndrome ("being different is cool") and another with the autism spectrum disorder theme, with symbols associated with the image of horses. In the promotion, the quantity of socks is linked to equine-assisted therapies: acquiring 6 socks the client pays for a therapy session, with 60 socks the client pays for a month of therapy, and 600 socks an entire year of therapy. During the launch in a group of entrepreneurs, a company purchased 600 socks as gifts to employees and practice its social responsibility, it took only 3 months for the entire investment to return, and customers are encouraged to post photos of their socks in social media. The conclusion is that a creative product, related to the cause, can generate visibility and diversification of sources, which is essential for the financial sustainability of an equine-assisted therapies center.

### CV:

Luciana Mota da Silva

Graduated in "Fashion Business" and postgraduate in "Business Management". Since 2008 in the fashion area, specialist in retail. Volunteer at Instituto Passo a Passo.

# Panel: Disabilities & Symptoms

## Comparative gait analysis between children with sensory processing problems and age-matched control group: analysis of the effectiveness of equine-assisted therapy

#sensory processing problem | #gait | #GAITRite®

### AUTHORS:

- Dorottya Ágoston
- Gabriella Bozori
- Rita M. Kiss

### ABSTRACT

#### OBJECTIVE:

The aim of the GAITRite® pressure-sensing mat study was to determine the effect of equine-assisted therapy on the gait patterns of children with sensory processing problems.

#### METHODS/DESIGN:

Twenty-five children (pretherapy:  $5.44 \pm 0.98$  years,  $115.64 \pm 11.18$  cm,  $22.57 \pm 5.16$  kg, posttherapy:  $5.64 \pm 0.93$  years,  $117.00 \pm 11.06$  cm,  $22.90 \pm 5.61$  kg) with sensory processing problems (7 of them also with a diagnosis of autism) and eighteen age-matched controls ( $4.94 \pm 1.13$  years,  $109.33 \pm 13.34$  cm,  $20.54 \pm 7.09$  kg) participated in the study.

The gait of children with SPD was monitored before and after the seven-month-long equine-assisted therapy period, the control group performed the measurement once.

A GAITRite® pressure-sensing mat was used to detect the pressure data of each step of the children and calculate the twelve chosen spatial and temporal gait parameters.

The results of the children (with SPD) before and after the therapy period were statistically compared to the control group results, and the Lilliefors normality test was carried out.

In the case of normal distribution, the unpaired t test, otherwise, the Mann-Whitney test was executed.

#### RESULTS:

The pretherapy results show thirteen significantly different results in comparison to their healthy peers, whilst only three results were significantly different in the case of the posttherapy results.

#### CONCLUSION:

The results in comparison with the control group show that EAT helped to improve the walking parameters of children with SPD.

### CV:

*Gabriella Bozori:*

#### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*honorary associate professor at MATE University, Vice President of the Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation, Hungary*

*Special education teacher and therapist, equine assisted therapist, honorary associate professor at MATE University, Vice President of the Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation, Hungary. She has been working as a special education teacher and therapist since 1995, and since 1996, she has specialised in remedial riding and vaulting. She is one of the founding members of the Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation. She is a professional leader of the training courses organised by the Hungarian Riding for Disabled Federation. Since 2005, she has been working as the Head of the Therapeutic Riding and Education Centre of the International Children's Safety Service in Fót. She is also a lecturer at several Hungarian universities.*

# Longitudal prospective study in Niguarda General Hospital, Milan: equine-assisted therapy in a sample of children with autism spectrum disorder

#Autism Spectrum Disorder | #Equine Assisted Therapy | #developmental disability

AUTHORS:

- Alessia Caruso, Neurodevelopmental disorders therapist, Non-profit organisation of social utility "Amici del Centro Vittorio Di Capua"
- Aurora Sotgiu, Psychiatric rehabilitation therapist, Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian Rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Alice Passarini, MD, Specialized in Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry, Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian Rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Michela Riceputi, Psy. D., Psychoterapist, Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian Rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Annalisa Roscio, Physical therapist, Non-profit organisation of social utility "Amici del Centro Vittorio Di Capua"
- Annalisa Marnoni, Neurodevelopmental disorders therapist, Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian Rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Aglaia Vignoli, MD, Specialized in Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry, Department of Health Sciences, University of Milan (Italy)
- Alessia Leidi, MD, Specialized in Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry, Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian Rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

Our study seeks to identify, through a battery of standardized test, the potential effects that Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT) can have on emotional regulation, communication, social and motor skills in children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and to highlight the potential benefits of integrating EAT with other treatments.

DESIGN:

We recruited 15 children diagnosed with ASD at V. Di Capua Equestrian Rehabilitation Center, at the Niguarda General Hospital, Milan. Inclusion criteria: ASD severity level 2 or 3 (DSM-5); aged 6 to 13 years. Exclusion criteria: presence of contraindications to EAT.

Each patient was evaluated at the beginning of EAT, and after 40 sessions of EAT, using: Child Behavior Check List (CBCL), Vineland Adaptive Behaviour Scale (VABS), Social Responsiveness Scale (SRS), Autism Behavior Checklist (ABC), Pediatric Quality of Life Inventory (PedsQL), Emotional Contagion Test (TCE) and Movement Assessment Battery for Children (M-ABC).

RESULTS:

The main result is the statistically significant improvement in all the VABS subscales scores (Communication, Daily living skills and Socialization), which is crucial for the adaptive aspects that we aim to generalize to the different spheres of daily life. Another interesting result is the significant global improvement of the TCE, which indicates the ability to recognize emotional aspects in other people, as a precursor of empathy. We also detected a general improvement in the SRS (Social cognition and Social communication), CBCL (Aggressive behaviour) and M-ABC (Aim and grasp and Balance) scores.

CONCLUSION:

Our study shows promising and significant improvement in social functioning (social cognition and availability to social interactions) and in communication. It also shows a positive trend in behavioural skills, emotional aspects and motor functions, as highlighted by the test results and by the monitoring video recordings.

CV:

Alessia Caruso

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Neurodevelopmental disorders therapist, Non-profit organisation of social utility "Amici del Centro Vittorio Di Capua"

Graduated in 2018 at University of Milan (Italy) as a neurodevelopmental disorder therapist. Specialized in animal assisted interventions in 2022. Working at Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) at the Child Neuropsychiatry Department at the Equestrian Rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua since 2022. Role: horse assisted therapies to patients in developmental age mostly with neurodevelopmental disorders, genetic syndromes, and intellectual disabilities.

# How 166 transdisciplinary equine assisted therapy practice guidelines for cerebral palsy were developed

#practice guidelines | #guidelines | #equine assisted therapy

AUTHORS:

- Dr Ninette, Du Plessis, PhD in Occupational Therapy, University of Pretoria
- Prof Kitty, Uys, PhD in Occupational Therapy, University of Pretoria
- Dr Tania, Buys, PhD in Occupational Therapy, University of Pretoria

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION:

This study developed transdisciplinary equine assisted therapy (EAT) practice guidelines for clients with spastic cerebral palsy by involving occupational therapists, physiotherapists and speech and language pathologists from different countries.

OBJECTIVE:

When treating the spastic cerebral palsy population with EAT, guidelines benefit providers in planning and executing EAT. However, few resources and no guidelines were found, which revealed the need for guidelines that are transdisciplinary in nature and that encompass the concepts applicable to all three professions.

DESIGN:

The guidelines were developed in three phases that used a qualitative, exploratory, descriptive, contextual research design. Phase 1 did a theoretical enquiry through a scoping review to identify, describe and explore EAT concepts that were referred to in 51 documents. Phase 2 explored transdisciplinary EAT practices for clients with spastic cerebral palsy through the involvement of 11 practitioners from six countries and led to the construction of guideline statements. Phase 3 obtained consensus from 11 expert panel members on the transdisciplinary EAT practice guidelines using a modified Delphi technique. Eleven selected expert panel members took part in three Delphi rounds.

RESULTS:

Nineteen EAT concepts were identified and 166 transdisciplinary EAT practice guidelines were developed.

CONCLUSION:

The identified concepts provided a novel basis for EAT research. Furthermore, the 166 newly developed transdisciplinary EAT practice guidelines for clients with spastic cerebral palsy will help to structure future research, and more importantly, improve effective client outcomes for the spastic cerebral palsy population.

CV:

Ninette du Plessis

EDUCATION:

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at the University of Pretoria (UP), 2023.
- Master (MOcc Ther) by virtue of research at UP, 2016.
- Bachelor's in Occupational Therapy at UP, 1995.

MEMBERSHIP OF PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES:

- Vice Chairperson of the Equine Assisted Therapy Association of South Africa.
- Registered at the Royal Collage of Occupational Therapists.
- Registered at the Health and Care Professions Council of the United Kingdom.
- Member of the Equine Facilitated Occupational Therapists of the United Kingdom.

PUBLICATIONS:

- Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2023: Hippotherapy concepts: A scoping review to inform transdisciplinary practice guidelines. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2023.2231562>
- British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2019: Effect of hippotherapy on physiological cost index and walking speed of adolescents with diplegia. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022619841318>

Languages: Fluent in Afrikaans and English



# How can a herd of horses serve as inspiration for conversation and bonding within a group

#herd experience | #storytelling | #group work

**AUTHORS:**

- Kaja Koleča, Bachelor's degree, Social Work
- Maša Bastič, Bachelor's degree, Psychology
- Metka Demšar Goljevšček, Master's Degree, Pedagogy and Sociology

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:**

Intense horse herd dynamic is witnessed on a daily basis which offers us insights into various situations and relationships among horses, analogous to what happens in human groups and social subsystems (such as kindergarten, classroom, family, peer group, social circle, work environment, etc.). In this article, we aim to present methods and some interactive didactic tools that we have developed for facilitating conversation while observing a horse herd. We use these tools when working with various groups of children, adolescents, and adults.

**DESIGN:**

PowerPoint presentation with interactive activities.

**RESULTS:**

The experience of the horse herd and the stories of individual horses offer us many insights and ideas: how to resolve conflicts; why it is necessary to adhere to certain rules to prevent anarchy; how to integrate into a group to be accepted; how to establish and maintain friendships; how to cope with difficult life situations without drama... The concept of "herd experience" is built on the theories of some renowned psychologists and educators (Csikszentmihalyi, Gogala, Kroflič, Maslow, Ziegenspeck, etc.), who argue that experience deeply impacts the depth of the whole person and shows us the value of understanding through peak experience. Experience has the power to shape and re-shape us mentally.

**CONCLUSION:**

Horses provide us with powerful peak experiences of group dynamics. They inspire us with their ability to maintain a balance between expressing respect for the herd's rules and striving to preserve personal space. Structured conversation offers us the opportunity to become aware of these key experiences and guide users - regardless of their age, status, and life situation - through powerful experiences towards a deeper understanding of interpersonal relationships and group dynamics. This encourages them to transfer skills to important social groups.

**CV:**

*Metka Demšar Goljevšček*

*Metka Demšar Goljevšček, a pedagogist and sociologist of culture, skillfully intertwines her professional expertise with a passion for horses, fostering lifelong learning opportunities in natural settings. During her studies, she was involved in the establishment of the non-governmental organization "Nazaj na konja", where she later became regularly employed as the professional head of pedagogical, andragogical, and therapeutic activities. She has dedicated herself to the development of the educational system in the field of equine assisted interventions, where she lectures and coordinates educational programs for professionals. She is also the coordinator of the Family Center Objem (Hug), which operates within the framework of the "Nazaj na konja" institute. She has participated in numerous national and international projects and conferences, but she devotes most of her time to direct work with people.*

# Animal –assisted intervention for elderly with dementia in Taiwan

#Animal Assisted Therapy | #dementia | #Community Care

**AUTHORS:**

- Jannette Wei Ting Wang Gutierrez, PhD, Tamkang University Taiwan
- Haoju Hsu, Master Social worker

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:**

This paper presents a comprehensive study on implementing animal-assisted therapy for elders with dementia in Taiwan. The focus is an AAT program held by the Dementia Center of Asia Eastern Hospital. Participants are diagnosed with dementia, with Clinical Dementia Rating (CD-R) scores ranging between 0.5 and 1.

**DESIGN:**

This AAT program consists of 12 sessions of animal-assisted therapy led by trained animal-assisted therapists and social workers, guiding groups of approximately 15 dementia patients. Each session lasts for two hours with structured content, using therapy dogs. The study employs diverse analysis methods. Data includes quantitative scores of behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia (BPSD), in-depth interviews with facilitators, and observational notes. Data includes pre-and post-testing CD-R Scores, which are utilized to evaluate dementia severity. Both quantity and quality evaluations for Individual assessments are conducted after each group session. Observations and participant feedback are recorded to evaluate the course's effectiveness.

**RESULTS:**

pre-defined outcomes demonstrate the program has impacts on four dimensions as below,

1. Maintain cognitive ability.
2. Emotional Expression: The elderly recall and share past experiences with animals, increasing positive emotions and language expression.
3. Interpersonal Interaction: the interactions of participants with each other and professionals increase in more natural situations, reducing patients' discomfort in the medical environment.
4. Quality of Life: AAT dogs arouse the motivation and action of the elderly to care for others and thereby gain the sense of achievement and self-worth brought by giving.

**CONCLUSION:**

This AAT decelerates the deterioration of dementia patients, and also enriches well-being. Recognizing the advantages of animal-assisted therapy allows Taiwan to bolster its mission of creating friendly and inclusive care environments for the elderly.

**CV:**

*Jannette Wei Ting Wang Gutierrez*

*Assistant Professor  
Department of English  
College of Foreign Languages and  
Literatures  
Tamkang University, Taiwan  
Master of Education, Rutgers, The State  
University of New Jersey, USA  
Ph.D, University of Georgia, USA*

# Equine assisted occupational therapy for children

#equine assisted occupational therapy | #ADHD | #interventional protocol

**AUTHORS:**

- Henny Helmer
- Orit Bart, PhD, Tel Aviv University

**ABSTRACT**

**AIMS:**

Children with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are often referred to Equine-Assisted Services (EAS) for therapy despite lack of validated protocols in the field. This paper reports the development and validation of ASTride (ADHD Skills Therapy): a protocol of Equine-Assisted Occupational Therapy (EAOT) intervention for children aged 6-12 with ADHD. The intervention addresses deficits in cognitive-emotional functions and participation.

**METHODS:**

Phase one of the intervention development includes theoretical framework and core content based on an in-depth review of existing literature. Subsequently, the intervention protocol was revised by a panel of experts. Phase two includes a pilot study, during which five children diagnosed with ADHD (mean age= 10.40 year, SD 2.966) participated in a 12-week EAOT intervention according to the suggested protocol, with pre- and post-assessments conducted.

**RESULTS:**

A value was obtained indicating a decrease in Functional Age by 6 months at the 99% level of significance. Values for changes in Stress and Regeneration were approximately 5% and statistically significant at the 95% level of significance.

**CONCLUSION:**

The results suggest an improvement in heart rate variability after the Equine Assisted Mental/Health intervention. We welcome cooperation with other experts and organizations in our future research, in which we will also monitor additional parameters during the intervention to determine the immediate effect of Equine Assisted Mental/Health and mutual interaction between the horse and the human.

**CV:**

*Henny Helmer*

*My name is Hen Anne Helmer. I am an OT, a physiotherapist and an advanced therapeutic riding instructor. I am an executive director of a therapeutic riding program and have practiced EAS and EAOT for the past 10 years. I am currently a PhD student at Tel Aviv university and research mainly EAS in children with ADHD. Presenter 2 is an OT, PhD with vast experience in the research of children with disabilities and leads the research for EAS in Tel Aviv University. Presenter 3 is an OT and a therapeutic riding instructor who is researching EAS as part of her Master's studies in Tel Aviv University.*

# Stimulating positioning on a horse and human – a form of equine assisted therapy for the children from the first months of life

#EAT | #infants, toddlers | #cerebral palsys

**AUTHORS:**

- Martina Fillová Mihaliková, Mgr. Rehabilitation center for children, Martin, Slovakia

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:**

At the FRDI congress in Budapest in 2003, we initially introduced our perspective that the age limit of 4 years, previously considered a contraindication for Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT) in children, should be reconsidered. Our video on stimulating positioning on a horse (SPHo) with 5-month-old babies generated a heated discussion. We are developing our methodology, and it is spreading around the world. Besides SPHo we can use stimulating positioning on a human (SPHu) with children only a few weeks old. By positioning the child on these living and unstable platforms, we facilitate the individual phases of postural ontogenesis using positions fitting their development age.

**DESIGN:**

In our ambition to find more objective effects of SPHo, we classified 20 prematurely born 6-month-old infants with developmental motor delay into locomotion stages according to their developmental age according to Vojta (0-7). Based on this classification, we placed 10 babies in an experimental and 10 babies in a control group and paired them according to their corresponding locomotion stage. The control group continued Vojta's reflex locomotion (VRL) 4 times daily. The experimental group continued in rehabilitation but additionally received SPHo twice a week. On those days received VRL only 3 times. During next 6 month, we followed psychomotor progress every second month. We evaluated results using nonparametric tests (alfa = 0,05).

**RESULTS:**

The spontaneous motor activity, postural reactions, primitive reflexes, muscular tonus, and locomotion stages according to Vojta resulted in significant improvements in both groups, often after two months. The results also indicated that the combination of SPHo and VRL – was significantly more effective in the child's psychomotor progress than solitary application of VRL.

**CONCLUSION:**

SPHo is an effective form of EAT and can be combined with VRL. Since it has the same kinesiotherapeutic principles, it is advisable to combine it with SPHu, quadrupedal and bipedal form and games with horse motifs.

**CV:**

*Karol Hornacek*

*In 1984, he graduated from the Faculty of Medicine in Bratislava. He obtained a specialization in internal medicine in 1987 and in Physical and Rehabilitation Medicine (PRM) in 2001. In 2009, he obtained the PhD degree and 2012 ass. professor. He is the head of the Department of PRM of the Faculty of Medicine of the Slovak Medical University in Bratislava. In 1994, he was a co-founder of the Slovak Hippotherapy Association, and until 2012 its chairman. He was the president of the Slovak Society of PRM. He is the representative of the Slovak Republic in European PRM companies (ESPRM, UEMS PRM). He is co-author of textbooks (rehabilitation, algesiology, surgery) and monographs (EAT, obesitology, diabetic foot), 150 professional publications. He is editor-in-chief of the Rehabilitácia magazine. From a theoretical point of view, he enriched the method of equine assisted services (influencing factors, action, contraindications, eval. tests), and elaborated its implementation also in babies.*

# The benefits of equine-assisted activities (EAA) for children suffering from acute stress syndrome (ASS) in time of war

#anxiety | #stress | #horse

AUTHORS:

- Laurence Ikan

ABSTRACT:

This lecture explores the therapeutic benefits of Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapies (EAA/T) as a complementary intervention for children suffering from Acute Stress Syndrome (ASS) due to wartime experiences. Incorporating case studies and empirical evidence, the lecture aims to illuminate the potential of EAAT for enhancing the mental health and recovery process of children with ASS. Special attention will be paid to the role of horses in this process, as they are highly sensitive to stress.

In conclusion, the lecture will highlight the transformative power of the human-horse bond in restoring stress management, emotional regulation, and proactive behaviour in children experiencing ASS.

CV:

Laurence Ikan is the co-founder and General Manager of IMH NGO for the promotion of equine assisted programs in Israel. She is also the founder and manager of the Wizo Nir Haemek Therapeutic Riding and Horseback Riding Instructor Courses, Founder, and former Chairman of the Therapeutic Riding National Committee at the Israel Equestrian Federation (2008-2018), New Member of the Executive Board Committee at HETI (starting from June 2024).

# The effect of equine-assisted physiotherapy on static and dynamic balance, walking performance and quality of life with people multiple sclerosis

#multiple sclerosis | #equine assisted physiotherapy | #research

AUTHORS:

- Christina KoutraPT, PhD (cand.), NDT department of physical education and sports science, DUTH, Greece
- Paraskevi-Vivian Malliou, professor DUTH, Greece department of physical education and sports science, DUTH, Greece
- Maria Pasenidou, PT, MSc, PhD(cand.) Department of physical therapy, International Hellenic University, Greece

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

Multiple Sclerosis (MS), a disease characterized by immune system dysfunction, presents a spectrum of symptoms affecting various aspects of patients' lives, including balance, gait, and quality of life. This study aimed to assess the impact of 16 sessions of equine assisted physiotherapy on these parameters in individuals with MS.

DESIGN:

Eleven participants formed the intervention group, receiving equine assisted physiotherapy twice a week for 30 minutes, followed by a 10-minute off-horse exercise regimen. An equal number of participants formed the control group, maintaining their daily routines without any additional interventions. Measurements of static and dynamic balance, gait ability, and quality of life were taken using validated assessments pre-intervention, post-intervention, and at a 6-week follow-up.

RESULTS:

indicated significant improvement in the intervention group across all measured parameters, including the Timed Up and Go (TUG) test, mini-Balance Evaluation Systems Test (miniBESTest), Modified-6 Minute Walk Test (M-6MWT), and quality of life scores. These improvements were sustained at the 6-week follow-up assessment. Conversely, the control group did not exhibit significant changes in any measured parameters.

CONCLUSION:

Equine assisted physiotherapy emerges as a promising adjunctive intervention for individuals with MS, offering tangible benefits in terms of enhancing balance, gait, and quality of life.

CV:

Maria Liga

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

physiotherapist NDT, kethis-hetrics, MSc in MBA, International University of Greece and Msc in kinesiology

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

1984 to 1994 (10 years) Ministry of Health Rehabilitation Center for severe handicapped children.  
1994 to 2020 (26 years) Ministry of Education, Special Education schools of primary and secondary education.  
2005 to 2021 (16 years) President of Board Directors of Therapeutic Horse Riding Center of Serres (KETHIS-HETRICS) in the Prefecture of Neos Skopos

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2014 until now: Teaching the course of Hippotherapy at the department of Postgraduate Pediatric Physiotherapy at International Hellenic University at Thessaloniki. Specialization in AUTISM, in hippotherapy in Goteborg, 2 courses AHA oral presentations. World Congress in Budapest 2003, Brazil in 2006, in Münster, Germany in 2009, in Greece in 2012, many others conferences all over Greece.



# Equine-assisted speech therapy for children with apraxia of speech

#Speech-Language Pathology | #apraxia of speech | #children

## AUTHORS:

• Beth Macauley, CCC-SLP, HPCS, FNAP, ACUE. Grand Valley State University

## ABSTRACT

### OBJECTIVE:

Apraxia of speech is a motor speech disorder affecting the ability to plan and execute the movements necessary for speech production. Traditional speech therapy approaches focus on improving muscle coordination through repetitive exercises. However, recent research has explored alternative methods, such as incorporating equine-assisted therapy, to enhance speech outcomes in children with apraxia. This study examines the effectiveness of speech therapy incorporating horses in facilitating speech motor coordination and phoneme articulation for children with apraxia of speech.

### DESIGN:

Two 4-year-old children diagnosed with apraxia of speech participated in speech therapy sessions incorporating hippotherapy for 10 months. Each therapy session involved structured activities on horseback, focusing on the rhythmic movement of the horse to promote sensory integration and coordination of the speech motor system.

### RESULTS:

Both children demonstrated significant improvement in speech motor coordination and phoneme articulation. They showed increased confidence and proficiency in producing speech sounds, with measurable improvements in speech intelligibility. Additionally, observations from therapy sessions indicated enhanced engagement and due to the novel and stimulating environment provided by equine-assisted therapy.

### CONCLUSION:

The results of this study suggest that speech therapy incorporating horses can be an effective intervention for children with apraxia of speech. The rhythmic movement of the horse, coupled with sensory integration techniques, appears to enhance speech motor coordination and facilitate the articulation of phonemes.

## CV:

*Beth L. Macauley, PhD, CCC-SLP, HPCS, FNAP, ACUE*  
Associate Professor, Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, MI USA

### BOOKS

*Macauley, B.L. (2006). Resources for Research and Education in Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapy. Publisher Services: Chicago, IL.*

### BOOK CHAPTERS

*Macauley, B.L. (2021). Animal-Assisted Interventions in Speech-Language Pathology. In Driscoll, C. (Ed.) Animal-Assisted Interventions for Health and Human*  
*Macauley, B.L. (2022). Animal-Assisted Therapy for Pediatric Patients. In Atschuler, E., (Ed.) Animal-Assisted Therapy Use by Condition. Boston: Elsevier Publishers*  
*Dr. Macauley received her PhD in 1998 from the University of Florida specializing in neurogenic communication disorders. She has published 34 articles, given 130 conference presentations, facilitated 24 workshops, and presented at every HETI Congress beginning in 2003 in Budapest.*

# The effect of equine-assisted therapy using the principles of neuroproprioceptive „facilitatuin, inhibition“ on spirometer parameters in children with spinal muscular atrophy: randomised controlled trial

#childhood spinal muscular atrophies | #physical therapy specialty | #equine-assisted therapy

## AUTHORS:

- Kamila Řasová, Assoc. prof. PhDr., Ph.D. Department of Rehabilitation, Third Faculty of Medicine, Charles University and University Hospital of Královské Vinohrady, Prague, Czech Republic
- Miloslav Vilímek, Ing., Ph.D. Polytechnic College Jihlava
- Jindra Reissigová, RNDr., Ph.D. The Czech Academy of Sciences, Institute of Computer Science, Prague, Czech Republic

## ABSTRACT

### OBJECTIVE:

Spinal muscular atrophy (SMA) is a rare progressive neuromuscular disease caused by a mutation in the SMN1 gene, where the effect of physiotherapy in children with SMA has not yet been clearly demonstrated. The aim of this study is to demonstrate the effect of physiotherapy in general and hippotherapy in particular using a unique facilitation approach in children with SMA. With its quadrupedal locomotion, the horse offers the child the initiation of movement from the pelvic area, which is reflected in the whole body in assisted movement and differentiation and has a positive effect on the diaphragm area.

### DESIGN:

In a two-arm randomised controlled trial blinded by an observer, two physiotherapy concepts will be compared in children with SMA, type I, II, III, 2-9 years of age, able to sit independently. Both groups will undergo a six-day therapeutic programme of the same duration and intensity (2 x daily 15 min. individual therapy + 1 x daily 20 min. therapeutic horse grooming) with the same therapeutic goal. One therapeutic concept will be physiotherapy according to the standardized procedure of Standard of care ("SMA-SOC"), the other concept will be equine assisted therapy (EAT). Spirometric parameters FEV1 and PEF will be determined using a spirometer. The change in value at the beginning and end of the therapeutic programme will be evaluated.

### RESULTS:

Study participants were 19 children with SMA, 9 boys and 10 girls - 13 of them treated with disease-modifying treatment before. The results show that EAT has a positive effect on respiratory functions. The positive effect is significantly higher than standardised physiotherapy, regardless of the type of previous treatment or the age of the children.

### CONCLUSION:

This research presents the possibilities of physiotherapy in respect to respiratory functions. It shows that EAT can be one of the most effective methods to improve the motor condition of children with SMA.

## CV:

*Kateřina Mařiková*

*I attended Charles University in Prague, Czechia, Faculty of Physical Education and Sport, and specialised in Health Care - Physiotherapy between 2006 - 2012, and I graduated with a bachelor's and master's degree. As early as 2008, I started to gather my first experiences with equine assisted therapy (EAT), and in 2012 I founded a non-profit organization Centrum hiporehabilitace Mirákl, o.p.s., dedicated to intensive EAT for children with disabilities. I drafted the methodology of my work in EAT in 2016 and our organization received accreditation by the Ministry of Health. This officially made EAT an official treatment method in Czechia. I am currently the director and chief physiotherapist of the largest EAT center in Czechia, and I am currently taking a postgraduate course at the Third Faculty of Medicine, Charles University, field of preventive medicine. The main subject of my research is intensive hippotherapy in children with neuromuscular disease.*



# Panel: Education

PRESENTER'S NAME: **Ninette DU PLESSIS**

DEGREE, AFFILIATION: **PhD**

## International status of education and practice in equine-assisted therapy and other services

**#Equine Assisted Services | #best practices | #education systems**

### AUTHORS:

- Ninette du Plessis, PhD occupational therapy, Svitani International team
- Beth Macauley, PhD speech and language pathology, Svitani International team
- Vera Lantelme-Faisan, MSc physiotherapy, Svitani International team
- Sanna Mattila-Rautiainen, MSc physiotherapy, Svitani International team
- Carlos Hernandez Izquierdo, MSc psychology, Svitani International team
- Audrey Darby, BSc occupational therapy, Svitani International team
- Prof. Selcuk Akpinar, PhD sport scientist, Svitani International team

### ABSTRACT

#### INTRODUCTION:

Many countries worldwide have therapists incorporating Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT), including physiotherapists (PTs), occupational therapists (OTs), speech and language therapists (SLPs), and other services incorporating equines, including psychology, education, and sport. These countries have also developed educational and academic programs and training for professionals involved in these services, including EAT.

#### OBJECTIVE:

This presentation will give an overview of what is happening in six different countries and discuss future international endeavours, including education, consultation, and collaborative research to help therapists determine which physical, psychological or social aspects of engaging with equines can benefit their clients.

#### DESIGN:

The information will be presented in a narrative format and was not derived from a research study but from therapists involved in the EAT in these countries.

#### RESULTS:

A summary of EAT training provided in the Czech Republic, Finland, South Africa, Spain, Türkiye, United Kingdom, and the United States will be given. The participants of these training courses as well as the course providers will also be introduced to the audience.

#### CONCLUSION:

This presentation will add to the knowledge about EAT and other services by explaining and describing the international development thereof. It will inform participants on the overview and availability of EAT training internationally to not only OTs, PTs and SLPs but also to psychologists and sport scientists who use the movement of quine or environment to reach functional goals within their professional scope of practice. Thus, expanding the world vision and understanding of the participants. The following education and services will be presented; see the table.

#### DISCLAIMER:

Seven professionals compiled this proposal to the best of our ability. It adheres to the HETI terminology and guidelines but may occasionally differ due to country-specific terminology.

### CV:

*Ninette du Plessis*

#### EDUCATION

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at the University of Pretoria (UP), 2023.
- Master (MOcc Ther) by virtue of research at UP, 2016.
- Bachelor's in Occupational Therapy at UP, 1995.

*Membership of professional societies:*

- Vice Chairperson of the Equine Assisted Therapy Association of South Africa.
- Registered at the Royal Collage of Occupational Therapists.
- Registered at the Health and Care Professions Council of the United Kingdom.
- Member of the Equine Facilitated Occupational Therapists of the United Kingdom.

#### PUBLICATIONS:

- Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2023: Hippotherapy concepts: A scoping review to inform transdisciplinary practice guidelines. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2023.2231562>
- British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2019: Effect of hippotherapy on physiological cost index and walking speed of adolescents with diplegia. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022619841318>

*Languages: Fluent in Afrikaans and English*

# The Ann Kern Godal Memorial Fund

**AUTHORS:**

- Tore Godal

**ABSTRACT:**

Tore Godal will provide delegates with a brief introduction to the Ann Kern Godal Memorial Fund. Tore Godal created this international research fund in memory of his late wife Ann Kern Godal, herself an avid researcher in the field of Equine Assisted Services. Friends of Ann have noted that she “worked hard to bring equine researchers from different fields together” and “believed that more perspectives created better therapy, enhanced our knowledge and fertilized the research” (Myhre et al, 2017). In keeping with this perspective, the Ann Kern Godal Memorial fund invites international applicants across a wide range of disciplines. The fund is open to PhD candidates, post-doctoral researchers as well as applicants from institutions actively partaking in pioneering research into therapies incorporating horses. It endeavours to support researchers in producing valuable contributions to this evolving field. This presentation aims to provide information about the creation and development of the fund as well as updates on international research projects which have been funded to date. It also aims to inspire international delegates to submit their research proposals for consideration.

**CV:**

*Tore Godal is a Norwegian immunologist and one of the most influential health physicians of all time. Godal is a medical doctor and holds a PhD from the University of Oslo. In 1970 he moved to Ethiopia to conduct research on leprosy at the newly established Armauer Hansen Research Institute. From 1974 he was head of the immunology laboratory at the Norwegian Radium Hospital. He was chairman of the World Health Organization (WHO) steering group for research in leprosy immunology from 1975 to 1980 and tuberculosis immunology from 1983. In 1986, he became WHO Director-General of the program devoted to research and teaching in tropical diseases. He was one of the initiators of the creation of the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) in 1999 and served as its chair for six years. He has been a special advisor to Gro Harlem Brundtland at WHO and has worked at the Prime Minister's Office and as a special advisor for global health at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since 2018, he has worked at the Norwegian Institute of Public Health and now as a Special Advisor at the Ministry of Health and Care Services. Godal received the King's Medal of Merit in 2019.*

# The role of communication skills of EAI teams

#education | #team development | #communication

**AUTHORS:**

- Metka Demšar, Goljevšček Master's Degree, Pedagogy and Sociology
- Kaja Koleša, Bachelor's degree, Social Work
- Nikolina Stojnovič, Master's degree, Economics

**ABSTRACT:**

The ‘HOPE4HEALTH’ project is a partnership project implemented by the Association for Equine Assisted Therapies ‘Pegaz’ from Croatia, and Institute ‘Nazaj na Konja’ from Slovenia, as part of the Erasmus+ program (KA210 - Adult Education) with an implementation period from October 1, 2023, until October 31, 2024.

**OBJECTIVE:**

The main goal of the article is to introduce HETI Congress participants to the activities and intensive training program of the ‘HOPE-4HEALTH’ project. Working together in an Equine Assisted Intervention team requires a lot of teamwork. We have developed an intensive program focused on strengthening team bonds and teamwork for more effective Equine Assisted Intervention work. We will present the most common challenges within the therapy team and present some of our developed tools for strengthening teamwork. The training program emphasizes the importance of communication and teamwork of team members involved in EAI and consists of three modules:

Module 1- Key competencies of therapeutic team (team’s values, tools for assessment of their team)

Module 2- Practical presentation and sharing of team’s challenges (reporting of individual work)

Module 3- Safety at work (including challenges Equine Assisted team may face, conversations with the parents, the influence of the environment).

**DESIGN:**

PowerPoint presentation with interactive activities.

**RESULTS:**

This presentation will present an intensive new program available to EAI teams. It will give the participants practical questions and tools to assess their team’s cohesion and strengthen their teamwork. It will also highlight possible challenges and opportunities for conversation of one’s Equine Assisted Interventions team.

**CONCLUSION:**

Team dynamic, team cohesion and effective communication are of utmost importance for effective EAI sessions. We will present an intensive training we have developed within the ‘HOPE4HEALTH’ project.

**CV:**

*Metka Demšar Goljevšček*

*Metka Demšar Goljevšček, a pedagogist and sociologist of culture, skillfully intertwines her professional expertise with a passion for horses, fostering lifelong learning opportunities in natural settings. During her studies, she was involved in the establishment of the non-governmental organization “Nazaj na konja”, where she later became regularly employed as the professional head of pedagogical, andragogical, and therapeutic activities. She has dedicated herself to the development of the educational system in the field of equine assisted interventions, where she lectures and coordinates educational programs for professionals. She is also the coordinator of the Family Center Objem (Hug), which operates within the framework of the “Nazaj na konja” institute. She has participated in numerous national and international projects and conferences, but she devotes most of her time to direct work with people.*

# To introduce the benefit of independent regulation that is recognised by healthcare commission and clinicians

#professional standards | #standards in education | #public confidence and safety

## AUTHORS:

- Jennifer Geach
- Graeme Green

## ABSTRACT:

To introduce the benefit of independent regulation that is recognised by healthcare commission and clinicians.

The global provision of Equine Assisted Services has largely grown without formal regulation, with some oversight being provided by training organisations through ongoing membership arrangements or within-industry oversight.

In the UK this has changed, potential service users and healthcare employers and providers, can now commission a service provider, or choose an individual practitioner that belongs to a register vetted and approved by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (the Authority), an independent statutory body, accountable to the UK Parliament.

This represents the first and only current independent (i.e. out of industry) national animal assisted register of practitioners in the UK.

To quote the CEO of the Professional Services Authority:

"Bringing practitioners into a broad framework of assurance is good for clients, service users and the public and is the best way to promote quality. The programme offers enhanced consumer protection to anyone looking for health and social care services"

The Register has been established to:

- create and maintain professional ethics and standards that prioritise the health and wellbeing of clients and public and protects them from harm or injury;
- promote and maintain client confidence and public credibility in the benefits of Equine Facilitated Interactions and the delivery thereof;
- provide a clear definition of professional standards required to support the delivery of Equine Facilitated Interactions;
- practitioners maintain professional compliance with defined professional and ethical standards;
- create more active relationships with other accredited registers and regulators

Athena wishes to share with the international HETI community the importance and benefits of such independently accredited registers.

## CV:

### JENNIFER GEACH

*Jennifer is the co-founder of Athena® Herd Foundation. She has a lifetime of horse ownership, and over 25 years' experience of working internationally with magic circle law firms, including global investment banking clients, international investment management firms and insurance companies.*

*Jennifer has trained in Equine Facilitated Interactions, is a Fellow Member of the ACCPH (Accredited Counsellors, Coaches, Psychotherapists and Hypnotherapists), Mental Health First Aider and actively supports funded projects at the Athena® as well as the Training Programmes weaving in the horse aspects and enjoys supporting learners through their journeys. Jennifer is also a qualified Internal Quality Assurer.*

*Jennifer is passionate about community and regulation in this field. Jennifer enjoys sharing her experience of track systems, provides private consultations in this space, has spoken at conferences, written papers for the BHS and runs interactive track days both online and onsite at the Athena®.*

*With the rest of the Athena® team she has worked with the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) for Health and Social Care, an independent statutory body, accountable to the UK Parliament, to accredit Accredited Practitioner Register under their accredited registers programme. It is the first Register accredited by the PSA that involves the direct use of animals to deliver therapeutic and wellbeing services.*

### GRAEME GREEN

*Graeme Green is a Director of Athena® Herd Foundation and provides facilitation support and training services for the Equine Facilitated Interactions on-site at Athena®.*

*Graeme has worked as a Equine Facilitated professional since around 2010 which has included the provision of personal coaching, corporate training, wellbeing-based retreats and therapeutic support. Graeme is also a Mental Health First Aid trainer for MHFA England, a Fellow Member of the ACCPH (Accredited Counsellors, Coaches, Psychotherapists and Hypnotherapists), a first aider and qualified safeguarding officer.*

*Graeme has provided Equine Facilitated Interactions with clients as diverse as Pupil Referral Units, fellows of Oxford University, and senior executive teams. He has provided Mindfulness training to clients of the Mental Health charity MIND and trains Mental Health First Aiders.*

*He has worked with Jennifer and the Athena® team, and the Professional Standards Authority to accredit Accredited Practitioner Register under their accredited registers programme.*

# Sensory transition for the equine setting

#sensory integration and processing | #therapists and coaches | #resources

## AUTHORS:

- Rhona Harkness

## ABSTRACT:

Sensory Transitions for the Equine Setting™ Resource Manual was developed by the author to support and enhance the practice of therapists and coaches who provide provision to individuals with additional support needs in the equine setting. This comprehensive resource manual gives therapists and coaches a basic knowledge of sensory integration and processing, which in this

booklet is referred to as becoming Sensory Informed, an understanding as to how sensory integration and processing may impact on everyday performance and behaviour,

an awareness of how human sensory needs, preferences and challenges can be successfully addressed in the equine setting, support to identify service users that sit out with their scope of practice and require consultation with, and/or onward referral to an Occupational

Therapist, Physiotherapist and / or Speech and Language Therapist with a recognised additional postgraduate training qualification in sensory integration and processing, a method of assessing, monitoring and reviewing equines. This includes raising awareness to each equine's individual sensory needs, preferences, challenges, and triggers, a range of forms and resources to guide and compliment their practice and enhance service users' journeys within their services, a sensory-motor transitions package specific to the equine setting to facilitate smoother transitions for service users,

activities and regulation tools specifically designed for this setting that can be used with staff members and service users to allow them to become sensory informed, activities and regulation tools to assist service users to reach their potential in self-regulation, through completing the activities within this resource manual, the scope to positively influence service user's ability to self-regulate out with the equine setting.

## CV:

*CLASI Certificate in Ayres Sensory Integration  
Module 5 Evidenced Based Interventions including Fidelity to Intervention  
Module 4 Clinical Reasoning using Ayres Sensory Integration  
Equine Facilitated Therapy Course  
60 credit bearing points into the Masters in Advancing Practice  
Equine Facilitated Practitioner Diploma  
SCQF Level 8 Professional Diploma in Equine Facilitated Learning and Development  
Equine Psychology Diploma with Distinction  
The Movement Program® Provider  
M6 Evidence-based ASI Intervention Hands-on Practice and Review  
Certified The Listening Program® (TLP) Provider  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module 4: Advanced Treatment  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module 2/3: From Assessment to Practice  
Equine Reiki Master  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module: Theory and Intervention  
Degree Module – Understanding ADHD  
Sensory Integration Module 1 & 2  
Fortune Centre Diploma in EAT  
BHS Stage 3 Coach in complete Horsemanship  
BSc (Hons) in OT*



# Key aspects within the field of equine-assisted services

#Equine-Assisted Services (EAS) | #International Classification of Functioning (ICF) | #professional qualifications

AUTHORS:

- Marilyn Sokolof, PhD, HETI
- Alexia Stergiou, PhD, HETI
- Sanna Mattila-Rautiainen PT, Researcher University of Eastern Finland

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

Presenting an illustrated overview of the interface between categories of Equine Assisted Services (EAS). It clarifies the key aspects as they relate to the service providers, service users and equines within the specific categories within EAS.

DESIGN:

The infographic was created during the Erasmus + project 2019-1-FI01-KA202-060805 between international organisations associated with HETI. The methodology to create the infographic was through discussion and brainstorming the ideas how to visualize Best Practice in EAS for everybody in a comprehensible way. The infographic is divided into four main EAS categories (Psychology, Education, Medicine, Sport). The verbal presentation added to the infographic includes examples for each category taking into account the International classification of Functioning (ICF) by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

RESULTS:

Visual demonstration and descriptive examples clarify the differences and overlaps of the key aspects within the EAS categories.

CONCLUSION:

The infographic and verbal presentation provide transparency within the field of EAS and contribute to increased professionalism.

CV:

*Gisela Heimsath-Rhodes*

*Gisela earned her master's degree in education in her native Germany. After moving to the USA, and during her tenure as chair of the vaulting committee of the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association (NARHA, now Path Intl.) she spearheaded the development of workshops and certification for interactive vaulting instructors (1999-2012). Her qualifications include Lunging (FN Germany) and Vaulting certificates (DkThR Germany). She is an Advanced Therapeutic Riding and Vaulting Instructor (PATH Intl.). She is senior faculty for the HETI Level 1 Education Program.*

*Gisela served six years on the board of the Equine Facilitated Mental Health Association, USA (EFMHA). She joined HETI (formerly FRDI) in 1998 and served as Board member (2006-2009, 2018-2021), as Executive Director (2009-2018) and currently as President of HETI (2021-2024) She is the author of Hello Bob, and Co-Author of Fitting in -A Horse's Tale.*

# Perspectives of Equine-Assisted Therapy from the European Network (EEATN)

#Equine Assisted Therapy | #collaboration | #standardisation

AUTHORS:

- Nona Dane, Physiotherapist, Member of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, Chair of ACPEA

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

The European Equine Assisted Therapy Network (EEATN) functions as a collaborative platform for associations and practitioners engaged in Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT) across Europe. Its principal aim is to encompass the standardisation of terminology, the promotion of EAT recognition, and the facilitation of best practices exchange, educational competencies, and evidence-based practice.

DESIGN:

Face-to-face meetings provided opportunities for in-depth discussions and decision-making regarding terminology, research initiatives, education standards, and communication strategies within the network. Virtual meetings held quarterly furthered the Network's goals and allowed for ongoing updates and goal setting.

RESULTS:

These meetings resulted in the establishment of standardised definitions for Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT). Presentations and discussions highlighted the positive impact of EAT on various aspects of human health and well-being. Subgroups formed within EEATN focused on education, research, practice sharing, equine management, and best practice exchange, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among members.

CONCLUSION:

EEATN serves as a platform for advancing the field of Equine Assisted Therapy in Europe. By fostering collaboration, standardising terminology, and promoting best practices. EEATN contributes to the growth and recognition of EAT as a valuable therapeutic modality. Ongoing efforts within the Network, including virtual meetings and specialised subgroups, ensure continued progress and innovation in the field of Equine Assisted Therapy across Europe.

CV:

*Carlos Hernandez*

**WORK EXPERIENCE**  
*Inclusion Coordinator & Learning Support Educator*  
*Primary school, Malta - Jan 2015 - Present*  
*Psychotherapy Sessions*  
*Sep 2017 - Present*  
*Equine Facilitated Specialist*  
*Malta. May 2015 - Present*

**EDUCATION**  
*Master in Neuropsychology and Education*  
*International University of La Rioja*  
*MSc Clinical Psychology*  
*University Complutense of Madrid (Spain)*  
*& Università degli Studi di Padova (Italy)*  
*BA, Psychology*  
*University Complutense of Madrid (Spain)*  
**MEMBERSHIPS**  
*Founder of Equability Malta.*  
*Founder member of AINISE.*  
*Member of EEFTN.*  
*Member of HETI Federation.*



# A new matrix for comparison of different education curricula in EAS: previous results of its application to the Erasmus Associations"

## Erasmus + project 2019-1-fi01-ka202-060805

#EAS | #education – curriculum | #matrix

### AUTHORS:

- Anne Rokka, Physiotherapist, Suomen Ratsastusterapeutitry (Finland)
- JoannaDzwonkowska, MA, Polish Equine Facilitated Therapy Association (Poland)
- Jill Carey Dr., Festina Lente (Ireland)

### ABSTRACT

#### OBJECTIVE:

Comparison between education curricula in EAS to understand the main content and orientation.

#### DESIGN:

Elaboration of an original matrix which analyses each Erasmus partner's curricula:

Topics:

- a) Main Topics
- |   |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. General aspects                            | 2. Neurology and Psychiatry |
| 3. Rehabilitation                             | 4. Education/learning       |
| 5. Monitoring tools and assessment of results | 6. Horse                    |
| 7. Veterinary                                 |                             |

b) Main disciplines for each topic

Elaboration of data to outline the characteristics of each curriculum.

The comparison was completed with qualitative and quantitative analysis assessing the topics according to their importance in education: each partner was assigned an item with a qualitative value to which a mathematical value was attributed. The sum of these values showed the significance of each topic to the partner's curricula. The values can be related to the importance of the topic in education as follows: top, almost the best, fair, slight and minimal

#### RESULTS:

a) MAIN TOPICS: almost the best: 1, 3, 5, 6; fair: 2; slight: 4, 7

b) MAIN DISCIPLINES FOR EACH TOPIC

General Aspects: Planning of therapeutic project: top; almost the best: team, indications and contraindications. other disciplines: fair

Neurology and Psychiatry: top: Semeiology. other disciplines: slight or minimal, except for Intellectual disorders (fair)

Rehabilitation: top: observation techniques. other disciplines: fair

Education/learning: slight

Monitoring tools and assessment of the results: almost the best

Horse disciplines: Almost the best, except schooling/training (fair)

Veterinary disciplines: minimal (except prevention of behavioural disorders: fair)

#### CONCLUSION:

The results suggest an improvement in heart rate variability after the Equine Assisted Mental/Health intervention. We welcome cooperation with other experts and organizations in our future research, in which we will also monitor additional parameters during the intervention to determine the immediate effect of Equine Assisted Mental/Health and mutual interaction between the horse and the human.

### CV:

Anna Pasquinelli

#### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

University Associate Professor, President of "Lapo" Association

Associate Professor of Child Neuropsychiatry at the Child Neuropsychiatry Department, University of Florence, person in charge for Neurology and Rehabilitation. Director (2007-2012) of the Post Graduate School in Child Neuropsychiatry, President of "Degree Course in Child Therapy of Neuro and Psychomotricity"; Director (2009-2012) of Child University Neuropsychiatry Clinic, in Florence.

Co-founder (1993) and President (2017) of "Lapo" Association, President of the Therapeutic Riding (TR) Section of "Lapo" Association (1998), member of FRDI Medical Committee (1997-2009) and Journal Committee (2000-2009). Since 1996 I organize TR Courses: "Theoretical/Practical Training in TR" and, since 1999, the "UNIVERSITY MASTER IN TR".

Author of 172 publications (56 on TR -17 at an intern. level).

Editor and Author of "Equine-Assisted Interventions Handbook of Therapeutic Riding: Principles, Methodology, Organisation" (2020), a 400-page book and 2 Videos.

Member of the Erasmus+ project 2019.



# Panel: Horse related

## The rythm of connection – exploring the psychophysiological aspects of horse – human relationship in equine-assisted therapy

**#equine assisted psychotherapy | #emotional transfer | #synchronization**

### AUTHORS:

- Eszter Bálint, Semmelweis University - Institute of Behavioural Sciences, Kapcsolat Equine-Assisted Therapy and Training Center
- György Purebl MD, PhD Semmelweis University - Institute of Behavioural Sciences
- Edina Kardos, Somogy County Kaposi Mór Teaching Hospital, Kapcsolat Equine-assisted Therapy and Training Center

### ABSTRACT:

Horses are increasingly recognized and referred to as “mirrors” which refers to their high functioning emotional-social abilities. This also makes them great co-therapist in equine-assisted settings. It's probable that this phenomenon can be explained by emotional transfer between horses and humans, which could be looked at as a synchronization between the participants of the interaction. In trying to make this synchronicity evident, our choice was to turn to the examination of physiological markers. Heart rate and other related variables, i.e. HRV appears to be the easiest of the physiological markers to grasp when studying equines and already have been measured in several studies and is considered a reliable measure in the research of stress reactions and emotions and horse-human interactions, and is also non-invasive. We planned a pilot-study to address the gap in the research of the background mechanisms of equine assisted therapies. We are investigating the synchronization process through HRV recorded of all three agents in the therapeutic triangle: the horse, the client, and the therapist.

We obtained simultaneous HRV records during a standardized session of equine assisted intervention, enabling us to examine the existence of the synchronization and the pattern of action-reaction in stressful situations. The standardized session had a strict framework: it starts with a baseline situation (standing next to a horse), followed by a stressful event (having to lead the horse through a scary obstacle), ended by a brief relaxation. To examine the variables, that could have a possible effect on the forming of the synchronization, we analysed the horse-human compatibility based on the Big Five factors, and on the attachment styles of the participants. (At the time of abstract submission, the experiment is still in progress, so therefore the results are not included in the abstract, but will be in the presentation)

### CV:

*Eszter Bálint*

#### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*Semmelweis University - Institute of Behavioural Sciences, Kapcsolat Equine-Assisted Therapy and Training Center*

#### EDUCATION

*Equine-assisted psychotherapy - Hungarian Equestrian Therapy Association (2019-2021)*  
*Sport and performance psychologist - Hungarian University of Sport Sciences (2017-2019)*  
*Psychologist (Clinical and health psychology specialisation) - Eötvös Loránd University (2014-2016)*

#### EXPERIENCE

*Equine-assisted therapist - Kapcsolat Equine-Assisted Therapy and Training Center (2019-present)*  
*PhD student, psychologist - Semmelweis University - Institute of Behavioural Sciences (2021-present)*  
*Assistant lecturer - Eötvös Loránd University - Faculty of Education and Psychology - Institute of Psychology (2022-present)*  
*Sportpsychologist (several sport clubs - triathlon, artistic gymnastics, soccer, equestrian sports- 2018-2022)*  
*Program director of the mental health program - Háttér Society (2019-2021)*  
*Psychologist - Pesti Barnabás Secondary School (2019-2020)*  
*Psychologist, Coordinator of the psychologist team - Bolyai Children's Home Center (2016-2019)*

# The occurrence of a tail swish related to decrease ground force in horses working in equine-assisted services

#equine behaviour | #equine gait | #horses in EAS

AUTHORS:

- Nichole Anderson, Ph.D. Texas Tech University, School of Veterinary Medicine

ABSTRACT:

Horses utilized in mounted Equine-Assisted Services (EAS) are removed or retired from programs most often due to behavioural or soundness issues. Our objective is to assess the horse's gait and behaviour without a rider to gain a clearer understanding of the potential relationship between gait asymmetry and behavioural issues.

The hypothesis is that horses with lower vertical ground reaction force (GRF) in a leg will show an increase in discomfort behaviours. To investigate the relationship between gait and behaviour, a study was conducted on horses (n = 22) from four EAS centers. These horses had all been actively involved in EAS programs for at least a year. Tendi-boots™ gait analysis boots were attached to all four lower legs.

The horses' gait was evaluated at a walk during a warm-up period on three separate days, following a repeated measures design. Tail swishing, head toss, and bite behaviours were counted throughout the warm-up. Data were analysed using a negative binomial model.

One tail swish occurred for every 0.002 N decrease in GRF in the left front (LF; P = 0.03), 0.002 N in the right front (RF; P = 0.03) a 0.002 N decrease in the left hind (LH; P = 0.04) and 0.002 N decrease in the right hind (RF; P = 0.02). One head toss would occur for every 0.16 N decrease of the LF (P < 0.05) 0.09 N decrease of the RF (P = 0.02). Head tossing did not have a relationship with LH or RH limbs.

Biting behaviour did not have a relationship with GRF in any limb. These results suggest that tail swish may be a predictor of decreased force on any limb whereas head toss may be a predictor of decreased force on a front limb. These results show that discomfort behaviours may indicate limb pain or unsoundness.

CV:

Bethany Baxley

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Texas Tech University, School of Veterinary Medicine

Texas Tech University, Amarillo, TX  
Expected: Dec 2024

Ph.D. Candidate in One Health  
Thesis: Understanding the Welfare of Horses working in Equine-Assisted Services: A multi-method approach  
Advisor: Dr. Nichole C. Anderson  
Aberystwyth University, Wales, UK  
September 2014

M.Sc. in Equine Science  
Thesis: An Investigation of the Multiple Ovulation Characteristic of Equine Breeds using Genetic Analysis  
Advisor: Dr. William Haresign  
Averett University, Danville, VA  
April 2012

B.Sc. in Equestrian Studies  
Concentration: Equine Business Management  
Equine International, Board of Directors  
Sept 2022-Present

PATH Intl. Equine Welfare Committee, Member  
Dec 2020 – 2023  
Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH)  
Certified Therapeutic Riding Instructor since May 2020

# Equine-assisted therapy with the horses' consent? Teaching therapy horses to say "yes" and "no"?: audible exhale communication

#equine welfare | #animal consent | #horse training

AUTHORS:

- Anna Naber MSc. e.motion Lichtblickhof, Vienna, Austria
- Roswitha Zink Mag., MSc. e.motion Lichtblickhof, Vienna, Austria

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

The training concepts behind these questions about animal consent in EAT comes from dog and zoo animal training and are described, e.g., under "cooperative care" or "choice and control". It involves consented stress modulation via horses' audible exhales and is based on the fact that control over a situation is one of the most effective stress-reducing factors. This leads to higher experienced self-efficacy, a sense of control and optimistic expectations. Therapy horses should be trained to be as predictable as possible, not to overreact and to approach difficult situations calmly in order to increase safety for clients. Horses may benefit from support through learning proactive strategies to reduce their stress level. They should be given permission to have a say in the therapy process, to express their feelings and to show their consent or to exercise a veto.

DESIGN:

In a pilot project, we started a training program at Lichtblickhof, Vienna: 20 therapy horses learned the so-called "Audible Exhale Communication" (AEC), which is based on natural physiologically positive and healthy body processes and incorporates human breathing and relaxation techniques, while therapists responded to the signals.

RESULTS:

After six months of training, we could show that horses had successfully learned this method. They showed a higher number of audible exhalations in the last training session than in the first. Neither age, years of training or therapy experience had a moderating effect. The horses used this newly acquired tool in various situations and showed fewer signs of stress, more relaxed feelings and more positive emotions in behavioural observations.

CONCLUSION:

Training horses to use AEC could be an important way to help therapy horses to reduce their stress and increase their self-efficacy. This subsequently improves safety for clients, the human-animal relationship and opens up new possibilities for improving therapeutic procedures and animal welfare.

CV:

Reante Deime

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Mag., MSc., e.motion Lichtblickhof, Vienna, Austria

Mag. Renate Deimel, MSc. has been working as a psychotherapist and special needs educator for many years in equine assisted grief, trauma and palliative accompaniment at Lichtblickhof (ray of hope farm) in Vienna, Austria. She is also on the Executive Committee of HETI and Section head deputy of "Curative educational and therapeutic support with horses" from the "Austrian Board of Trustees for Therapeutic Riding" (Österreichisches Kuratorium für Therapeutisches Reiten). In addition to her therapeutic work, she enjoys dedicating herself to international networking in order to strengthen scientific and professional development in the field of horse/animal-assisted therapy. A research focus of her and her team at Lichtblickhof (ray of hope farm) is the training of therapy horses and the development of methods to increase the welfare of the animals in therapy settings and in their leisure time.



# Feasibility of monitoring stress markers in horse coats for disabled riding

#cortisol | #oxytocine | #horse hair

**AUTHORS:**

- Genta OCHI, Lecturer, Department of Health and Sports, Niigata University of Health and Welfare, Niigata
- Tsuyoshi MATSUMOTO, Associate Professor, Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences, University of Tsukuba

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:**

This study focused on the coat of the horse, with the aim of investigating the possibility of extracting stress markers as a sample for non-invasive, long-term indicators. Hair generally grows from nutrients in the blood. During this process, other components in the blood accumulate in the hair at the same time. Studies in various animal species, including horses, have reported that one component that accumulates is cortisol (COR). The objective of the study was to examine the feasibility of simultaneously extracting COR and oxytocin (OXT) from horse coats and to investigate the relationship between COR and OXT. Experiments were conducted to investigate the stress accumulated in the horse's coat by these methods.

**DESIGN:**

Nine horses from a Japanese facility for children with disabilities were studied. Coat samples were collected in June, September, and December 2023 for seasonal comparisons. COR and OXT were extracted using established protocols, and SPSS was employed for statistical analyses.

**RESULTS:**

Simultaneous extraction of COR and OXT was feasible. COR levels were higher in December compared to June, while OXT levels remained consistent across seasons. Regarding the condition of the horses during the period when the COR was elevated, the keeper stated that there were changes in behaviour and training among the individuals.

**CONCLUSION:**

This study confirms simultaneous COR and OXT extraction from horse coats, providing insights into stress variability. Individual differences identified may help understand the balance between exercise and rest. Increasing sample size and frequency of sampling can enhance study reliability.

**CV:**

*Maho Fuchikami*

**DEGREE, AFFILIATION:**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Occupation Therapy, Faculty of Health Sciences, Mejiro University*

*The author earned her PhD from the Graduate School of Agriculture at Tokyo University of Agriculture (Japan). Her doctoral thesis focused on measuring neurotransmitters and hormones in equine lacrimal fluid, examining their correlation with equine-mediated interventions, and elucidating differences in equine occupational and individual traits. Following the completion of her PhD, she contributed to a child development facility, offering assistance to children and their families. Subsequently, she served as a researcher at the University of Tsukuba before assuming her current role at Mejiro University. In addition to her academic work, she works as an equine intervention instructor on weekends, providing services to people with disabilities, children, the elderly, and able-bodied individuals. Author of articles researching the characteristics of horses utilized in intervention activities and the educational impact of equine-assisted activities on participants.*

# Exploring the concept of positive association to the human (PA) as a dynamic tool

#positive association | #horse human communication | #mutual wellbeing

**AUTHORS:**

- Carlos Ganzabal

**ABSTRACT:**

It examines PA from both a psychological/scientific standpoint and an inter-species interpersonal perspective, emphasizing statistical correlations and constructive, empathetic relationships.

Positive Association is defined as the promotion of beneficial and healthy interactions when variables move in the same direction, fostering mutual support, effective communication, and collaboration.

The understanding of equine needs involves quality time spent together, emphasizing free participation, respectful dialogue, and unconditional communication. Reciprocal activities are encouraged in an atmosphere of openness to each other's needs, fostering empathetic relationships.

Building trust is viewed as a co-creative, correlational process progressing through expressions of affect and value, requiring an understanding of individual needs, a holistic view of the environment, safety, active listening, and respectful communication. Considerations for PA include awareness of body sovereignty, touch, emotional states, safety zones, curiosity levels, coherence, and the role of the human companion as a bridge between the needs of both individuals.

The paper focuses on the distinction between well-being and quality of life.

Goals include working from the horse's optimal level to provide safe relationships, empathy through human-animal connections. Challenges to implementing PA include cognitive dissonance, emotional involvement, speciesism, resistance to change in professional training, identifying equine quality of life, limited development opportunities, safety vs. freedom, economic sustainability, and social and cultural pressures. Opportunities lie in social change, the green economy. In conclusion, this presentation aims to disseminate the value of Positive Human-Animal Partnership, addressing challenges and presenting opportunities for its implementation. By embracing a holistic approach, leading to a positive transformation in human-equine relationships.

**CV:**

**DEGREE, AFFILIATION:**

*MSc in/mSC Equine Assisted Learning. Asociación Proyecto Caballo, Accompanying the equine world in its transition*

*Dynamic and experienced service provider with a passion and curiosity to explore common links between humans and equines. Excited to share insights and collaborate with EAS. He is an entrepreneur of iPoney Outdoors Spaces in the north of Spain, delivering EAL Lessons and creating spaces where humans and equines can be their best selves. Actively collaborating with HETI in the ethics Taskforce since 2018. Part of the team of Asociacion Proyecto Caballo, working for a sustainable environment in the equine world. Founder member of AINISE, Proud member of the EEAFTN Network to share experiences and trainings. By bringing these abstracts on positive associations with humans we would love to share a dynamic tool that would benefit the equine culture.*



# EEG (electroencephalogram) brain activity in humans while playing with horses

#human horse interaction | #brain activity in humans | #animal assisted service

**AUTHORS:**

- Xun He, PhD, Bournemouth University UK
- Fred Charles, PhD, Bournemouth University UK
- Roya Haratian, PhD, Bournemouth University UK

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:**

The team from Bournemouth University (UK) which included Prof Hemingway, Dr Xun He, Prof Fred Charles and Dr Roya Haratian, conducted a pilot study jointly with TheHorseCourse, funded by the Esme Fairbairn Foundation, with the eventual aim of developing a 'virtual reality' version of the course which will aim to produce the same positive impacts with the virtual participants.

**DESIGN:**

Using electroencephalogram (EEG) to collect brain activity and psycho-physiological data from the students while active on the course has enabled the team to capture instantly, moment by moment, the key changes in brain activity as they were taking place, providing an entirely new, neurological understanding of what is happening in the human's brain as it learns to communicate with a horse. In addition, the data from beginners has been compared with experienced EAS facilitators to show how the brain activity changes as one's expertise grows. Heart rate data was also collected from the horses involved in the pilot to further understand their experiences of involvement in the interaction.

**RESULTS:**

This is the first time the brain and body response in a equine assisted intervention has been mapped in this way using EEG and psycho-physiological technology in real time. Our current analysis of the data builds on our previous findings showing that emotional arousal occurs when humans interact with the horse. This may mean that human participants undertaking the course are learning to deal with an emotional experience and being coached to success which may underpin the positive outcomes seen from the course.

**CONCLUSION:**

This research is an important step forward in understanding the benefits of this ancient relationship between humans and horses while in addition, the team believes the techniques and methods used in this research study can be used to further understand other examples of inter-species' interactions in future.

**CV:**

Ann Hemingway

*Dr Ann Hemingway is Professor of Public Health and Wellbeing at Bournemouth University UK, she is a public health academic. Ann's research is focused on the reduction of inequities in health and wellbeing through public health action. Ann is regularly commissioned to undertake international and UK based research projects she has been studying the horse human relationship for the last ten years and works with a multidisciplinary group of researchers to explore the outcomes, impacts and mechanisms of action of equine assisted services. She has recently published (open access) a first for the global evidence on this area, an observational study which has shown a reduction in domestic violence in families following attending an equine assisted service (Hemingway A, Sullivan K. Reducing the incidence of domestic violence: An observational study of an equine-assisted intervention. Fam Process. 2022 Jun;61(2):549-570. doi: 10.1111/famp.12768. Epub 2022 Mar 30. PMID: 35355260).*

# Motion analysis of the sitting point at free walk from the aspect of equine-assisted physiotherapy

#equine-assisted physiotherapy | #motion analysis | #stride kinematics

**AUTHORS:**

- Árpád Bokor, PhD. Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Department of Animal Sciences, Kaposvár Campus, 7400, Guba S. str. 40., Kaposvár, Hungary
- Julianna Bokor, PhD. Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Game Management Landscape Centre, 7475 Bószénfa, Malom str. 3.

**ABSTRACT:**

Accurate cognition of the horse's walk has a primary importance in equine assisted physiotherapy (EAPT), because the movements of the sitting surface of the back of the horse determine the potential therapeutical effect. The summation of the longitudinal, vertical and horizontal amplitudes of the vertebral column forms an individual moving pattern of every horse. The goal of our research is to assess and compare horses from the aspect of EAPT. Fourteen horses with different conformation were used to study the stride kinematics of free walk. Horses equipped with a special trapezoid-frame marker representing the rider's pelvis were led in free walk and recorded by two DV cameras in outdoor conditions. Body parameters and ten strides per horse were analysed with the Ariel Performance Analysis System. Four important EAPT stride variables were defined. Descriptive statistics for the linear, temporal and EAPT stride variables were determined. Results of ANOVA and Duncan's Multiple Range test indicated that the kinematic variables of horses were significantly different. The system we used to record and process data proved to be sufficient to determine individual kinematic character. The method is suitable for assessing and comparing horses used in EAPT. Significant correlations were not observed between EAPT stride variables and body parameters. We suppose that there are too many factors effecting the movement of the sitting point of horses.

**CV:**

Péter Jámbor

**DEGREE, AFFILIATION:**

*PhD., Equine-Assisted Therapy for the Disabled Association, 1089 Vajda P str. 7., Budapest, Hungary*

*Dr. Péter Jámbor (MSc, Agricultural Engineer; MSc, Teacher of Agricultural Engineering; BSc, Special Education Teacher) received his PhD in Animal Science from the Doctoral School of Kaposvár University, Hungary in 2013, researching and analysing the motion patterns of horses to select for hippotherapy. He has been the coordinator of Equine-Assisted Therapy for the Disabled Association in Budapest since 2003. The Association helps 120 children with physical and cognitive disabilities reach beyond their boundaries every week. In addition to practical therapeutic work, he is a regular participant in scientific conferences, where he gives lectures on the methodology of selection horses for hippotherapeutic purposes.*

# Selection and induction process of horses for new zealand riding for the disabled assocation

#riding therapy | #horse selection | #horse management

**AUTHORS:**

- Kristie Cameron, PhD, Unitec Institute of Technology, New Zealand
- Kath Shorter, PhD, University of South Australia

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:**

Selection of suitable horses for riding therapy and their subsequent induction is important for the success of a riding therapy horse, however there is a current lack of data that identifies attributes of an ideal riding therapy horse, and induction process. This study examined current selection and management processes of horses used in New Zealand (NZ) for riding therapy.

**DESIGN:**

A series of focus groups were held online with volunteers from riding therapy groups in NZ. Respondents were asked how their group selected and inducted horses, and how they managed horse-related issues. Following transcription of session recordings, Iterative Thematic Inquiry was used to develop themes and sub-themes.

**RESULTS:**

While a range of official policies and procedures exist for these groups, most respondents referred to their own experience, personal preferences, and specific group requirements when selecting and inducting horses. Smaller horses of any breed, with a range of experience and a calm temperament, aged 8 – 10 years were preferred. The most common induction challenges were horses being reactive to sidewalkers, the riders’ mounting block, and the variety in handlers. Behavioural issues such as biting, kicking, or bucking were addressed either by individuals or by group consensus, and included a break from riding therapy, a change in environment, or retirement.

**CONCLUSION:**

The ideal riding therapy horse is a calm, trainable horse with a wide range of experience, who can easily adapt to the riding therapy life-style during induction. Methodology to achieve this varied greatly between groups, and reported occurrences of undesirable behaviours indicated deficiencies in the selection, induction, or management processes. A review of these processes is recommended, to ensure optimal success for horses. The appropriate incorporation of variation in the ridden environment for horses should also be investigated as a means of responding to undesirable behaviours.

**CV:**

*Kristina Naden*

**DEGREE, AFFILIATION:**

*BVN, MRurSci student at University of New England, Australia*

*Kristina Naden is a senior lecturer in veterinary nursing at Otago Polytechnic, and has been lecturing in veterinary nursing since 2009, after working as a surgical veterinary nurse in a specialist veterinary clinic. Her research interests include the selection, induction, and use of horses in riding therapy, which is the focus of her Master of Rural Science program of study. Further studies in this area will investigate the impact of riding therapy programs on individual horses in New Zealand. Other research interests include the health of dogs in Tonga, a small nation in the Pacific Ocean. This research is currently investigating the presence of endoparasites and leptospira spp in the canine population of Tonga, and the related potential impacts on public health.*

# Post-racing thoroughbreds in equine assisted services: is there an ideal profile?

#personality | #welfare | #racehorses

**AUTHORS:**

- Claire Neveux, MSC, PhD, student, University of Bristol
- Jo Hockenhull, Ph, University of Bristol
- Jennifer Barker, LLB Hons Racing to Relate
- Kate Allen, PhD, University of Bristol
- Sarah Kappel, PhD, University of Bristol
- Siobhan Mullan, PhD, University College Dublin
- Mathilde Valenchon, PhD, University of Bristol

**ABSTRACT:**

The retraining and welfare of post-racing Thoroughbreds (TBs) is a highly topical issue. TBs are often retrained for sport or leisure purposes and are increasingly being considered for Equine Assisted Services (EAS). However, the personality and behavioural profile of successful TBs in EAS have not yet been evaluated. The objectives of this project were: 1- to identify the perceived characteristics of TBs in EAS programmes, 2- to characterise the personality and behavioural profile of successful TBs used in EAS. The first phase, an online survey aimed at EAS practitioners, received 129 responses, of which 56.3% (71) agreed that TBs have specific characteristics making them especially useful for EAS. Respondents particularly mentioned their sensitivity, body/movement characteristics, responsiveness, intelligence, and past experience. Detailed survey information was provided about 57 TBs (median age: 14 years old, geldings: 78.57%) who were less frequently used in ridden EAS programmes than other breeds (OBs) (31.58% vs 64.85%, p<0.001). The second phase, an experimental study, compared the personality of 52 TBs and 44 OBs all used in EAS, and 55 TBs in general retraining. TBs in EAS were more sensitive to tactile stimulation (p<0.001) than OBs. Even if TBs showed stronger responses on some emotivity tests (unknown surface, p<0.05), their response to other tests such as the suddenness test was lower than OBs (p<0.01). TBs in general retraining expressed higher emotivity reactions (p<0.01) and more positive behaviours towards humans (p<0.05) when stabled than successful EAS horses.

These results move towards an understanding of the key features of successful TBs used in EAS programmes. TBs are capable of adapting to some EAS programmes and could be selected from general retraining.

**CV:**

*Claire Neveux*

*Claire Neveux worked in racehorse breeding in France, Ireland and South Africa for several years. She graduated with a master's degree in animal behaviour (University Paris 13-Sorbonne) and became a consultant in equine behaviour in France for over a decade. She is now a PhD student at Bristol Veterinary School (United Kingdom). Her research project focuses on the selection, training and welfare of Post-racing Thoroughbreds used in Equine Assisted Services. This project is carried out by the University of Bristol and the UK-based charity Racing to Relate and is funded by the John Pearce Foundation.*

# Case study on equine psychotherapy based on human and horse communication

#equine anxiety | #human - horse interaction | #horses' psychological disorders

## AUTHORS:

- Sok-kyung Sookie Park, Ph.D. degrees in psychomotor and social welfare, Collab of Psychotherapy Co., Ltd.
- Jiwon Huh, Korea International School

## ABSTRACT

### OBJECTIVE:

The purpose of this study is to investigate how interactions between horses and humans, based on communication and trust, can contribute to equine psychotherapy.

Horses are intellectual, emotional, and social animals. Therefore, like humans, horses can also experience psychological disorders. However, generally, especially in Korea, it is difficult to find interest or research on psychological disorders of horses. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the understanding and therapy of equine psychological disorders by introducing a case of equine psychotherapy. This case centers on Royal Heritage, a horse grappling with enduring psychological disorders, notably anxiety, spanning numerous years.

### DESIGN:

(1) Research Question

How does a horse as the client respond and change in the psychotherapeutic process based on communication?

(2) Research Method

From September 2023 to March 2024 for 7 months, more than 4 times therapy every week

At the Stevens Horse Riding Club in South Korea

A horse with serious anxiety avoids people and horses approaching her. Stands against one side of the stall, avoiding eye contact and turning away. Unable to communicate with other horses.

- Diagnosis through observation.
- Empathizing with the horse's fears and pain through communication.
- Requesting assistance to other horses through communication for helping the horse.

Psychotherapy treatment for the horse was conducted in 7 steps.

Evaluation method: weekly report, pictures and videos, interviews of witness

### RESULTS & CONCLUSION:

This study reveals shifts in the horse's demeanor, interactions with both horses and humans, and a surge in demand. It explores the efficacy of communication-based psychotherapy for horses, offering insights crucial for advancing equine psychological care, including the creation of a matrix to gauge horse anxiety.

## CV:

Sok-kyung Sookie Park

### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Ph.D. degrees in psychomotor and social welfare/Collab of Psychotherapy Co., Ltd

A human rights advocator who has devoted over 30 years to the human rights and welfare of people with disabilities. In 2021, she established Collab (the Col Lab of Psycho Therapy) which Research Institute developed a new healing methodology that combines horses and psychomotor and other methods for children with developmental disabilities and people in need of various psychological support. As a visiting professor at Kyung Hee University Humanitas College, she is dedicated to revitalizing horse-mediated healing practices in Korea.

### EDUCATION CAREER

Graduated from Ewha Womans University, Department of Law  
Master of Social Welfare, Ewha Womans University  
Ph. D. in Social Welfare from Sungkonghoe University  
Ph. D. in Psycho Motologie Woosuk University

### LICENSE

Social worker (national)  
Psychomotor therapist  
Developmental rehabilitation service provider (national)  
Sports Instructor for Disabled (horseback riding, national)

# Ethics and equine welfare in equine-assisted services

#ethical guidelines | #welfare | #Equine-Assisted Services

## AUTHORS:

- Alexandra Stergiou, Physical Educator, PhD, ETI Federation
- Hetta Rautiainen, Animal Science, MSc, HETI Federation
- Marilyn Sokolof, Psychologist, PhD, HETI Federation
- Gisela Heimsath-Rhodes, MSc in Education, HETI Federation
- Sanna Mattila-Rautiainen, Physiotherapist, MSc, HETI Federation

## ABSTRACT

### OBJECTIVE:

Horse welfare is an increasing interest worldwide, particularly from those in developed countries who now have the knowledge and resources to be able to offer the best management systems and treat their horses with respect, compassion and understanding. The objective of this work is to present an overview of ethical and welfare guidelines in Equine Assisted Services (EAS). It clarifies the key aspects as they relate to the service providers, service users, and equines.

### DESIGN:

During the Erasmus + project 2019-1-FI01-KA202-060805, international organizations engaged in discussions about service providers and equine welfare ethical guidelines. By engaging in discussions and brainstorming sessions, the method for creating this work incorporated information of the work of HETI ethics and welfare task forces, as well as the IAHAIO task force, which both drawing upon current best practices and evidence-based research in EAS.

### RESULTS:

It is the ethical responsibility of all service providers to manage the welfare of horses and to be sure that horses are not subject to any form of abuse neglect or distress, either physical or mental/emotional. Service providers must supervise the interaction between horses and clients for the benefit of both and in a manner that upholds the welfare of the horses.

Ethical and welfare Guidelines are a base integrated into the entire educational process (and to further education of the Service providers). They include the horse and service provider and are brought to the knowledge of the service user (and family + cooperating professionals).

### CONCLUSION:

Horses are part of education and therapy services. While working in these areas involving horses, one can experience improvements in health, education, and general needs. However, prioritizing the health, needs, welfare, training, and education of the horses is also crucial.

## CV:

Alexandra Stergiou

Originally from Ioannina, Greece, Alexandra earned her PhD from the Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the Medical School of the University of Ioannina. She has also held academic fellowships in Special Education at both the University of Ioannina and the University of Macedonia in Greece. Her research interest is in the rehabilitation of children with neurological disorders. In addition, she has been running her own business at Ioannina Therapeutic Riding Centre in Greece for the last 15 years. Alexandra has served as a vice president of HETI since June 2021, holds the chair of the Research Committee and is a chief editor in HETI Journal: International Research and Practice.



# Horses training for equine-assisted services in Brazil

#horse training | #equine welfare | #operant conditioning

AUTHORS:

- Syllas Jadah Oliveira, Lima, Major PM, Polícia Militar do Estado de São Paulo
- Alexandre Corrêa, Borghesan, Veterinarian Captain PM, Polícia Militar do Estado de São Paulo
- Carolina de Marchi, Soares, Veterinarian, Polícia Militar do Estado de São Paulo

ABSTRACT:

Equine Assisted Services (EAS) has developed considerably around the world and many research show the benefits of human-horse interaction, however the analysis of these interactions is most often done from the human perspective, little is discussed about the training and the physical and mental health of horses. Walking in a restrained way and being deprived of physical exercise are examples of situations that threaten equine health and welfare. Considering that training for the task is of paramount importance so that the horse is only required to do what it was trained to, this research sought to investigate: how many horses came from other equestrian disciplines; days exclusively dedicated for training; how many are involved in the training and, if these professionals have knowledge about Operant Conditioning (OC), in particular, negative reinforcement (NR). An e-questionnaire of 13 questions relating to the training and management of horses as well as the theoretical knowledge of the respondents, was sent to 314 EAS centers' addresses, all of them listed on the Associação Nacional de Equoterapia (ANDE-Brasil) website. Duplicate responses were excluded, and 127 respondents completed the questionnaire.

The questionnaire requested them to answer all questions except the 4 free-text questions included in questionnaire, with not mandatory answers. Results showed that around half of the 127 responses claimed to have heard about OC reinforcements and punishments (said YES), but from 64 YES answer, when asked to give examples of NR only 3 could do it correctly, indicating that even professionals who claim to know about OC may be incorrect or not apply it correctly. Regarding how many days a week are dedicated exclusively to training, 62.1% (79 centers) have responded (zero) or only once a week. Another point of concern is that in 54.3% of Centers, all horses came from other equestrian disciplines.

CV:

Syllas Jadah Oliviera Lima

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Major PM, Polícia Militar do Estado de São Paulo

Coordinator and Horse Trainer of Equine Assisted Therapies and Activities Center of Mounted Police Regiment "Jully, 9th", Military Police of São Paulo State, 2000 - 2019 /

Riding Instructor in Brazilian Army Equitation School (9 months course) / Basic and Advanced Equoterapia Course (ANDE)

Corso di Specializzazione MRGC (Metodo di Riabilitazione Globale a Mezzo Cavallo) ANIRE, Italy

Area Ludico Desportiva, 2015 e Psico Intelettiva, 2018

Dressage and ParaDressage National Judge / FEI Coach Level I (jumping/dressage) / Vaulting Lunger

(clinics with Agner Werhahn, Erich Breiter, Priscila Bottom) /

Author of the books: "O cavalo na Equoterapia e na interface Equitação/Reabilitação" (Horse in Equoterapia and in the Equitation/Rehabilitation) e "Manual de Boas Práticas para o bem-estar do cavalo nas Terapias e Atividades Assistidas com Equinos" (Best Practices Manual for Equine Assisted Therapies and Activities) Member of Mounted Police Bidding Committe for horse acquiring

# Can equine-assisted services (EAS) through virtual reality deliver similar benefits as face to face EAS

#horses | #virtual reality | #wellbeing

AUTHORS:

- Linda Wong Honours, BA Mathematics in Business and Information Systems and current PhD student Current - Deakin University, Past - University of Waterloo
- Claire Henderson-Wilson, PhD, Deakin University
- Justin Lawson, PhD, Deakin University

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

The research project "Improving Individuals' Health and Wellbeing through Horses and Virtual Reality (VR)" aims to bridge the gap between existing theoretical frameworks and approaches used in Equine Assisted Learning (EAL) and Social Care. A scoping review completed as part of this project identified knowledge gaps, of which two related to accessibility and the use of technology.

DESIGN:

Due to the exploratory nature of this research, an Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) technique was used to determine if a purposive sampling of individual participants identified an improvement to their overall health and wellbeing through interaction with horses, either face-to-face or via virtual reality.

Data collection and analysis was conducted in three stages:

- Stage 1 consisted of participant interactions with horses using virtual reality (VR) only.
- Stage 2 consisted of participant interactions with horses in a face-to-face environment only.
- Stage 3 consisted of Informant interviews conducted with either authors or facilitators in the industry.

RESULTS:

Preliminary results indicate a strong link between the benefits found from the scoping review to the benefits identified from the virtual reality case studies. These benefits have been mapped to the scoping review findings, which were 1) regulating emotion, 2) sense of connection, 3) Mindfulness, and 4) Physical well-being. There is also alignment to the theories explored which were Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Kaplan's Attention Restoration Theory.

CONCLUSION:

The findings from all three stages of data collection will help decisions about the use of virtual reality in Equine Assisted Services (EAS). This inclusion can hopefully increase the accessibility of EAS to a broader range of participants but can also be used to complement existing face-to-face EAS. Ultimately the outcomes and benefits for participants will be an improvement to overall health and wellbeing.

CV:

Linda Wong

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

PhD Student, Deakin University AND Honours BA of Mathematics with Business and Information Systems, University of Waterloo

Linda combines over 25 years of professional consultancy and industry experience, which has developed her into a well-rounded, dedicated and astute business woman. With strong strategic thinking, Linda combines her broad experience in complex environments to execute and deliver outcomes. Her dedication to people has often seen her leading large change programs. Linda brings great drive and tenacity to programs requiring rigour, but also provides a good mix of empathy. Using effective communication and observation skills, Linda builds rapport across all levels of an organisation. Her strong sense of commercial acumen has demonstrated success in identifying opportunities, developing relationships, and operating businesses from the ground up. Over the years, Linda has combined her three biggest passions – people, learning and horses. She established a charity organisation in 2016 called Hands of Change Limited ([www.handsofchange.org.au](http://www.handsofchange.org.au)), where she is a director and chair of board.



# Panel: Special Program / Projects

## Evaluation system of equines taking part in equine-assisted services (EvaSE) – intellectual outputs Erasmus+2020-1-cz01-ka204-078277

#equine | #evaluation | #EAS

### AUTHORS:

- Lina Šarkienė: Bachelor of Science in Rehabilitation - Physical therapy and Master's degree in public health care management, member of horse riding association of people with disabilities (Lithuania), European equine assisted therapy network

### ABSTRACT

#### OBJECTIVE:

Standardised criteria and guidelines for selecting equines in EAS in the EU. Six European partner organisations developed EvaSE through the Erasmus+ project with the intention of helping to establish consistent standards across EAS programs and organisations, ensuring a reliable and uniform approach to equine selection and preparation.

#### DESIGN:

In Europe, there is no uniform (or generally identical) system of preparation and evaluation of equines participating in Equine Assisted Services (EAS). The project thus responds to a current need for ensuring the safe training and welfare of equines included in EAS, including methods of evaluating their suitability. In the EU, there is a need for more specialists to carry out special training and preparation of equines for this purpose. Equines are currently being trained in various ways, which may lead to welfare problems and variety in the quality of the EAS. We aimed to share knowledge and experiences of partner organisations and develop a document that all partners have approved.

#### RESULTS:

EAS's effectiveness relies on the equines' suitability. An evaluation system can help to identify equines with the desired attributes, such as adequate temperament, suitable size, and appropriate preparation, which are crucial for facilitating positive interactions and achieving goals. Proper evaluation allows us to select the most suitable equines and enhance the programs' quality and efficacy, leading to better participant outcomes.

#### CONCLUSION:

The creation of EvaSE improved our competencies in the selection and preparation of the equines. It represents a significant milestone in the advancement of EAS standardisation. It can be applied as a comprehensive guide for EAS centres and practitioners, providing the necessary tools to create evaluation procedures that prioritise equine welfare, safety, and the promotion of best practices.

### CV:

#### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Degree in Equine Science and Master's degree in Behaviour and Animal Welfare; Affiliation: Member of The KidsFellows Association and board member of SPSAE Association (Portugal)

HELENA COSTA: I'm horse trainer and Coach level II, specialized in Horse behaviour and in Equine Assisted Services. I've been working in a Project on Equine Assisted Services, named: Odivelas Hippotherapy Project, since 2009 and last year I set up with my husband our own Equestrian Center in Pinhal Novo named CostaAmorim stables. I am also a co-author in some publications about horse behaviour and Horse training.

LINA ŠARKIENĖ: I have equine business worker education, over 15 years horse riding experience (showjumping). I have been working for 4 years in the field of Hippotherapy (physical therapy) in my family Equestrian club. Between 2020 and 2023, I was the Lithuanian administrator of ERASMUS+ project 2020-1-CZ01-KA204-078277. I participated in the Lithuanian Health Care Ministry qualification evaluation commission in the transition period recognizing the qualifications of alternative and complementary health care specialists, cooperated with the Ministry of Health in developing horse evaluation methodology.

# Pilot project: adaptation of the segmental assessment of trunk control –SATCo – for equine assisted therapy

#SATCo | #equine-assisted therapy | #postural control

AUTHORS:

- Juliana Ganem Fernandes Pires, Specialist Business
- Claudia da Costa Mota, Master Business

ABSTRACT:

The SATCo scale evaluates the trunk area with reduced postural control, which is essential information for intervention. The assessment is made in a neutral and seated position to identify the critical segment where control is not demonstrated. Goal: adapt it to equine-assisted therapy to monitor the head evolution and trunk control on horseback. We use a wooden trestle, mixed saddle, girth, stirrup leathers, stirrups, half-moon cushion, adjustable dense foam pad and three-strap belt with buckles. The saddle is fixed on the trestle by the circumference, and the stirrup leathers are adjusted to position the hips and lower limbs vertically neutral, with feet at 90 degrees in the stirrups. The hip is stabilized with the half-moon cushion, the belt is used to adjust stability in the saddle for evaluation on the trestle. Evaluations are conducted by 2 examiners: one for trunk fixation and another to create active and reactive multidirectional stimuli. Support is given below the segment being tested. It must be sufficient to stabilize it (support at the scapular waist, in the axillary region, at the lower scapula, at the lower rib, below the lower ribs, at the pelvis, and finally, without support). The dense foam pad will position the upper thoracic to perform item 1 of the SATCo scale. The SATCo scale adaptation for the specificity of equine-assisted therapy can be performed and studied, generating data on the level of head and trunk control in static, active, and reactive modes, also categorizing the level considering the 3 levels together using the materials and the specific positioning of horse riding. The application of this scale will guide therapeutic planning, assisting in the choice of riding material, the position of the therapist's hands for support, biomechanical adjustments on the horse to offer different postural control challenges, and the practitioner's position to stimulate the ideal trunk segment according to their development stage.

CV:

Claudia da Costa Mota

Master in Education Sciences: Special Education from the Fernando Pessoa University, Porto, Portugal, in 2020. Specialist in Neuropsychomotricity in 2023 from Centro Universitário OPET-UNIOPET; Specialist in Pedagogical Psychodrama from Universidade Padre Anchieta in 2001; Graduated in Speech Therapy in 1995, with a specialization in Third Sector Management at Faculdade Getúlio Vargas in 2008 and continued her studies in Management at Metanóia - from 2014; Training Method - A.N.I.R.E. Italian Equestrian Rehabilitation Association - Neuromotor module; Eagala Model training course; She has been a professor at the(ANDE Brasil) since 2007 and at the Escola de Equo&Terapias at Instituto Passo a Passo; Created the PAEDHA - Equine Therapeutic Care Program in the development of skills; Author and co-author of scientific research involving the topic of Equine Therapy Co-author of the book (in release): Talking about autism - Autism in Equine Assisted Therapy

# Complex animal-assisted program at the psychiatric and Addiction Center of Kaposi Mór Hospital

#animal-assisted therapy | #group setting | #a variety of diagnoses

AUTHORS:

- Edina Kardos, clinical psychologist, animal assisted therapist
- Enikő Cseri, neuropsychologist
- Anna-Kata Ferentz, psychologist
- Réka Iváncsik, special education teacher, horse assisted therapist
- Annamária Leipold, clinical psychologist
- Eszter Franciskovics, clinical psychologist
- Eszter Zákányi, childrens' clinical psychologist
- Dr. Csilla Somoskövi, psychiatrist, neurologist
- Dr. Edit Hörcsik, psychiatrist

ABSTRACT:

At the Psychiatric and Addiction Center of Kaposi Mór Hospital, in Somogy county, a unique animal assisted program started in September of 2023, being the first of its kind in our country. The program makes the benefits of animal assisted interventions accessible to children and adults of all ages, with a broad spectrum of diagnoses.

With the inclusion of several species of animals (such as horses, dogs, rabbits or reptiles), the program is available to the patients at the hospital's in- and outpatient departments, as well as to the clients of the new rehabilitation unit. Within the framework of the program, elementary school kids with anxiety get the chance to take part in bunny assisted fairy tale therapy, middle school children with behaviour challenges can join art therapy groups with the assistance of different companions (snail, hedgehog, turtle), while adolescents facing social challenges can choose between horse and dog assisted relationship focused psychotherapy groups. What's more, children with learning disabilities can benefit from individual sessions of therapeutic riding and vaulting. Furthermore, at the hospital's addiction center, patients can now take part in weekly horse and dog assisted group therapy sessions. And at our new dual diagnosis rehab unit, animals are an integral part of the residents' recovery journey. All in all, thanks to this unique program, about 80 people are benefiting from animal assisted therapy at the same time, in 7 differently themed groups.

Every element is carried out by trained professionals: childrens' and adults' clinical psychologists, special education teachers, horse assisted therapists in the fields of psychology and therapeutic riding and vaulting, and dog assisted therapists. We are continuously monitoring the program, and therefore hope that in the future, the results of our work can contribute to a better understanding of the effects of animal assisted therapies.

CV:

Anna-Kata Ferentz

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:  
psychologist, Kaposi Mór Hospital in Somogy County

Ferentz Anna-Kata has been training horses and teaching horse riding for over a decade. She got her MA degree in psychology in 2020. She then was an equine assisted psychotherapy intern in California and Hungary. Since then, she has been working with groups and individuals using the tools of animal assisted psychotherapy, at Kapcsolat Horse Assisted Therapy and Training Center and BarangoLó Farm, Hungary. In January of 2024, she started working at Kaposi Mór Hospital in Somogy County, where she is now co-facilitating horse assisted therapy groups for adolescents, as well as for the residents of the hospital's new dual diagnosis rehab center.

# A novel Nature-Based Intervention Rehabilitation Program including equine-assisted therapy (THE NBI-RP) for people with severe stress-related mental health, personal recovery, and activity level

#occupational therapy | #equine-assisted therapy | #psychiatry

## AUTHORS:

- Anna María Pálsdóttir Ph.D., Associate Professor Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Faculty of Landscape Architecture, Horticulture and Crop Production Sciences, Department of People and Society, Alnarp, Sweden
- Ulrika Bejerholm PhD., Professor in Mental Health Services Research Lund University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Health Sciences, Mental Health, Activity and Participation (MAP), Lund, Sweden.; Department of Psychiatry, Habilitation and Aids, Region Skåne, Lund, Sweden
- Elisabeth Argentzell PhD., Associate Professor Lund University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Health Sciences, Mental Health, Activity and Participation (MAP), Lund, Sweden.; Department of Psychiatry, Habilitation and Aids, Region Skåne, Lund, Sweden

## ABSTRACT

### OBJECTIVE:

Stress-related mental health problems (MHP) are increasing worldwide. It has been shown that people with stress-related MHP may benefit from nature-based interventions (NBI), and equine-assisted therapy (EAT) to support their health, recovery, and activity level of daily life. However, the evidence-base to support this is still weak and there is a knowledge gap concerning health-, recovery- and activity-oriented outcomes for participants in an intervention combining NBI and EAT. The aim of this study was thus to evaluate the possible effects of a novel rehabilitation concept, the NBI-RP, a nature-based intervention including equine-assisted therapy for people with severe stress-related MHP.

### DESIGN:

Forty participants completed the study, which utilized a one-group pretest-posttest design. The NBI-RP was delivered in groups at a farm-based rehabilitation centre in the south of Sweden. It consisted of 24 weeks in two 12 week-phases running over each. Data were collected using well-tested questionnaires reflecting health, recovery, and activity level.

### RESULTS:

The analysis showed improvement with medium to large effect sizes over time according to outcomes on health as well as personal recovery and activity level with exception for self-mastery. All outcomes were statistically significant with p-values  $\leq 0.05$ .

### CONCLUSION:

This innovative rehabilitation program holds promise as a recovery-oriented service that may bolster perceived health, personal recovery, and activity levels among individuals grappling with severe stress-related mental health problems. The NBI-RP could thus be beneficial as a complementary rehabilitation to current psychiatric care services. Results from the study will be presented at the congress.

## CV:

Marie Gudmundsson

### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

PhD-student, Lund University, Faculty of Medicine, Department of Health Sciences, Mental Health, Activity and Participation (MAP), Lund, Sweden.; Health Care Dalarna, Region Dalarna, Falun, Sweden

PhD-student, Lund University, department of Health Sciences, part-time. Reg. Occupational Therapist (OT), 1986. Currently OT in psychiatric services, Region Dalarna, part-time. Project manager and development manager for nature-based interventions and EAS, Region Dalarna 2012-2022. Doctoral project "Personal recovery, return to work and occupational engagement in people with stress-related mental health problems who are provided a nature-based intervention".

Publication: Pálsdóttir AM., Gudmundsson M., Grahn P. (2020). Equine-Assisted Intervention to Improve Perceived Value of Everyday Occupations and Quality of Life in People with Lifelong Neurological Disorders: A Prospective Controlled Study Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health.

Presentation: Dublin, HETI International Congress, 2018. Equine assisted interventions as support for everyday function and activities. Gudmundsson M, Pálsdóttir AM, Grahn P., Åström, M. Certified member of the Swedish Organization of EAS, named OHI.

# Speech camp including equine-assisted therapy for children with communication disorders

#speech therapy | #children | #speech and language disorders

## AUTHORS:

- Beth Macauley, Ph.D., CCC-SLP, HPCS, FNAP, ACUE. Grand Valley State University

## ABSTRACT

### OBJECTIVE:

This presentation is about Speech Camp, a 4-day, 3-hours-a-day camp for children with communication disorders that included equine-assisted speech therapy.

### DESIGN:

Speech Camp was conducted annually at Renew Therapeutic Riding Center in Holland, MI, a PATH, Intl. Premier Accredited Center. The camp targeted children aged 4-18 with various communication disorders, including but not limited to speech and language delays, apraxia, Down Syndrome, and autism spectrum disorders. Each camp session lasted for four days, with three hours of daily therapy. Equine-assisted speech therapy was a central component of the camp program, incorporating structured activities on horseback to facilitate communication skills.

### RESULTS:

Over the three-year period, a total of 60 children participated in Speech Camp. 97% of the children met their speech and language goals by the end of the camp sessions. Five children uttered their first words during the camp, marking significant communication milestones. Three children successfully learned to use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices, enhancing their ability to communicate effectively. Children with autism spectrum disorders demonstrated increased engagement in social communication with peers, indicating improvements in social interaction skills.

### CONCLUSION:

Speech Camp, incorporating equine-assisted speech therapy, emerges as a highly effective intervention for children with communication disorders. The overwhelmingly positive outcomes underscore the efficacy of the camp program. Speech Camp offered a holistic and impactful approach to speech and language therapy.

## CV:

Associate Professor, Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, MI USA

### BOOKS:

Macauley, B.L. (2006). Resources for Research and Education in Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapy. Publisher Services: Chicago, IL.

### BOOK CHAPTERS:

Macauley, B.L. (2021). Animal-Assisted Interventions in Speech-Language Pathology. In Driscoll, C. (Ed.) Animal-Assisted Interventions for Health and Human  
Macauley, B.L. (2022). Animal-Assisted Therapy for Pediatric Patients. In Atschuler, E., (Ed.) Animal-Assisted Therapy Use by Condition. Boston: Elsevier Publishers  
Dr. Macauley received her PhD in 1998 from the University of Florida specializing in neurogenic communication disorders. She has published 34 articles, given 130 conference presentations, facilitated 24 workshops, and presented at every HETI Congress beginning in 2003 in Budapest



# Seated posture control measure for hippotherapy App

#outcome Measure App | #hippotherapy | #neuromotor disabilities

AUTHORS:

- Mylena Medeiros

ABSTRACT:

Physical outcome in Hippotherapy have been identified in many studies. Nonetheless, researchers have highlighted the lack of clinical assessment tools used in clients with neuromotor disorders to determine effectiveness of Hippotherapy before and after sessions.

An App has been created at Saskatchewan Polytechnic, a Canadian Academic Institution, in partnership with four departments, Arts and Sciences, Computer System Technology, Software Developer and Media Developer. This App was based on my thesis research which developed an outcome measure, in the context of Hippotherapy, to evaluate postural control and gross motor functions in clients with neuromotor disorders which had a reliability score of inter-rater and test-retest above 0.90 (ICC values).

The purpose of this presentation is to introduce this outcome measure App, developed for the Hippotherapy community, to foment academic collaboration and future research studies.

CV:

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Master of Sciences, Saskatchewan Polytechnic

2017- MSc in Medical Rehabilitation, University of Manitoba, MB, Canada  
2001-Post-Graduate in Physical Therapy Neurofunctional  
1996-Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE

12/2022 to present Professor Anatomy & Physiology, Saskatchewan Polytechnic  
08/2019 to present Director, Frontierless Wellness Centre  
01/2022 to 5/2022 Professor, University of Manitoba  
04/1997 to 11/2016 Founder/President, EquoAmigos Hippotherapy Association (Nonprofit Organization), RJ, Brazil

PEER-REVIEWED

Medeiros, Mylena, et al. "Development and reliability of the seated posture control measure for therapeutic horseback riding/hippotherapy for children and youth with neuromotor disorders." *Physiotherapy - The Journal of Indian Association of Physiotherapists*, vol. 17, no. 1, Jan.-June 2023, p. 42.

BOOKS

Author of 4 Hippotherapy book

PRESENTATIONS

Keynote speaker of several conferences in the area of Hippotherapy worldwide

# Warming up the brain: a new start to a therapeutic riding lesson

#brain warm-up | #autonomous coordination | #body ownership

AUTHORS:

- Isabelle von Neumann-Cosel

ABSTRACT:

Anyone who sits on a horse, whether they are a competitive rider or not, faces the same basic challenge: to adapt their body, consciously and unconsciously, to the movements of the horse's back. It's one of the wonders of nature that these movements fit perfectly into the human body's system of movement.

If we look at the basic gaits of a horse - walk, trot, canter - the different demands on the compensatory movements of the rider's body have one thing in common: they belong to Autonomous Coordination, such as walking, standing, kneeling, running, swinging or jumping from one leg to the other... ect. This type of coordination doesn't need to be trained; it just needs to be developed. All babies and toddlers have similar, if not identical, stages of learning to move without the help of responsible adults. This self-fulfilling program has established human survival skills: safe stability in an upright position and the ability to move the body as effectively as possible.

The specific learning steps in Autonomous Coordination can be used for a highly effective warm-up of the brain. This program directly activates the cerebellum, which is responsible for coordination, rhythm and movement correction. The brain's strong danger filter will generally consider these familiar movements as safe. This warm-up program, consisting of 2 preparatory and 6 execution steps, can be easily adapted to different levels of movement ability. The exercises can be performed on the ground and/or on horseback.

The immediate benefit of the program will be a better connection between the brain and the body. It can help to reduce hyperarousal, anxiety and fear, and build a better sense of self in a number of ways, including body ownership. All of these effects can be very helpful in a Therapeutic Riding approach.

CV:

Isabelle von Neumann-Cosel is a journalist, author and riding instructor qualified by the German Equestrian Federation (FN). With over 20 published books – some of which have been translated into Hungarian – numerous lectures, seminars, courses and further training for trainers, she is a qualified specialist for the rider's seat and aids both at home and abroad. Her uncle Gottfried von Dietze founded the German Kuratorium für Therapeutisches Reiten. Through her family connection, her professional expertise and the intensive collaboration with her well-known cousin Susanne von Dietze – a worldwide well-known physiotherapist – she has gained practical experience in various areas of therapeutic riding – from training para-equestrian athletes to working as a judge. For more than 20 years she has been involved in the training program for future therapists in Hungary as an examiner for the relevant equestrian and hippological skills. This year she started a train-the-trainers program in Hungary. As a journalist, she is not only known for her writing on equestrian topics, but she is also an expert on contemporary ballet and stage dance.



# Validation trials of the English- and Spanish-language Equitedo Assessment App - standardized measurement in Equine Assisted Services (EAS)

#research methods | #quantitative assessment | #equine assisted interventions

## AUTHORS:

- Stolz, I. Research Institute of Movement and Neurosciences, German Sport University Cologne; Research Institute of Movement and Neurosciences, German Sport University Cologne
- Gabriel, L. Research Institute of Movement and Neurosciences, German Sport University Cologne
- Frerich, D. Equestrian Sport and Riding Therapy Center of the Gold-Kraemer-Foundation, Paralympic Training Center
- Rosiny, F. Research Institute of Movement and Neurosciences, German Sport University Cologne
- Anneken, V. Research Institute of Movement and Neurosciences, German Sport University Cologne; Equestrian Sport and Riding Therapy Center of the Gold-Kraemer-Foundation, Paralympic Training Center
- Dieste, G. AINISE International working Alliance, in favor of Healthy Equine Interactions
- Heimsath-Rhodes G. The Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy International AISBL (HETI)

## ABSTRACT

### BACKGROUND/AIMS:

Joint data collection in international Equine Assisted Services (EAS) and subdisciplines has been challenging in the past years in terms of terminology and clarity in intervention targets and intended intervention outcomes. In the scientific discourse, the need for both common and consistent language was identified in the past years, to realize joint international projects and generate a systematization of scientific data against the background of cultural diversities. The international EQUITEDO collaboration-project aims to contribute to a standardized documentation and valid scientific evaluation of EAS findings, by validating a German-language ICF-based assessment- tool for the measurement of EAS into the English and Spanish languages. The digital assessment tool is based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) of the World Health Organization (WHO) and was developed in an extensive scientific process (Horse: Evaluation, Documentation – Study) within two years and four months (01.09.2019-31.12.2021, N=265). EAS intervention periods can be automatically evaluated by the app, so that clients' improvements can be precisely recorded in regard to different submodules of therapy specifics. Also diagrams and charts of progress can be output automatically.

### METHODS:

The initial tool underwent development through a mixed-method approach, incorporating focus group methodology involving a total of 17 experts in the field of Equine-Assisted Services (EAS) to construct the assessment tool. Qualitative data was linked to the ICF classification system via the Cieza' Linking Rules by two independent assessors to create an ICF-based EAS assessment tool (Cieza et al., 2019). Explorative and confirmatory factor analyses were performed for the elaboration of the model construction and confirmation of the model structure (N=116, N=265). Furthermore, psychometric properties indicated validity and reliability.

### RESULTS:

In the international EQUITEDO collaboration-project, the assessment tool was subsequently translated to English and Spanish according to the TRAPD guidelines (Harkness, 2003) and relinked to the English and Spanish versions of the ICF. Each translation was conducted by two independent translators, who translated and retranslated each test-item into the target language and word by word back. Afterwards they linked the translated version to the Spanish or English version of the ICF. Following this, the phases of review, adjudication, and pretest were undertaken to achieve consensus and ensure practicality for Equine-Assisted Services (EAS) practice. During this process, translations underwent discussion and modification with experts from both English and Spanish-speaking Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT) fields to identify cultural variations and refine the tool for optimal alignment with the target language. The final versions were adapted for digital data collection and validation within EAS practice across English- and Spanish-speaking regions. Currently, the assessment tool is undergoing trials within EAS practice in both Spanish- and English-speaking countries. Subsequently, it will undergo examination and validation concerning its psychometric properties.

### CONCLUSION:

The research approach according to Harkness (2003) has proved to be a valid procedure to develop internationally compatible assessments. The long-term vision is to make data from different countries comparable, on the common international basis of the ICF by WHO. Ensuring the comparability of the design, implementation, and organization of the validation studies, a strict study protocol was followed, in order to determine EAS aims and effects objectively, reliably, and validly and subsequently relate test-items to international health-related domains of the WHO. The EQUITEDO assessment-tool is designed for the use in EAS practice as a digital web app, to depict the effects and document the progress of EAS and associated services in a prospective longitudinal manner in the common international language of the WHO.

# Pilot study: a short term equine-assisted learning program improves family relationship

#family relationship | #early intervention | #equine-assisted learning

## AUTHORS:

- Kezia Sullivan, MSc Social Cognition: Research and Applications
- Ann Hemingway, Professor of Public Health and Wellbeing Bournemouth University
- Petra Ingram, HorseWorld Trust

## ABSTRACT

### OBJECTIVE:

Young people with special educational needs and their families were particularly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, with many parents reporting feeling overwhelmed. This study reports on outcomes of an equine assisted learning program piloted in summer 2021, which aimed to improve the wellbeing of families by providing them with a positive group experience.

### DESIGN:

The design was an observational study of outcomes before and after the intervention. Data were collected by HorseWorld facilitators and by referrers from the Families in Focus early intervention team. The data were collected before the program, immediately after the program, and at a 2-month follow up to the program. Data were anonymised and sent to the independent researcher, who analysed the data in order to compare participant scores from before and after the program.

### RESULTS:

Analysis revealed a significant positive impact of the program on family relationships scores at a total level which was maintained at a 2-month follow up, as well as at item level for the majority of items in the short-term. There was also a positive change in SDQ scores for the young people, although this was non-significant.

### CONCLUSION:

The results of this pilot study indicate that a short-term family-focussed equine assisted learning intervention may be effective for improving family relationships, which are known to contribute to individual well-being. A larger-scale randomised controlled trial would be beneficial to allow the results of this study to be generalised further in future.

## CV:

Kezia Sullivan

### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

MSc Social Cognition (UCL),  
Bournemouth University

Kezia Sullivan is a researcher working in collaboration with Professor Ann Hemingway at the University of Bournemouth & several charities within Equine Assisted Services to develop an evidence base for understanding the efficacy of EAS.

Petra Ingram is an experienced charity sector leader; in 2009 she combined her personal passion for horses with her professional experience as an accountant, becoming CEO at Brooke, an international equine charity. In 2020 she became CEO at HorseWorld Trust which, in addition to the rescue of horses for over 70 years, has been running the Discovery programme since 2007, an EAS education provision registered with 4 local authorities and supporting around 300 young people each year. With a 5-year strategy in place, HorseWorld has an exciting future ahead collaborating with others to increase the positive impact on both horses and young people.

# Equine-assisted interventions to approach school after long term absence – the Stall Kungsgård Model

#problematic school absenteeism | #neuropsychiatric disorders | #relationships and trust

AUTHORS:

- Pia Tillberg

ABSTRACT:

At Stall Kungsgården students with long-term and extensive school absences can receive support to approach school and learnings settings again.

The model has been developed in close collaboration with Central Student Health's Team and their Special Unit for Long term Attendance Deficit in a smaller municipality near Stockholm, Sweden. It started in August 2021 as a project with support from the Special Education School Agency (Spsm). After a positive evaluation of the project in June 2023, the collaboration is part of the Children and Education Administration's regular interventions for students' health in elementary school.

The staff at Stall Kungsgården have many years of knowledge in working with children and young people with neuropsychiatric challenges in Equine Assisted Interventions. Staff members provide equine-related activities and an alternative learning environment where teachers, school psychologists and other supporting staff members can start to build a relationship with the students.

Project evaluation shows that all fourteen attending students felt that they experienced better mental health, felt safe in the stable environment and that they had approached school and teaching environment to a varying degree. Parents testified that the intervention had a crucial impact on their children's life and the whole family's situation. Specific examples mentioned by parents were disappearing social isolation as the stable provided security, and the fact that students became more motivated. Students established their own routines and a world of their own choice where they were allowed to grow, gain positive experiences, and dared to challenge themselves. The initiative helped students to look at themselves in a more positive way and see strengths and not just weaknesses.

In the oral presentation we intend to focus on the key factors that we have identified as vital for the good outcome.

CV:

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Licensed Physiotherapist, certified in EAI, Operations manager at Stall Kungsgården

*Pia Tillberg, licensed physiotherapist, OHI certified in EAI, rider since childhood, has worked with EAI since 1989 within neurological rehab, young persons with NPF and parariders.*



# Panel: Sport

PRESENTER'S NAME: **Jana TOMISKOVA**

## Para-vaulting

**#paravaulting | #sport | #disability**

### AUTHORS:

- Okan Miçooğulları, Nevşehir Hacı Bektaş Veli Üniversitesi, Türkiye
- Ines Pereira-Figueiredo, TKF-REsearch Group in Anthrozoology, Portugal
- Saša Tuksar, Krila terapijsko jahanje, Croatia

### ABSTRACT:

Throughout history, the horse has been a steadfast companion to humanity, serving as both a therapeutic aid in treating ailments and a beloved partner in sports. The relationship between the horse and person with a disability led to the emergence of para-equestrianism. Paravaulting is an equestrian sport discipline where gymnastic exercises are intertwined with acrobatics and dance. The most important thing for exercises is to blend in with the horse's movement and thus maintain balance during an elegant ride.

Paravaulting is a discipline uniquely suited for individuals with various disabilities – be it physical, intellectual, visual, or auditory – as well as those with behavioral challenges, offering a path to improved focus and social skills. It positively develops social thinking skills.

In the Czech Republic, the roots of Paravaulting trace back to 1994, where physiotherapists included gymnastic exercises in equine assisted therapy units for clients for whom had already achieved maximum results. Presently, this sport is experiencing significant growth and encompasses competitions in individual, pairs, and team formats. Athletes are categorized based on the extent and nature of their disabilities, with routines consistently performed at a walking pace. In lieu of a live horse, competitors have the option to utilize a simulator, resembling a real horse in size, for rehearsal purposes. Participation in competitions commences at the age of eight, with no upper age limit imposed on athletes.

The Czech Republic has embarked on a new endeavor: to elevate Paravaulting to an international platform. This endeavor involves harmonizing rules and refining training methodologies, with a focus on enhancing motor skills and sports technique. Currently, the Czech Republic is actively fostering international collaboration and sharing its three decades of expertise with neighboring equestrian nations, thereby promoting the sport's growth and development on a global scale.

### CV:

*Jana Tomiskova*

#### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*JK Fany Hostěnice, Czech Republic, Project no: 2022-3-CZ01-KA153-YOU-000102111*

#### WORKPLACE AND ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS

- 2016 - present - manager of vaulting and paravaulting discipline under the Czech Equestrian Federation.
- 2017 – present: Consultant of adapted physical activities – Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, project to support the integration of students with disabilities into physical education in primary schools, Faculty of Physical Culture of Palacký University Olomouc.
- 2013 – present: lecturer of Adapted Physical Education, at the Faculty of Sports Studies of Masaryk University in Brno.
- 2017–2018: Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic – Program to support applied medical research and development: Effect of intensive dance-movement intervention on cognitive functions and changes in brain plasticity of healthy seniors and patients with cognitive impairment
- 2013–2015: Scientific-pedagogical worker (Postdoc), Faculty of Physical Culture, Palacký University Olomouc, research in inclusive physical education



# Panel: Treatment Methods of Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy

## Leading my horse through a new path groups sessions for chemical dependency - proposal

#PAEDHA | #Equine-Assisted Therapy | #chemical dependency

### AUTHORS:

- Claudia da Costa Mota, Master
- Luciana Mota da Silva, Specialist

### ABSTRACT:

Equine-assisted therapy has become recommended for individuals facing challenges in their lives, such as mental health issues related to psychoactive substance use. Group sessions can provide new meaning to life.

The objective of this study is to devise a service model tailored for individuals grappling with chemical dependency, with the overarching goal of facilitating the construction of a renewed sense of life purpose.

The methodology used was from the Equine-Assisted Therapy Program in Skills Development, in the context of free-roaming horses, therapeutic guidance, and riding without autonomy. Thirteen adult males in the process of social reintegration participated. Eight meetings of three hours each were held. The activities took place in an equine-assisted services center in the countryside of São Paulo, Brazil. A comparative analysis between the experimental group and the control group regarding relapses, frequency, and maintenance of participants in the recovery process was conducted. The evaluation was constructed by the responsible staff and applied at the end of the group sessions, including verbal reports, recorded during the group dynamics.

The findings reveal that within the experimental group, 46.15% managed to sustain their progress, while 53.84% experienced relapses. Conversely, in the control group, 38.46% maintained their progress, with 61.53% encountering relapses. Furthermore, during the evaluation phase, all participants expressed satisfaction with the meeting methodology, citing it as instrumental in their personal development and self-awareness. In the qualitative analysis, the reports were: "It fostered my desire to live. I have chosen to live and this meeting showed me the reason." "I'm taking an enriching experience, maintaining my pre-drug identity and valuing my existence." "I improved my personal control before mastering a horse." "I recognized my irrational side in me, learning to understand and deal with it." Each participant has found a new purpose. These results can be replicated in other centers, benefiting similar groups and supporting new research and interventions.

### CV:

*Claudia da Costa Mota*

*Master in Education Sciences: Special Education from the Fernando Pessoa University, Porto, Portugal, in 2020. Taking horses to school as an inclusion strategy. Specialist in Neuropsychomotricity in 2023 from Centro Universitário OPET- UNIOPET in partnership with Rhema Educação. Specialist in Pedagogical Psychodrama from Universidade Padre Anchieta in 2001. Graduated in Speech Therapy in 1995, with a specialization in Third Sector Management at Faculdade Getúlio Vargas in 2008 and continued her studies in Management at Metanóia - Propósito nos Negócios, from 2014 to the present day. She has been a professor at the National Association of Equotherapy (ANDE Brasil) since 2007 and at the Escola de Equo&Terapias at Instituto Passo a Passo, where she teaches courses in the area of horses, therapy and management. Created the PAEDHA - Equine Therapeutic Care Program in the development of skills with a focus on learning disorders and difficulties and with a focus on Chemical Dependency.*

# Behavioural and psychophysiological interaction of horses and humans in meditative states in equine therapies

#synchronicity | #altered states of consciousness meditation | #interaction

## AUTHORS:

- Annamária Jánosi

## ABSTRACT:

Altered states of consciousness in equine therapy practice and their effects on horses during therapy is not a widely studied and researched area in the field of equine assisted therapies. Altered states of consciousness were previously considered a passive state of relaxation, but are now considered an active process. It is known that brain plasticity (based on observed EEG patterns) during altered states of consciousness is triggered by gamma oscillations, resulting in cognitive restructuring and learning. In parallel, studies of equine behaviour and EEG patterns have also linked increased gamma waves to increased attentional functions of the horse. The hypnosis-interaction approach, which also studies altered states of consciousness in humans, suggests that there is interactional synchronicity, a kind of psychophysiological attunement occurs in participants during this type of intervention in therapy. Physiological, behavioural, subjective experiential and relational interactions develop between therapist-patient participants. Its mechanisms require an understanding of the context, the mutual interaction between the participants, the interaction in a modified state of consciousness. An alignment, a rhythmic organisation, is established between the behaviour of persons. They also lay the foundations for intersubjectivity and subsequent processes of self-regulation.

In equine therapy practice, the horse becomes a participant in this synchronicity and this interaction, and the interaction can affect the horse's behavioural reactions and the patient's intersubjective experiences. The following discussion will address whether synchronicity and emotional transfer in the horse-human relationship may be present during altered states of consciousness in equine therapy practice and whether it is possible that it may influence the horses' responsiveness, behavioural reactions or the impact of the therapy on human participants. Afterwards physiological, behavioural and relational interactions can occur in all participants in therapy (horse, therapist, patient). Hypotheses about possible variables in equine behaviour and their beneficial effects on therapy participants will be discussed in the following topic.

## CV:

### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*Clinical psychologist, Equine-assisted therapist*

### WORK EXPERIENCE

*I started my professional career as a psychologist in 2015 and I have specialised in clinical psychology since the beginning. I worked for the first seven years in a Psychiatric Department and started to work in private practice, and completed the qualification of Equine Assisted Therapist. I currently work in private practice as an Equine Assisted Therapist. In my work, I often experience trauma related issues, clients come to me mainly with anxiety, relationship, and attachment problems, which in the first instance cause difficulty.*

### EDUCATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

*2015 - University of Debrecen, Psychologist  
2019 - University of Debrecen, Institute of Behavioral Sciences, Specialization in Adult Clinical PSYCHOLOGY  
2019- Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation  
2020- Association for Integrative Psychotherapy, Integrative Hypnotherapist  
2023 - Hungarian EMDR Institute, supervision stage  
2023- 2023 - PEATT, Psychodynamic Equine Assisted Trauma Therapy*

# Psychotherapy with horses as an adjunct to dialectical behavior therapy: a case study

#psychotherapy with horses | #case-study | #emotional instability

## AUTHORS:

- Norunn Kogstad MD, PhD- student Norwegian University of Science and Technology
- Charlotte Fiskum PHD, Psychologist Norwegian University of Science and Technology

## ABSTRACT

### OBJECTIVE:

Exploring the value of Equine-assisted therapy (EAT) is an complementary approach to psychotherapy that actively involves horses in the therapeutic process. There is ample clinical and anecdotal evidence regarding the value of horses as contributors to therapeutic interventions. The focus of equine-assisted therapy is not recreational riding but rather moment-to-moment opportunities to practice self-awareness, emotional availability, constructive relational skills, and self-regulation. Patients with emotionally unstable traits typically exhibit a consistently high level of symptoms, including frequent suicidal crises, self-harm, emotional instability, interpersonal issues, and intense internal pain. This patient group requires significant resources within the treatment system over time, with variable effectiveness and a high dropout rate from therapy. Dialectical Behaviour Therapy (DBT) is one of several research-based, standardized, manualized treatment options for this patient group. However, like other models, it faces challenges regarding outcomes, adherence/dropout, and duration of effect. Several studies have also expressed the need for more focus on patients' extensive social, relational, and functional challenges.

### DESIGN:

In this case study, we aim to shed light on topics important for a patient with emotionally unstable personality disorder who is offered psychotherapy with horses as an addition to standard treatment.

### RESULTS:

The patient has expressed, among other things: "It's so strange to feel in my body many of the things we talk about in DBT."

### CONCLUSION:

The article will elucidate how EAT can bring to life themes that are important in treatment through interaction with the horse and contribute to making DBT more feasible. The article will also highlight how equine-assisted therapy can complement existing offerings through examples from the case and experience from our ongoing treatment study.

## CV:

*Norunn Kogstad*

### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*MD, PhD- student Norwegian University of Science and Technology*

### EDUCATION

*1999-2000: 1-year Dog Trainer Education at Hagan Dog School  
Sept. 2000-April 2002: Equine Physiotherapy and Naturopathy Education in Gothenburg  
Sept 2002-2008: Medical Studies in Pécs, Hungary  
Spring 2013: Centered Riding Instructor Level 1  
2013: HEAL - Human-Equine Alliance for Learning and Psychotherapy, Certified Instructor  
Nov 2014: Cognitive Therapy Course  
Autumn 2015: Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Course  
Spring 2016: Group Therapy Course  
May 2016: Completed Basic Course I-II-III Psychiatry  
Autumn 2021: Completed all compulsory courses in Psychiatry specialization  
2018-2022: Completed 4 years at the Institute for Psychotherapy, Psychodynamic Psychotherapist  
January 2023: Approved Specialist in Psychiatry  
01.08.22- : PhD Position*

# The healing power of symbol of the horse

#symbol | #healing power | #abstraction

**AUTHORS:**

- Eszter Kövesi

**ABSTRACT:**

The horse is one of the most ancient and deeply layered symbols. In history, arts, legends, fairy tales or even religions, the mysterious figure of the horse appears everywhere. Sometimes as a positive, sometimes as a dark hero, but he is mostly surrounded by respect and admiration. The symbol of the horse is holistic, representing the extreme poles of certain phenomena, thus forming a round whole.

This is the point where the symbolic figure of the horse can be transformed into a therapeutic medium. The horse enters the therapy as a complex symbol. Many patients do not have much personal experience with horses, sometimes even they fear of them, yet, something attracts them to want to heal and change with the help of them.

Why? Because we are attracted to them, very deeply, with an elemental force. In the forthcoming discussion, I aim to present the symbolical figure of the horse from a historical and cultural perspective, then we will connect it with the healing power of the animal, having a closer look how its holistic presence can indirectly affect the psychological equine therapy and how therapists can harness the direct symbolism of the horse within therapeutic sessions for maximum impact.

**CV:**

*I started my psychological studies at the University of Debrecen, then due to a scholarship, I earned my BSc degree at Roehampton University in the United Kingdom, then finished my Master's degree back in Hungary. Later, I completed equine assisted therapy, couple and family therapy and relaxation therapy (Autogenic Training) courses, soon becoming a schema therapy consultant. In my therapeutic practice, to grant a broad and holistic support, I combine my different fields of expertise, with the focus depending on the actual problem that the client brings into the therapy. With my work, I aim to support the stabilization of the physical and mental immune system, the formation of healthy self-knowledge and self-esteem as well as the restoration of constructive human relationships.*

# "The horse as your shadow"

**AUTHORS:**

- Peter Holzmüller
- Willem Lieshout

**ABSTRACT:**

This lecture aims to simplify the concept of "projective identification" for understanding the communication between humans and horses using visual aids such as cartoons and movie clips. Projective identification is a phenomenon of the psychopathology of everyday life, particularly in regard to intimate relationships (like marital and family transactions and interactions among close friends). Moreover, it is also a useful concept for the understanding of and explanation of confusing patient-therapist interactions. The interaction between patient, therapist and horse is also an intimate relationship, that maybe confusing.

So, 'projective identification' seems to be a good tool for understanding the communication between patient and therapist and horse

By illustrating the concept of "projective identification" through the idea of "recruiting the horse as your shadow," wherein the term "identification" is omitted, the essential meaning of "projective identification" remains intact: the simultaneous disavowal and retention of something. This lecture will demonstrate how this fresh perspective enhances our understanding of the interaction between humans and horses.

This lecture will substantiate theoretical viewpoints with practical examples.

**CV:**

*Peter Holzmüller*

*Head of the staff unit for organizational development at the Bavarian Red Cross (Germany)  
Research associate in the Sociology of Diversity working group at the Faculty of Sport and Health Sciences at the Technical University of Munich  
Member of the Board of the Hungarian Therapeutic Riding Association  
Member of the German Kuratorium für Therapeutisches Reiten  
In the Hungarian Therapeutic Riding Association, he has been responsible for the development of hippotherapeutic education in a multiprofessional setting for 25 years. An essential aspect of this is the participant-oriented conception of the neurophysiological therapy units. Motto: "Let's make sensitive and touching music".*

*Drs. Willem H. M. van Lieshout*

**DEGREE, AFFILIATION:**

*Supervisor Clinical Psychology, Supervisor Psychoanalytical Psychotherapy, Supervisor Forensic Psychiatry, Supervisor Leadership Balint Group, Supervisory Committee Forensic Psychiatry, Holland*

*Since 2003 has been working for the International Children's Safety Service in Hungary as a teacher in Equitherapy (for psychologists and psychiatrists). Since 2003 yearly has been giving a lecture in 'psychotherapy with the help of horses' for the International Children's Safety Service in Hungary.*



# Effect of equine-assisted psychotherapy on anxiety perception in patients with substance use disorder

#equine-assisted psychotherapy | #substance use disorder | #anxiety

AUTHORS:

- Kristýna Machová associated professor Czech university of life sciences
- Štěpán Zítek PhD. student Czech university of life sciences
- Veronika Juríčková PhD. student Center for Advanced Studies of Brain and Consciousness, National Institute of Mental Health
- Kamila Petrová Horse trainer Center of Equine Assisted Therapy of Psychiatric Hospital Kosmonosy, Psychiatric Hospital Kosmonosy
- Barbora Sládková Psychologist Center of Equine Assisted Therapy of Psychiatric Hospital Kosmonosy, Psychiatric Hospital Kosmonosy
- Ivona Svobodová PhD. Czech university of Life sciences

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

Equine assisted psychotherapy (EAP) may provide a number of positive effects for clients dealing with substance use disorder, as well as for other patient groups, even in the area of anxiety perception. There are only 4 quantitative studies on EAP in adults with substance use disorder by the year 2023. Two of them assessed persistence in the treatment program, one measured the effect on anxiety in adolescents, and only one focused on the same target group and evaluated the overall health of these clients. The aim of this study was to determine the effect of a specific EAP program in the premises of a psychiatric hospital on anxiety in clients diagnosed with substance use disorder.

DESIGN:

A total of 68 respondents from the Kosmonosy psychiatric hospital who had been diagnosed with some form of substance use disorder participated in the study. A total of 32 respondents were part of the experimental group and 36 respondents were participating in the control group. Both groups underwent the same program, but the experimental group also received EAP. The EAP program lasted 4 weeks. 5 different psychometric measurement instruments were used to measure anxiety and stress.

RESULTS:

The results show that at the beginning of the study there was no difference between the groups, while at the end of the study period the difference between the groups was observed only in the STAI scale. However, when comparing each group separately both at the beginning and at the end, the experimental group differed in all the observed parameters, while the control group differed only in the STAI scale. In the experimental group, patients very often shifted within particular clinical stages of depression, stress or anxiety.

CONCLUSION:

There are only very few studies on this particular topic. However, the present study suggests that the progress of patients that received EAP has been proven after 4 weeks. Therefore, this topic needs to be further investigated.

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CV:

Kristýna Machová

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

doc. Ing. Kristýna Machová, associated professor - Czech University of Life Sciences

Department of Ethology and Companion Animal Science, Faculty of Agrobiolgy, Food and Natural Resources, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague  
Research interest- Animal assisted Interventions, Animal assisted therapy, Elderly, Physiology, Animal Welfare

EDUCATION

Ph.D.: 2012 – 2018, University: Faculty of Agrobiolgy, Food and Natural Resources, Czech University of Life Sciences Prague, Department of Ethology and Companion Animal Science  
Dissertation: Animal assisted therapy with the participation of the dog in the comprehensive rehabilitation of individuals in long-term health care

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Animal assisted interventions  
Dog assisted interventions  
Applied dog assisted interventions  
Practical course of Applied dog assisted interventions in central military hospital  
12 publications with impact factor on topic of animal- assisted therapy

# Transcending trauma

#trauma, resilience, post traumatic growth | #EAS, human horse bonding, somatic experiences | #Post traumatic Stress Disorder

AUTHORS:

- Anita Shkedi

ABSTRACT:

The Equine Assisted Services (EAS) initiative in South Korea and Israel has proven to be a highly effective intervention for individuals dealing with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). By utilizing a human-horse bonding approach, the programs addressed the immediate needs of trauma survivors, guiding them through the various stages of recovery and fostering resilience and post-traumatic growth.

A key achievement of the EAS initiative lies in its capacity to guide individuals away from the trauma vortex by offering positive post-event experiences. Central to this process is the human-horse bonding method, which plays a pivotal role in triggering somatic experiences and fostering body awareness. This is particularly significant as trauma often triggers the autonomic nervous system, leading to a fight, flight, or freeze response, causing stress on the body and deregulation of brain activity. The chosen methodology re-engaged executive functions, reworked cognitive processes, and shifted individuals from survival mode to a regulated state. Trust-building, structure, purpose, goals, and achievement were the primary focuses of the program. The human-horse bonding method re-established essential elements such as attachment communication, commitment, body awareness, coordination, and rhythm. These components contributed significantly to the overall success of the intervention by promoting a holistic approach to healing.

The positive results of the EAS initiative were evident in the life-changing effects reported by clients. The program facilitated the development of resilience, mental and emotional flexibility, and the ability to adapt to internal and external demands. Clients transitioned from the vortex of trauma to a window of tolerance, showcasing the effectiveness of EAS in promoting post-traumatic growth. The EAS initiative significantly improved the lives of individuals with PTSD through human-horse bonding, providing them with positive experiences.

CV:

Dr. Shkedi has a para-medical background working as a Registered Nurse and then Health Visitor in the UK. She holds a Doctorate in Education, specializing in curriculum building for EAA/T. She has authored two books: "Traumatic Brain Injury and Therapeutic Riding" (2012) and "Horses Heal PTSD: Walking New Paths" (2021). She has also written numerous articles to advance practitioners' knowledge in the field. She lectures and consults worldwide in the areas of equine-assisted activities and therapies, PTSD, and traumatic brain injuries. Dr. Shkedi provides clinics and workshops, as well as a British CPD certificate for practitioners seeking to expand their knowledge for clients with PTSD. In 2015, she received an Award of Excellence from Israel's prestigious Wingate Institute. She is in the International Jewish Sports Hall of Fame for her contribution to therapeutic horseback riding activities and therapies, PTSD, and traumatic brain injuries. She was a competitive horse rider.

# The horse as a reinforcement agent for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

**#equine-assisted interventions** | **#Autism Spectrum Disorder** | **#reinforcement**

## AUTHORS:

• Roberto Pérez Verdía de la Torre

## ABSTRACT:

Equine-assisted Services (EAS) have gained popularity in therapeutic settings, especially for addressing the needs of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Despite anecdotal support, the existing literature lacks consistency in methodology. This study aims to empirically clarify concepts related to the efficacy of EAS in ASD interventions.

## OBJECTIVE:

The objective of this study is to assess the reinforcing function of therapy horses through preference and reinforcement assessments, specifically focusing on their impact on the response rate of children with ASD within equine-assisted therapy.

## DESIGN:

Five children diagnosed with ASD, aged between 5 and 10 years, with limited verbal development, prior experience with horses, and independent riding skills, participated in this study. The study employed a multi-session design, including parent interviews, preference assessments, reinforcement training, and reinforcement testing.

## RESULTS:

The results revealed a hierarchy of preferences for each participant, determined by combining structured interviews with parents and preference assessments. Preliminary results indicated promising outcomes regarding the reinforcing efficacy of therapy horses for children with ASD, with further analyses underway to evaluate response rates and the hierarchy of preferences obtained.

## CONCLUSION:

This study presents an approach to exploring the potential role of horses as reinforcers in animal-assisted interventions. Initial findings suggest that horses may serve as effective reinforcers for maintaining or shaping desired behaviors in children with ASD. Additionally, parental reports of positive changes in children's behavior during the study raise questions regarding the contingent versus non-contingent participation of horses, warranting further investigation.

## CV:

### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*Licenciatura en psicología, Maestría en educación y docencia. Centro de Aprendizaje y Rehabilitación Asistida con Equinos A.C.*

*Experienced psychologist specializing in equestrian therapies, with over 15 years of dedicated service in the fields of disability rehabilitation and addiction treatment. Proficient in comprehensive patient assessment, personalized treatment planning, and ongoing familial support. Demonstrated ability in pioneering and directing social welfare initiatives, fostering collaborative partnerships with both public and private sector entities. Orchestrated inclusive events during the 2011 Parapanamerican Games and provided specialized training for athletes with disabilities. Spearheaded addiction rehabilitation efforts, integrating horse-assisted group therapy into treatment modalities for seven years. Conducted workshops to train physiotherapists, occupational therapists, and fellow psychologists in equestrian therapy methodologies.*

### EDUCATION

*Maestría en Educación y Docencia, Universidad Guadalajara Lamar, 2023  
Licenciatura en Psicología, Universidad Guadalajara Lamar, 2011*





# Poster Presentation Abstracts

**Topic: Business**



# Hope in entrepreneurship: a journey through equine-assisted services

#equine-assisted learning | #entrepreneurship | #business

## AUTHORS:

• Carlos Ganzabal Cuenca

## ABSTRACT:

This abstract provides an overview of a seminar presentation centered on entrepreneurship, specifically highlighting the distinctive challenges and opportunities inherent in the field of equine-assisted services (EAS).

The presentation begins with an introduction to the concept of HOPE (Honesty, Opportunities, Purpose, Enjoyment), framing the discussion around these principles. Emphasizing the importance of honesty in providing clear and just services, seizing opportunities in the equestrian world, defining one's purpose as an entrepreneur, and finding enjoyment in the process.

Sharing his personal story, detailing his late entry into the equestrian world and his evolution from a traditional riding spectator to an active participant in show jumping, shifting into an equestrian professional in EAS. The author reflects on the challenges of entrepreneurship in the horse industry, emphasizing the need for constant self-reflection, emotional awareness, and seizing opportunities for growth. The presenter delves into the competencies required for entrepreneurship, focusing on resilience, humility, and authenticity. Drawing parallels between the resilience needed in facing adversity and the continuous learning process. The abstract further explores the process of change, presenting a model called "Dragon Empredan" to illustrate how entrepreneurs must navigate various phases, from shock to integration. Carlos highlights the importance of embracing change with curiosity, joy, and a sense of security to foster personal and professional growth.

In conclusion, Carlos encourages aspiring entrepreneurs to embrace change, be conscious of differences, and prioritize hospitality in service development. The author emphasizes the trainable nature of these skills, assuring that the journey into entrepreneurship is transformative, leading individuals to higher levels of success and fulfilment.

## CV:

CEO iPoney Outdoors Spaces since 2010  
mSC Equine Assisted Therapies & Learning  
Accompanying human development in natural environments  
Physical education teacher  
As an entrepreneur in the equine industry, I have cultivated and embraced my authentic self while developing and learning to construct my own path. Following a seminar tailored for a University Master's course in Equine-Assisted Learning (EAL) focusing on entrepreneurship and Equine-Assisted Services (EAS), I've established a unique way of life in building equine businesses. I am eager to share these insights with colleagues worldwide at the HETI conference in Budapest 2024.



# Topic: Disabilities & Symptoms

## EQUINE Setting Sensory Ladders

#self-regulation | #equines | #self-awareness

### AUTHORS:

• Rhona Harkness

### ABSTRACT:

Sensory Ladders for self-regulation were first introduced by Smith in the UK in 2001. Sensory Ladders are now known worldwide as a tool to support with the recognition and labelling of how our bodies look and feel like when we experience different states of arousal. The author has developed activities using the foundation of Sensory Ladders to be suitable for use in the equine setting, including regulation charts that can be individualised for each person and a linking ladder for equines.

### CV:

CLASI Certificate in Ayres Sensory Integration  
Module 5 Evidenced Based Interventions including Fidelity to Intervention  
Module 4 Clinical Reasoning using Ayres Sensory Integration  
Equine Facilitated Therapy Course  
60 credit bearing points into the Masters in Advancing Practice  
Equine Facilitated Practitioner Diploma  
SCQF Level 8 Professional Diploma in Equine Facilitated Learning and Development  
Equine Psychology Diploma with Distinction  
The Movement Program® Provider  
M6 Evidence-based ASI Intervention Hands-on Practice and Review  
Certified The Listening Program® (TLP) Provider  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module 4: Advanced Treatment  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module 2/3: From Assessment to Practice  
Equine Reiki Master  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module: Theory and Intervention  
Degree Module – Understanding ADHD  
Sensory Integration Module 1 & 2  
Fortune Centre Diploma in EAT  
British Horse Society Stage 3 Coach in Complete Horsemanship  
BSc Hons OT

# Tomtag equine support toolkit

#visual support system | #communication | #equine environment

AUTHORS:

• Rhona Harkness

ABSTRACT:

The equine setting is an invaluable environment for both therapeutic and learning advancement. It is advantageous to provide an effective and structured communicative equine environment that enables all individuals to access the therapeutic and learning opportunities on offer. For some individuals,

additional provision may be required. Visual supports like the TomTag® Equine Support

Toolkit™ (TTEQST™) when used consistently can enhance communication and support engagement and participation. Children, young people and adults who may benefit from using TTEQST™ to support their equine educational, coaching or therapeutic sessions include those who: struggle to use speech or signing to express their needs, wants, and desires, require ongoing support to understand and process spoken language, would benefit from increased predictability in order to follow a routine, are accessing a new setting or environment, are meeting new or unfamiliar individuals or horses,

are experiencing new and unfamiliar sensory inputs e.g., new saddle, new props, and even different weather.

CV:

CLASI Certificate in Ayres Sensory Integration  
Module 5 Evidenced Based Interventions including Fidelity to Intervention  
Module 4 Clinical Reasoning using Ayres Sensory Integration  
Equine Facilitated Therapy Course  
60 credit bearing points into the Masters in Advancing Practice  
Equine Facilitated Practitioner Diploma  
SCQF Level 8 Professional Diploma in Equine Facilitated Learning and Development  
Equine Psychology Diploma with Distinction  
The Movement Program® Provider  
M6 Evidence-based ASI Intervention Hands-on Practice and Review  
Certified The Listening Program® (TLP) Provider  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module 4: Advanced Treatment  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module 2/3: From Assessment to Practice  
Equine Reiki Master  
Postgraduate Sensory Integration Module: Theory and Intervention  
Degree Module – Understanding ADHD  
Sensory Integration Module 1 & 2  
Fortune Centre Diploma in EAT  
British Horse Society Stage 3 Coach in Complete Horsemanship  
BSc Hons OT

# A study about the changing of EAA though experimental learning type of interpersonal interaction and confidence of children with disabilities

#Equine Assisted Education | #interpersonal interaction | #confidence

AUTHORS:

• Chieh Lu

ABSTRACT

OBSERVATION:

In the process of growing up, children with disabilities not only face congenital barriers but also often encounter many issues related to activities of daily living, interpersonal relationships, emotional control, and self-worth. Previous research has indicated that progressive independent practice and Situational Approach of teaching have had significant positive effects on the independence and social interactions of individuals with disabilities. Experiential learning has been shown to enhance participants' motivation for learning and bring about multi-faceted changes in cognition, emotion, and social skills. TCDA designed a three-day camp aimed at improving the social interaction abilities and self-confidence of children with disabilities through a progressive experiential curriculum.

METHOD:

A total of 9 students who participated continuously from 2020 to 2024 (participated in four or more sessions) were included in the study, with ages ranging from 8 to 17 years old. Changes were observed through questionnaires filled out by parents.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSION:

The three-day camp included activities such as environment orientation, teaching the knowledge of horses and how to interact with them, leading horses, grooming, and riding. Participants also practiced activities of daily living and cooperation skills. The progressive and experiential design of the program led to a 22% improvement in social interaction abilities among children, with some showing increased interest in interacting with others, showing care and praise towards others, and an increase in cooperative behaviours. Additionally, 44% of the children showed increased self-confidence, transitioning from being willing to attempt tasks only under guidance to gradually moving towards independence with minimal support. Their tolerating ability increased, negative emotions decreased, and they were willing to persist even in the face of failure.

CV:

Chairman of Taiwan Child Development Association.  
Graduated from National Dong Hwa University with a bachelor's degree in Clinical psychology.  
HETI certified Level 1 of Therapeutic Riding Instructor.



# Case report of equine-assisted speech therapy for a child who sustained a severe traumatic brain injury at 11 months of age

#speech therapy | #traumatic brain injury | #children

AUTHORS:

- Beth Macauley

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION:

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) in early childhood can have profound and lasting effects on cognitive and communication abilities. Speech therapy plays a crucial role in rehabilitating language skills following TBI, but traditional methods may not always yield optimal results. This case report discusses the effectiveness of equine-assisted speech therapy in improving receptive and expressive language skills in a 4-year-old child who sustained a severe TBI at 11 months of age.

METHODS:

A 4-year-old child with a history of severe TBI at age 11 months participated in equine-assisted speech therapy sessions for 8 months. Three therapy equines were used over the 8 months to facilitate progress. Structured activities on horseback focused on promoting sensory integration and facilitating receptive and expressive language skills. The rhythmic movement of the horse and the stimulating environment of the stable were utilized to engage the child and enhance communication abilities.

RESULTS:

After 8 months of equine-assisted speech therapy, the 5-year-old child demonstrated significant improvements in both receptive and expressive language skills. At the outset of therapy, the child used grunts to communicate and struggled to understand simple commands. However, following regular sessions incorporating the movement of the horse, the sensory-rich horse environment, and speech therapy techniques, the child is now using three-word phrases and following simple commands.

CONCLUSION:

This case report suggests that equine-assisted speech therapy can be an effective intervention for improving communication outcomes in children with TBI.

CV:

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Ph.D., CCC-SLP, HPCS, FNAP, ACUE.  
Grand Valley State University

Beth L. Macauley, PhD, CCC-SLP, HPCS, FNAP, ACUE

Associate Professor, Dept. of Communication Sciences and Disorders, Grand Valley State University, Grand Rapids, MI USA

BOOKS

Macauley, B.L. (2006). *Resources for Research and Education in Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapy*. Publisher Services: Chicago, IL.

BOOK CHAPTERS

Macauley, B.L. (2021). *Animal-Assisted Interventions in Speech-Language Pathology*. In Driscoll, C. (Ed.) *Animal-Assisted Interventions for Health and Human*

Macauley, B.L. (2022). *Animal-Assisted Therapy for Pediatric Patients*. In Atschuler, E., (Ed.) *Animal-Assisted Therapy Use by Condition*. Boston: Elsevier Publishers  
Dr. Macauley received her PhD in 1998 from the University of Florida specializing in neurogenic communication disorders. She has published 34 articles, given 130 conference presentations, facilitated 24 workshops, and presented at every HETI Congress beginning in 2003 in Budapest.

# Equine-Assisted Therapy (EAT) for tetraparesis: a holistic approach to physical recovery, emotional well-being and social reintegration - a case study

#spinal Cord Injury, Spinal Diseases | #equestrian injuries | #recovery after spinal cord injury

AUTHORS:

- Mirela Tripon, PhD, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
- Ionel Papuc, PhD, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Cluj-Napoca, Romania
- Florinela Catoi, PhD, University of Medicine and Pharmacy "Iuliu Hațieganu", Cluj-Napoca, Romania

ABSTRACT:

Equine-assisted therapy (EAT) is receiving increased interest and showing promising results as an alternative treatment for various physical and psychological conditions. Recent studies revealed that EAT improves neuromuscular function by using horse movement as a remedy instrument, so patients with tetraparesis can benefit from these therapeutic approaches. Although the benefits of EAT are evident, due to the lack of formal regulation in Romania and the recreational nature of these activities, many health professionals remain sceptical about their efficiency and the advantages of EAT are still subject to debate.

Furthermore, in the rehabilitation of tetraparesis few consider emotional recovery and social reintegration just as important as the physical one. This case study explores the efficiency of equine-assisted therapy in a comprehensive approach that considers physical recovery, emotional well-being and social reintegration of a person with tetraparesis after a spinal cord injury (SCI) describing the therapeutic goals, interventions, and outcomes observed over a period of four years with weekly EAT therapy/training sessions. Using the ASIA impairment scale according to International Standards for Neurological Classification for Spinal Cord Injury, and the psychological assessment following the World Health Organization Quality of Life Scale (WHOQLS) the case study reported a progression from a Grade A to a Grade D on the ASIA scale and from a very poor quality of life to a moderately to good score on the WHOQLS scale.

Therefore, our findings propose equine-assisted therapy as a source of significant physical benefits, but also a complex and holistic approach to psychological rehabilitation, emotional well-being, and social reintegration of patients with tetraparesis.

CV:

Dan Manolachescu

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Dr. / University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Dan Manolachescu has completed his studies in veterinary medicine at the University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine in Romania. After graduation, he obtained a diploma in Communication, and pursued a career as a professional horse rider and horse trainer around the globe. Following a riding accident that left him completely paralyzed he continued his scientific career obtaining a master's degree in Ethology and Human-Animal Interaction at the Faculty of Animal Sciences and Biotechnologies, Cluj Napoca. He is currently researching human-horse emotional contagion in a PhD program at the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine where he is also the chief administrative officer. This case study presents his rehabilitation through EAT as a comprehensive method for physical and emotional recovery. His recovery was featured in the RESETED documentary released this year by an independent producer.

# Pilot study: equine-assisted therapy in Rett Syndrome at Niguarda General Hospital

**#Rett Syndrome | #Equine-Assisted Therapy | #developmental disability**

**AUTHORS:**

- Annalisa Marnoni, Neurodevelopmental disorders therapist Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Michela Riceputi, Psy.D, Psychoterapist, Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Aurora Sotgiu, Psychiatric Rehabilitation therapist Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Alessia Caruso, Neurodevelopmental disorders therapist Non-profit organisation of social utility "Amici del Centro Vittorio Di Capua"
- Alessia Leidi MD, Specialized in Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Chiara Luzzoli Neurodevelopmental disorders therapist Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua
- Aglaia Vignoli, MD, Specialized in Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry Department of Health Sciences, University of Milan (Italy)
- Alice Passarini MD, Specialized in Child and Adolescent Neuropsychiatry Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:**

Our study seeks to delineate possible areas of interventions of Equine Assisted Therapy (EAT) in Rett syndrome (RTT: degenerative neurodevelopmental disorder resulting in severe intellectual and neuro-behavioural disability) and highlight the potential benefits of integrating EAT with other treatments.

**DESIGN:**

We recruited 4 girls at V. Di Capua Equestrian Rehabilitation Center, at the Niguarda General Hospital in Milan. Inclusion criteria: RTT diagnosed following the guidelines and mutation analysis of MECP2 gene; aged 3 to 6 years. Exclusion criteria: presence of contraindications to EAT. All the girls were in the post-regression phase of the disorder, with severe intellectual disability and unable to speak. Each patient was evaluated at the beginning of EAT, and after 40 sessions of EAT, using Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale (VABS), Gross Motor Function Measure (GMFM), and video-recording analysis.

**RESULTS:**

VABS was completed for 3 patients. From the analysis of the results, an improving trend is observed in the area of socialization for patient 1; and in the area of motor skills for both patients 2 and 4. In all other domains of VABS the scores remain fairly stable, showing no deterioration.

Video recording analysis showed an overall improvement for individualized therapeutic goals (functional hand use, postural stability, communication). GMFM-88 analysis shows a stable or improving overall score.

**CONCLUSION:**

We identified promising results on postural control, functional hand use and communication skills, although not clearly supported by significant changes in specific scales probably due to the severity of the clinical profile of RTT patients. Equine Assisted Therapy may represent an innovative rehabilitative intervention to maintain and possibly regain developmental skills in Rett patients. Future research will be necessary to better understand the role and the effectiveness of EAT in patients with RTT.

**CV:**

*Annalisa Marnoni*

**DEGREE, AFFILIATION:**

*Neurodevelopmental disorders therapist, Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) - Child Neuropsychiatry Department, Equestrian rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua*

*Graduated in 2015 at University of Milan (Italy) as Neurodevelopmental disorders therapist. Specialized in Animal assisted interventions since 2016. Working at Niguarda General Hospital, Milan (Italy) in the Child Neuropsychiatry Department at the Equestrian rehabilitation Centre Vittorio Di Capua since 2017. Role: Horse assisted therapies with patients in developmental age mostly with genetic syndromes, neurodevelopmental disorders and intellectual disabilities.*



# Topic: Education

## Svitani International Membership Forum

**#collaboration | #support | #education**

### AUTHORS:

- Vera Lantelme-Faisan Physiotherapist, specialist in Equine Assisted Physiotherapy, Svítání Chair, HETI EC Member

### ABSTRACT:

The aim of this presentation is to introduce Svítani International Mentorship Forum. Svítání's international mentorship forum offers a unique and valuable platform for individuals and organisations seeking to engage in cross-cultural learning and collaboration. The forum is made up of experts in the field of Equine Assisted Services from around the world. They come from backgrounds such as Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech & Language Pathology, Psychology, Research, Adaptive riding, and Equine Facilitated Learning.

Together, they offer support, education and mentorship to anyone working in the field of EAS in any aspect of their practice. They run courses, promote education and collaboration in the field of EAS. This presentation will introduce Svítani, its members, what it can offer professionals in EAS and promote collaboration internationally in this field.

### CV:

*Audrey Darby*

### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*BScOT, HETI member, Director of EquiSense: Integrated Equine Assisted Services*

*Audrey is an Occupational Therapist in Ireland with 29 years of experience. She has specialised in Paediatric Occupational Therapy, and has spent the past 14 years working in Equine Assisted Occupational Therapy (EAOT). She has worked with clients of all ages but has a particular interest in young children (0-4 years) with complex needs. Audrey has studied with the American Hippotherapy Association (AHA), and presented in conferences across the world on the topics related to Equine Assisted Services. As a member of Svítani – Education in Equine Assisted Services, Audrey is one of an international group of experts in the field of EAS who provide education and mentoring in the field. She is actively involved in the European Equine Assisted Therapy Network (EEATN) whose aim is to support standards of education, and work on collaborative EAS projects / research to deepen the knowledge base in this specialised field.*



# The scientific developement of EAT as complex interventions

#complex intervention | #EAT research | #scientific development of EAT

## AUTHORS:

- Prof Kitty Uys, PhD in occupational therapy Head of the occupational therapy department of the University of Pretoria
- Dr Tania Buy, PhD in occupational therapy Lecturer at the University of Pretoria

## ABSTRACT

### INTRODUCTION:

Specialist occupational therapists (OTs), physiotherapists (PTs) and speech and language pathologists (SLPs) incorporate the movement of a horse as therapy tool in the treatment of clients with neuro-motor or sensory difficulties. Yet, utilising the movement of a horse is a complex and abstract idea and that needed clarification.

### OBJECTIVE:

This presentation will explain why EAT can be seen as a complex intervention and aims to convert the abstract idea of incorporating a horse in therapy into understandable therapeutic applications.

### DESIGN:

Four pragmatic steps were followed, in a process called operationalisation. The steps were a literature review, a scoping review, defining of the hippotherapy concepts, and organising of the hippotherapy concepts under four treatment principles.

### RESULTS:

Step one, compared the components listed by Medical Research Council of the United Kingdom, to EAT components identified through a literature review and concluded that EAT can be classified as a complex intervention. Step two, a scoping review, identified 19 hippotherapy concepts that OTs, PTs and SLPs take into consideration when incorporating the movement of a horse into therapy. Step three: Defined each concept. Lastly these 19 hippotherapy concepts were organised under four treatment principles described by Vona du Toit. The four treatment principles are therapeutic relationships, presentation principles, structuring principles, and activity requirements.

### CONCLUSION:

Awareness of the complexity of EAT highlighted the need for post graduate training by OTs, PTs and SLPs in the use of EAT as complex intervention. The organisation of the concepts made EAT more create and the concepts more measurable for application in therapy.

## CV:

Ninette Du Plessis

### EDUCATION

- Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) at the University of Pretoria (UP), 2023.
- Master (MOcc Ther) by virtue of research at UP, 2016.
- Bachelor's in Occupational Therapy at UP,1995.

Membership of professional societies:

- Vice Chairperson of the Equine Assisted Therapy Association of South Africa.
- Registered at the Royal Collage of Occupational Therapists.
- Registered at the Health and Care Professions Council of the United Kingdom.
- Member of the Equine Facilitated Occupational Therapists of the United Kingdom.

### PUBLICATIONS

- Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2023: Hippotherapy concepts: A scoping review to inform transdisciplinary practice guidelines. <https://doi.org/10.1080/11038128.2023.2231562>
- British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 2019: Effect of hippotherapy on physiological cost index and walking speed of adolescents with diplegia. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308022619841318>

Languages: Fluent in Afrikaans and English

# Directives for EAS according to French's high health authority

#acknowledgment | # recommendations | #health authority

## AUTHORS:

- Nicolas EMOND, PsyM nstitut de Formation en Equithérapie

## ABSTRACT:

Equine Assisted Services are quoted by the French High Health Authority (HAS) for several precise indications. HAS guides represent national public recommendations for diagnosis, treatment, and best practices, curated by associations of scholars and professionals in the field. They constitute French standards addressed to public powers (government, parliament, local authorities) and health practitioners.

From 2013 to 2024, the HAS acknowledged:

- equithérapie for 15 pathologies or indications (such as ASD, Huntington syndrome, epilepsy, prevention of violences in psychiatric hospitals)
- equestrian sport for 11 pathologies (such as cardiovascular diseases, Down syndrome, multiple handicap)
- hippotherapy for 4 indications (such as cerebral palsy, cerebral injuries, spinal amyotrophy)
- donkey assisted therapy for 1 indication (10q26 deletion)

The poster will showcase comprehensive indications through a concise visual infographic, complemented by QR codes linking to the sources, a PDF synthesis, and a detailed article. Its objective is to disseminate the French context to attendees and foster discussions on national guidelines and regulations worldwide.

## CV:

### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Equithérapeute & PsyM at Institut de Formation en Equithérapie

CEO of the Institut de Formation en Equithérapie (IFEq, Paris, France)  
Associate member of the Société Française d'Equithérapie (SFE, Le Mans, France)  
Secretary General of the Syndicat Interprofessionnel des Praticiens en Médiation Équine (SIPME, Toulouse, France)  
Psychologist specialized in developemental disorders (Université Paris 5)  
Equithérapeute (FENTAC, EAGALA)

Topic: Horse Related

PRESENTER'S NAME: Amy DEARLOVE

An equal partnership? Considering welfare of equines in equine assisted service

#welfare | #Equine-Assisted Services | #equine

AUTHORS:

- Anna Haines BSc (Hons) MSc CAB - Equine Behaviour Consultant Equine Behaviourist for the Mare and Foal Sanctuary

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

Equine assisted services (EAS) is rapidly growing with recognised benefits for human wellbeing. The Mare and Foal Sanctuary is the largest equine welfare charity in Southwest England delivering EAS focusing on the psychological health of both equine and human participants. Meeting equines' needs is imperative to ensure optimal mental and physical welfare.

DESIGN:

Equines are initially assessed for suitability, evaluating physical and mental health, history of human interaction, training level and individual needs. Prospective equines are evaluated in simulated sessions with experienced handlers. Suitable equines progress into further training before participating in sessions. The weekly equine schedule includes a maximum of 3, 90-minute sessions, frequent breaks and at least 2 types of session. During sessions, equine behaviour is monitored and recorded on a behavioural observation sheet by an equine support person who is trained in equine ethology. Signs of stress, over-arousal, or pain that compromise equine welfare, or potential escalation of unsafe behaviours result in removal of the equine from the session. Equines displaying undesired behaviours are removed from the scheme. Equally, positive behavioural signs are also recorded. All equines are regularly reviewed for continued participation.

RESULTS:

Early indications suggest advantages to this approach with increased positive equine behaviours exhibited in sessions. This has improved equine longevity in EAS, contributed to enhanced equine welfare and increased participant's knowledge of equine welfare.

CONCLUSION:

Those offering EAS have a responsibility to optimise equine welfare, a lack of and ambiguity in guidance has led to a variety of management practices which may challenge equine welfare. To date, many EAS studies have focused on humans and not equines. Further research is much needed to bring about positive change to work towards a more equal partnership.

CV:

Amy Dearlove

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

FdSc Animal Behaviour and Psychology  
Cornwall (University of Plymouth)

Amy Dearlove – Equine Support Lead for the Mare and Foal Sanctuary  
Enthusiastic and attentive animal welfare aficionado with 10+ years of animal experience working with a variety of animals, specialising in equine behaviour and welfare within the Equine Assisted Services (EAS) sector. A thirst for chasing the most up to date equine research with recent experience in presenting at a Sociology Review Seminar regarding equine welfare principles in equine assisted services, which later was published in a digital booklet.

Equine Assisted Services Equine Support Lead (2020 to Present)

- Act as advocate for and support the welfare of equines throughout delivery of EAS and events.
- Support the development of the human-equine bond through EAS.
- Promote the safety and welfare of equines staff and participants during assessment, training, and delivery of EAS.
- Ensure modern, ethical, evidence-based training methods are practiced and embedded in our delivery and culture.

# Topic: Special Program / Projects

PRESENTER'S NAME: **Darinka KIRÁLY**

DEGREE, AFFILIATION: **MSc, PhD student**

## Case study: new ways for development of the physical skills in the early childhood in case of SMA II. disease

**#early childhood development** | **#TSMT (planned sensomotor therapy)** | **#equine assisted therapy**

### AUTHORS:

- Darinka Kiraly, Hyppotherapy, Special Needs Educator and Therapist (physical disabilities)  
Hungarian Riding for Disabled Federation
- Barbara Adorján, Physiotherapist, PhD predoctor, Human Kinesiology MSc

### ABSTRACT:

In this very special case study, we would like to deal with the opportunity of the combination between physiotherapy and hyppotherapy for developing the physical skills of a patient with SMA II disease. Because special situations require special solutions. In this instance, we will present a segment of the developmental journey of a 26-month-old patient who received a genetic diagnosis at 12 months of age. Physiotherapy commenced when the patient was 11 months old, with the primary goal being to enhance movement skills through comprehensive therapy. The choice fell on equine assisted therapy because of jarring of the vestibular system, to give the crawl a boost and to stabilize this.

The design of the therapy process started in the physiotherapy setting and the main criteria were to maintain the stability of the spine and to force the abduction in the hip, always with an eye on joint protection and muscle load. Furthermore, essential conditions included regular consultations with the treating physiotherapist, determining the optimal position on the horse's back, and selecting suitable equipment. The results of three months of equine-assisted therapy as supplementary treatment were evaluated during the last orthopaedic and neurological review at the conclusion of last year. The patient shows development in the physical skills, so the learning/practicing of walking can be started.

Thus, we can assert that with personalized planning, ongoing consultation with co-professionals, and regular medical monitoring, equine-assisted therapy proved to be effectively utilized by this patient with SMA II disease.

### CV:

*Darinka Király*

#### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*Special Needs Educator and Therapist (Physical Disabilities)*

*2012-Special Needs Educator and Therapist (Physical Disabilities) at the Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest.*

*2011-Art therapy with specialisation in visual arts, University of Pécs*

*2013-Hyppotherapy at the Hungarian Riding for Disabled Federation*

*2014-present working at Lebenshilfe Böblingen GgmbH*

*In the last few years several trainings, e.g.: Consultant in ASD, The SSCA method by Dr. Vass Zoltán 2022-present TSMT therapy - training*

*2018-HETI conference as a performer and got the chance to support the HRDF as lecturer.*

*2022-present own association for equine assisted therapy and art therapy*

*Barbara Adorján:*

*2009-Physiotherapist, University Pécs*

*2011-Pediatric rehabilitation physiotherapist*

*2012-MSc in Human Kinesiology*

*2014-present own praxis as Paediatric rehabilitation physiotherapist*

*2016-TSMT I. therapist, BHRG Foundation*

*2016-present PHD, University Pécs*



# Perceived effects of equine therapy on juveniles with neurological impairments

#equine assisted therapy | #quantitative methods | #children development

AUTHORS:

- Anna Reusz, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary
- Petra Parrag, Semmelweis University
- Gabriella Bozori, Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

The aim of the study is to examine whether parents perceived improvement or change in their children's physical and mental development after six months of equine assisted therapy at the Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation, as well as to explore the relationship between parent's and therapist's opinions.

DESIGN:

Parents of the children completed two similar questionnaires voluntarily, one at the beginning and the other at end of the therapy. The parent's test assessed the children's physical, social, psychological, learning, behavioural, cognitive, and communication abilities using 5-point Likert scales. Indices were created from variables within the same category. Therapists completed a questionnaire at the end of therapy, assessing the perceived level of improvement using similar criteria on 5-point Likert scales. Difference variables were created from the two parental questionnaires. Relationships were examined by Fisher's exact test and Spearman correlation.

RESULTS:

The sample consisted of 37 children aged 7-20 with neurological impairments, out of which all three questionnaires were completed in 15 cases. There is a significant relationship between the two parental questionnaires in three pairs: improvement in communication and relationship-building, development of social skills, and psychological development. Between parental and therapist questionnaires, there is a statistically significant positive moderate correlation between therapist evaluations of compliance and the difference variable of parental questionnaires. Additionally, statistically significant moderate correlations were identified in questions concerning extreme behaviour, both in the initial and subsequent surveys.

CONCLUSION:

Parents perceived positive changes in psychological development, communication and relationship-building, and social skills. Therapists and parents agreed on the improvement in compliance, but perception of extreme behaviours differed significantly.

CV:

Anna Reusz

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

Psychology BA student, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary

2021-Psychology BA student, Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary  
2023-Volunteer at Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation

# The impact of Equine Facilitated Services on the psychosocial health

#heart rate variability | #equine assisted mental | #health

AUTHORS:

- Michaela Mašková, Mgr. Department of Information and Communication, Technologies in Medicine, Faculty of Biomedical Engineering, Czech Technical, University in Prague, Czech Equine Facilitated Therapy Association
- Xenia Svobodová RNDr., CSc., MBA Czech Equine Facilitated Therapy Association
- Markéta Janatová MUDr., Ph.D. Department of Information and Communication Technologies in Medicine, Faculty of Biomedical, Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague, Czech Equine Facilitated Therapy Association

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

The scientific literature reports a positive impact of Equine Assisted Mental/Health on heart rate variability, which is one of the indicators of the autonomic nervous system state and adaptability to stress. Czech Equine Facilitated Therapy Association in cooperation with Czech Technical University in Prague is conducting research focused on development of solutions for monitoring of the physiological functions of horses and humans and on evaluation of the effect of Equine Assisted Services interventions. In this paper, we will demonstrate an example of the impact of Equine Assisted Mental/ Health on the heart rate variability of a senior female participant.

DESIGN:

A 70-year-old participant underwent a 60-minute Equine Assisted Mental/Health intervention 1-3 times a week (21 sessions per 3 months). Measurements were taken one day before and one day after the intervention. A total of 42 data points were evaluated. A commercially available mobile application system, MyAge, was utilized for simple data measurement in the home environment. The data were analyzed using a paired t-test.

RESULTS:

A value was obtained indicating a decrease in Functional Age by 6 months at the 99% level of significance. Values for changes in Stress and Regeneration were approximately 5% and statistically significant at the 95% level of significance.

CONCLUSION:

The results suggest an improvement in heart rate variability after the Equine Assisted Mental/Health intervention. We welcome cooperation with other experts and organizations in our future research, in which we will also monitor additional parameters during the intervention to determine the immediate effect of Equine Assisted Mental/ Health and mutual interaction between the horse and the human.

CV:

Xenia Svobodová

Xenia Svobodová has several years of counselling and teaching experience, psychotherapeutic training, and years of experience as an entrepreneur and manager in the field of diagnostic and therapeutic research. She graduated at Faculty of Natural Sciences, Charles University in Prague, completed a postgraduate program at Technical University in Bratislava, and studied management at Donau-Universität Krems. She has completed courses in Equine Assisted Services at the Czech Equine Facilitated Therapy Association. In collaboration with providers of Equine Assisted Services, she has prepared and successfully submitted several prestigious grant applications. She is involved in scientific research on the effect of Equine Assisted Services on the psycho-physiological state and quality of life. In the Czech Equine Facilitated Therapy Association she works as a lead methodologist and consultant for education, science and research.

# Topic: Treatment Methods of Equine-Assisted Psychotheraphy

## Integrating psychotherapy with horses into substance use disorder treatment in an institution: perspectives from ward-staff and patients

**#horse-assisted psychotherapy | #substance use disorder | #integration of horses into institutional treatment**

### AUTHORS:

- Marie Løvstad master student (second author), Department of Psychology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology
- Norunn Kogstad PhD-student, MD, specialist in psychiatry (last author), Department of Psychology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology
- Charlotte Fiskum Associate professor, Clinical psychologist (first author/presenter) Department of Psychology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

### ABSTRACT

#### OBJECTIVE:

To investigate the therapeutic benefits of horse-assisted psychotherapy (HAP) for patients with substance use disorders (SUD) and explore methods for integrating HAP into standard treatment within institutional settings.

#### DESIGN:

The study employed semi-structured interviews to investigate the viewpoints of six ward-staff and twelve patients enrolled in a SUD treatment facility. The study focused on the integration of HAP into the overall treatment regimen. HAP sessions were conducted weekly over 6 weeks at a farm outside the institution, facilitated by a mental health provider and a horse specialist. Thematic analysis was utilized to analyse the data.

#### RESULTS:

Ward-staff and patients highlighted the value of integrating HAP into the treatment continuum. Suggestions included ward-staff involvement in HAP, as well as the introduction of animals within the institution. By bringing themes that often arose in HAP, such as emotional regulation, social perception, boundaries, and relational dynamics, into therapeutic sessions outside HAP, therapists could augment the therapeutic impact and promote continuity of care. Moreover, participants emphasized the importance of curating group compositions thoughtfully to ensure better therapeutic outcomes, for instance by placing patients needing to work on similar issues together. Patients and staff expressed a desire for more extended group sessions, suggesting that a 6-week duration may not provide enough time for deep processing. Having the possibility to refer patients for more than one group successively was seen as positive.

#### CONCLUSION:

Overall, the results highlight potential strategies for integrating HAP into other aspects of institutional SUD-treatment like more staff involvement. By integrating topics and experiences from HAP further into existing treatment, therapists can better harness the therapeutic potential of human-animal interactions to facilitate healing in individuals recovering from SUDs.

### CV:

*Charlotte Fiskum*

#### DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

*associate professor, clinical psychologist,  
Institute of psychology, Norwegian  
University of Science and Technology*

*2007 Completed education as clinical  
psychologist*

*2007 - 2024 worked as a clinical  
psychologist in specialist services*

*2019 Completed specialization as clinical  
community psychologist*

*2019 Completed Phd in psychology,  
Department of psychology, Norwegian  
University of Science and Technology*

*2020 Completed specialization as child  
and adolescent psychologist*

*2020-2022 Postdoctoral researcher,  
Department of psychology, Norwegian  
University of Science and Technology*

*2022 Associate professor in clinical  
community psychology, Department of  
psychology, Norwegian University of  
Science and Technology*

# Horses in psychotherapeutic work with children and young people

#psychotherapy | #child and adolescent - psychiatry | #manualization

AUTHORS:

- Norunn Kogstad, MD, PhD- student Norwegian University of Science and Technology
- Sveinung Skårseth, MD Retired

ABSTRACT

OBJECTIVE:

Systematization of experiences with the use of horses in psychotherapeutic work done at the unit for mental health care for children and adolescents (PHBU) at Nordland Hospital Lofoten

DESIGN:

Nordland Hospital Lofoten District Psychiatric Center, in cooperation with Lofoten Horse and Health Center, gained accept in the early 2000s, by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to build a center for the use of horses in mental health care. The opportunity to combine psychotherapeutic knowledge and experience with a new method - the use of horses - gave impetus to this acceptance. With acceptance came financial backing, enabling the establishment of the center. The model developed was rooted in Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy (EAP), characterized by a "here and now" therapeutic approach. EAP falls within the realm of experiential therapies, focusing on the present moment. For over 15 years, Nordland Hospital Lofoten PHBU has employed EAP in treating patients in specialized mental health care, encompassing group, family, and individual therapy sessions for children, adolescents, and adults, particularly emphasizing services for children and young individuals over the past decade. From years of experience with these interventions, it has been observed that children and adolescents who have undergone prior therapies exhibit significant improvements in social competence. They develop a deeper understanding of their own challenges and incorporate imagery from therapy into their daily lives as reminders of important concepts.

RESULTS:

A manual based on 15 years of experience in specialist health care is published.

CONCLUSION:

In this project, we systematized and summarized clinical experiences from 15 years of horse-assisted interventions in a method book, so that important clinical knowledge and experience could be systematized and made available to clinicians and researchers nationally and internationally.

CV:

Norunn Kogstad

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

MD, PhD- student, Norwegian University of Science and Technology

EDUCATION

1999-2000: 1-year Dog Trainer Education at Hagan Dog School

Sept. 2000-April 2002: Equine Physiotherapy and Naturopathy Education in Gothenburg

Sept 2002-2008: Medical Studies in Pécs, Hungary

Spring 2013: Centered Riding Instructor Level 1

2013: HEAL - Human-Equine Alliance for Learning and Psychotherapy, Certified Instructor

Nov 2014: Cognitive Therapy Course

Autumn 2015: Psychodynamic

Psychotherapy Course

Spring 2016: Group Therapy Course

May 2016: Completed Basic Course I-II-III Psychiatry

Autumn 2021: Completed all compulsory courses in Psychiatry specialization

2018-2022: Completed 4 years at the Institute for Psychotherapy, Psychodynamic Psychotherapist

January 2023: Approved Specialist in Psychiatry

01.08.22- : PhD Position

# How does horses heal? An overview of the literature on the impacts of equine-assisted services on human's health and resilience

#human-horse bond | #coping with stress | #mental support

AUTHORS:

- Ana Rita Matias PhD Comprehensive Health Research Centre, Department of Sport and Health, School of Health and Human Development, University of Évora
- Graça Duarte Santos PhD Comprehensive Health Research Centre, Department of Sport and Health, School of Health and Human Development, University of Évora

ABSTRACT:

Since the beginning of the century, the World Health Organization (WHO) has considered stress as the health epidemic of the 21st century, acknowledging its devastating effects on our emotional and physical health. In the last few years, lifestyles, and rhythms, as well as various traumatic, sudden, and uncontrollable events (unexpected wars, COVID pandemic, natural disasters and economic crisis) escalated distress, and anxiety feelings, more visible in vulnerable populations. The need to develop programs for stress intervention has increased and there is some research on interventions with horses, but it is still too general and scattered.

Recognizing the importance that Equine Assisted services (EAS) might have as a support for the health and well-being of various populations, this study aimed to collect the latest published works focusing on using horses for mental support. We aimed to identify and describe key concepts and information about these interventions, highlighting populations, contexts, methodologies, and results, to deepen the contribution that EAS may offer as an approach to deal with stressful or difficult events. Preliminary results, reviewed herein, suggest that the implicit features of the horse (as a social, sensitive, fearful, and powerful animal) by eliciting emotions and attachment, might be the basis for their potential therapeutic role. From the review emerged the several theories that have been constructed about the working mechanisms in EAS, all recognizing their meaningful potential to enhance resilience and mental health, across various contexts. But it also identifies the several limitations in the existing literature.

The implications and recommendations for future research are discussed, demanding more objective and adequate methodologies, to fully understand EAS effectiveness in mental health, in different settings and age groups

CV:

Inês Barrancos Pereira de Figueiredo

DEGREE, AFFILIATION:

PhD, TheKidsFELLOWS Research Group in Anthrozoology

PhD in Neurosciences University of Salamanca, Spain, and a Master Degree in Zootechnical Engineering, from the University of Evora, Portugal, she made her fellowship and Graduation Thesis, at INRA, Tours, at Centre de Bien Être Animal et Ethologie , in France. Coordinator of some Research Projects in the field of Human-horse relationships", and Author of several Research Articles focusing on the effects of stress in emotional outcomes. Collaborator at the Institute of Neurosciences of Castilla y Leon, in Spain. Founder and President of the International organization THEKIDSFELLOWS Research Group in Anthrozoology, is working in some international Projects. Academic member of the International Society for Equitation Sciences (ISES) and Associate Editor of HETI, The Federation of Horses in Education and Therapy International.



# The impact of equine-assisted activities on placing youth groups – a case study of placement institutions in Hualien, Taiwan

#equine-assisted activities | #placing Youth Groups | #self-awareness

**AUTHORS:**

• YI-HSUAN WU

**ABSTRACT**

**OBJECTIVE:**

To examine the impact of equine-assisted programs on youths’ interpersonal relationships, self-esteem, and cognitive functioning.

**DESIGN:**

Participants: Eight youths residing in a small home within a placement institution in Hualien. Number of Sessions: Three sessions, each spanning 3 hours, comprising equine-assisted group activities. Program Content: Activities encompass interactions with horses both on the ground and while mounted (with guidance from an instructor). Ground activities entail education on horse care, grooming, leading horses, engaging in horse-related games, and playing the board game “Horsey Fairplay.”

Documentation and Evaluation: Following each session, the instructional leader provides qualitative descriptions of the youths’ progress, with observations documented by social workers from the institution.

**RESULTS:**

During the program, youth endeavored to (1) face their fears and nervousness, (2) practice cooperation with others, (3) practice clear communication through body language, and (4) practice caring for horses. After the program, it was found that youth experienced (1) increased stability, (2) changes in interpersonal interaction skills, (3) enhanced group cooperation, (4) self-awareness - discovering their habitual ways of expressing and facing challenges, and (5) the development of empathy. Furthermore, six months after the program, group members were still inquiring about continuing the sessions.

**CONCLUSION:**

This equine-assisted program has enriched various facets of the lives of youth, with observed enhancements in stability, interpersonal interaction, group cooperation, and self-awareness. However, attributing these changes solely to the equine-assisted program is challenging without a comprehensive understanding of other life factors. Future programs may benefit from incorporating self-assessment or self-reported changes by youth and controlling for other life aspects to enhance the effectiveness of research outcomes.

**CV:**

**DEGREE, AFFILIATION:**

master degree, Taiwan Child Development Association Equine Assisted Education Center

**EDUCATION**

Master's Degree in Counselling and Clinical Psychology, Department of Counselling and Clinical Psychology, National Dong Hwa University (Currently Enrolled)

**EXPERIENCE**

Group Facilitator, Interpersonal Relationship Psychological Therapy Group, Yuli Hospital (Internship)  
Intern, Psychological Rehabilitation Department, Taipei Cathay General Hospital  
Completed Fundamentals of the Eagala Model in 2019, a foundational course in Eagala Equine-Assisted Psychotherapy  
Instructor/Assistant Instructor, Winter Camps at Guang-Yin Yu-Yong Children's Home, Taiwan Child Development Association  
Assistant Instructor, Family Education and Support Parenting Group, Hualien  
Group Instructor, Psychological Trauma Recovery Service Program, Hope School, Hualien  
Instructor/Assistant Instructor, Animal-Assisted Education Program, Junior High School



# Round Table Abstracts

## Round Table Summary: Equine Assisted Psychotherapy

**Facilitators:** Marilyn Sokolof (PhD) and Renate Deimel

The Equine Assisted Psychotherapy roundtable is an informal meeting open to anyone interested in the practice of including equines in mental health praxes. It will be led by Mag. Renate Deimel and Marilyn Sokolof, members of HETI Executive Committee and the Psychotherapy Task Force. This is an opportunity to share information and questions from your programs as well as to discuss future projects for the HETI Task Force.

**The session will include:**

- individual introductions
- presentation of EAP survey results
- open discussion

## Round Table Summary: Terminology

**Facilitators:** Sanna-Mattila Rautiainen, Harriet Laurie

At 2018 Congress in Ireland the open forum stated a need for uniform terminology and issued a task for HETI executive committee. After that linguistic survey and analysis with international team was called to solve everyday problem with the use of terms.

A plethora of terms had been in use since the practice having a horse, as a part of rehabilitation team to benefit the client, had been growing all over the globe. This caused confusion for researchers, practitioners, stakeholders and clients. The same term was used for totally different kind of services and those who could not detect the differences could end in receiving services not meant for them. The same applies for research papers where activities and therapies have been mixed and the outcome then affected of it.

The terminology round table will give a short presentation of the state of the terminology at the moment and of several agreements made. After the presentation the moderator (Sanna Mattila-Rautiainen) will work with the participants to make common consensus of the terms used.

## Round Table Summary: Occupational Therapy in the Equine Environment - Exploring the Scope Facilitators:

**Ninette du Plessis** is a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Occupational Therapy. Her research focused on developing transdisciplinary hippotherapy (equine assisted therapy when the clients are mounted) practice guidelines. She is actively involved in the scientific development of EAT, presenting on courses and still providing EAT to clients when she is not working as an occupational therapist in the National Health Service in the UK.

**Audrey Darby** is an Occupational Therapist who has specialised in the treatment of children with complex needs, and has provided therapeutic input through the equine environment for the past 15 years. She has a private practice in Ireland, and is currently working on the development of EASI (Equine Assisted Services Ireland) - a national body responsible for the regulation, education and support of Equine Assisted Services in Ireland.

**Structure:**

- 10 minutes presentation on OT in the equine environment
- 30 minutes in group circles (15 minutes per topic)
- 20 minutes analysis and conclusion.

**Topics**

1. As Occupational Therapists, are additional courses needed before practicing in Equine Assisted Therapy?
2. The ideal treatment platform - the flexibility of the Equine environment for different client groups and goals.

# Round Table Summary: Social Licence to Operate

**Facilitators:** Harriet Laurie MBE

The Social License to Operate (SLO) is defined as the ongoing public acceptance of practice. This has become a hot topic in the equine field, particularly regarding Horse Sports but is equally important to discuss in Equine Assisted Services. This roundtable invites anyone interested in the topic to join the discussion, hear the results of the HETI Social License to Operate Survey and ask any questions you may have about this topic.

# Round Table Summary: Physiotherapy

**Facilitators:** Sanna Mattila-Rautiainen, Anne Rokka

Equine assisted physical therapy (EAPT) gives the therapist the opportunity to enhance the treatment for a patient. The horse adds specific values for physical therapy when compared to indoor physical therapy and treatment as usual.

In this round table session we wish to highlight the specific values for physical therapy treatment, possible to gain from the horse and its environment and yet seldom regarded as the main treatment goals.

We wish the participants to share their experiences from unexpected side effects in EAPT that made them discover new and valuable insights in the therapeutic values of adding a horse to physiotherapy treatment.

When we start a treatment, we have goals to set, but sometimes when we ask for an outcome, the measurements do not confirm a treatment effect as obvious as we ourselves and our patients see. Why does this difference occur? How do we know what to measure? And what if something other than the beforehand aspect chosen is the aspect that really changes the patients health status? Is it a side effect or is it THE effect from treatment?

One overlooked effect from mounted EAPT for many of our patients with severely motor deficits is that of enhanced physical activity level. While understanding of the importance of physical activity in everyday life and of the health effects over a lifetime for people in general, we rarely regard improved physical activity level for a person with severely limited ability to move herself as a prime motive for participating in EAPT, or at least I myself have not had this in mind. And for sure I do not know how to measure effects that would prove the treatment to be cost effective - but I am sure it would be for the individual.

During the pandemic Covid 19, many patients were immobilized in intensive care units. Patients with ME and those suffering from long standing Covid infections may be compared regarding their activity level, with those severely disabled children with different neurological diagnoses, who have been participating in EAPT because of their neurological issues. But what if the impact on these patients' physical activity is a vital part of the treatment effect? What do we really know of that? What are experiences from you, PTs around the world?

The horse transfer movements into the riders body. Apart from these movements, the body to body contact, the warmth and the emotional effects of thrill, joy and mastery is added during movements that, regarding the patient's physical condition, is more or less challenging the physical ability. Do we mention or notify these effects in systematic documentation? Do we use instruments to measure these effects from physical therapy?

**Three topics are on the table:**

1. Sharing unexpected effects or findings from your professional experience from EAPT that puzzles you or that have lead to new insights regarding how horses help persons
2. Discussing the physical activity level gained from riding in walk and which non traditional conditions/patient groups that could benefit from EAPT
3. Discussion on how we can trust the measurements we use to be relevant for the effects gained from EAPT Participants offers to choose the topic(s) most relevant and start a discussion, share insights and reflect on day to day professional activities regarding the above topics.

# Round Table Summary: Speech language pathology

**Facilitators:** Beth Macauley, PhD, CCC-SLP, HPCS, FNAP, ACUE - Speech Language Pathologist, Hip-  
potherapy Clinical Specialist, Researcher, Associate professor, USA

The SLP roundtable is a place for SLPs around the world to share clinical stories, clinical challenges, favourite patients, and business information and to create a group for future discussion.

# Round Table Summary: Ethics and Equine Welfare

**Facilitators:** Harriet Laurie, Alexandra Stergiou, Sanna-Mattila Rautiainen

The Ethics and Equine Welfare roundtable is a meeting open to anyone interested in ethical best practice in EAS, including equine welfare. It will be led by Sanna Mattila Rautiainen, Alexandra Stergiou and Harriet Laurie, members of the Ethics Task Force. This is an opportunity to share information and questions from your programs as well as to discuss future projects for the HETI Ethical Task Force.

The session will include:

- Ethics and Equine Welfare introduction
- open discussions

# Round Table Summary: Equestrian Sport

The Sports roundtable is a meeting open to anyone interested in Equestrian Sports. Alexandra Stergiou, a member of HETI Executive Committee, will lead it. This is an opportunity to share information and questions from your programs and discuss future projects for the HETI Task Force.

The session will include:

- individual introductions
- individual presentation
- open discussions





# Workshop Abstracts

PRESENTER'S NAME: **Isabelle von NEUMANN-COSEL**

## Warming up the brain - before a therapeutic riding lesson

### AUTHORS:

- Isabelle von Neumann-Cosel

### ABSTRACT:

This practical demonstration relates to the concept presented in my lecture. However, the practical steps presented here serve to prepare the brain in the best possible way for the compensatory movements that are necessary to balance the horse's movement. This warm-up activates the regions of the brain involved and is based on the concept of autonomic coordination, i.e. the spectrum of movement that is developed autonomously by babies and small children. Therapeutic riding covers a wide range of possible clients, objectives and forms of practical implementation. The model presented here allows for a wide range of individual adaptation on the basis of basic coordinative patterns. The exercises can be used both on the ground to prepare for riding and on horseback to improve body awareness, balance and safety.

### CV:

*Isabelle von Neumann-Cosel is a journalist, author and riding instructor qualified by the German Equestrian Federation (FN). With over 20 published books - some of which have been translated into Hungarian - numerous lectures, seminars, courses and further training for trainers, she is a qualified specialist for the rider's seat and aids both at home and abroad. Her uncle Gottfried von Dietze founded the German Kuratorium für Therapeutisches Reiten. Through her family connection, her professional expertise and the intensive collaboration with her well-known cousin Susanne von Dietze - a worldwide well-known physiotherapist - she has gained practical experience in various areas of therapeutic riding - from training para-equestrian athletes to working as a judge. For more than 20 years she has been involved in the training program for future therapists in Hungary as an examiner for the relevant equestrian and hippological skills. This year she started a train-the-trainers program in Hungary. As a journalist, she is not only known for her writing on equestrian topics, but she is also an expert on contemporary ballet and stage dance.*

# EQUITEDO® – ICF-based Measuring of Equine Assisted Services

**AUTHORS:**

- Isabel Stolz
- Franca Rosiny

**ABSTRACT:**

In this practical workshop, the EQUITEDO Evaluation Tool will be presented and used in practice.

EQUITEDO® is an app for measuring the effects of equine assisted services with a systematic report function. It can be used to display therapy progress with automated evaluations, graphs and diagrams. In addition, appointments can be entered and invoices created.

EQUITEDO® was developed over a period of two years and four months on the basis of a high-quality scientific procedure and tested according to psychometric quality criteria. It is based on the International Classification of Functioning, Health and Disability (ICF) of the World Health Organization (WHO). EQUITEDO® enables evidence-based mapping of the effectiveness of different Equine Assisted Services through a modular structure comprising various specializations. A case example will be presented in the workshop and participants can give EQUITEDO® a try on their smartphones, plus there is also a six-week free trial period for everyone. In addition, interested professionals and institutions can take part in our international validation study if they wish and become involved in our EQUITEDO® Working Group for the targeted ongoing refinement of the app.

**CV:**

- Dr. Isabel Stolz (Dr. phil Sports Sciences):*
- since 2021 Research Associate and Lecturer at German Sports University Cologne (CSU)
  - Founder of EQUITEDO®-App in cooperation with Research Associate at Research Institute for Inclusion through Physical Activity and Sports – affiliated Institute of German Sports University Cologne (GSU)
  - since 2017 Lecturer in the International Sports Science Masters Program University Foro Italico, Rome
  - since 2013 Research Associate at Research Institute for Inclusion through Physical Activity and Sports – affiliated Institute of German Sports University Cologne (GSU)

- FRANCA ROSINY: M.A. Rehabilitation, Prevention and Health Management*
- since 2024 research assistant at Research Institute for Inclusion through Physical Activity and Sports
  - 2020 – 2023 Research assistant at the Institute of Psychology; Section Health & Social Psychology
  - 10/2017 – 09/2021 B.A. „Sport and Health in Prevention and Rehabilitation“ at the German Sport University Cologne

# INDEX

NAME	OLDALSZÁMOK		
BÁLINT Eszter	43		
BAXLEY Bethany	44		
BOZORI Gabriella	21		
BROWN Octavia	16		
CARUSO Alessia	22		
COSTA Helena	57		
COSTA MOTA Claudia	58	71	
DARBY Audry	93	109	
DEARLOVE Amy	97		
DEIMEL Reante	45	109	
DÚLL Andrea	14		
EMOND Nicolas	95		
FERENTZ Anna-Kata	59		
FISKUM Charlotte	103		
FUCHIKAMI Maho	46		
GANZABAL CUENA Carlos	47	82	
GODAL Tore	34		
GOLJEVŠČEK Metka Demšar	24	35	
GREEN Graeme	36		
GUDMUNDSSON Marie	60		
GUTIERREZ Jannette Wei Ting Wang	25		
HARKNESS Rhona	37	85	86
HEIMSATH-RHODES Gisela	38		
HELMER Henny	26		
HEMINGWAY Ann	48		
HERNANDEZ Carlos	39		
HOLZMÜLLER PETER	15	75	
HORNACEK Karol	27		
IKAN Laurence	28		
JÁMBOR Péter	49		
JÁNOSI Annamária	72		
KIRÁLY Darinka	99		
KOGSTAD Norunn	73	104	
KÖVESI Eszter	74		

NAME	OLDALSZÁMOK			
LAURIE Harriet	109	110	111	
LIESHOUT Willem	75			
LIGA Maria	29			
LIMA Syllas Jadah Oliviera	54			
LU Chieh	87			
MACAULEY Beth	30	61	88	111
MACHOVÁ Kristýna	76			
MANOLACHESCU Dan	89			
MAŘÍKOVÁ Kateřina	31			
MARNON Annalisa	90			
MEDEIROS Mylena	62			
MOTA DA SILVA Luciana	19			
NADEN Kristina	50			
NEUMANN-COSEL Isabelle von	63	113		
NEVEUX Claire	51			
PARK Sok-kyung Sookie	52			
PASQUINELLI Anna	40			
PEREIRA DE FIGUEIREDO Inês Barrancos	105			
PLESSIS Ninette	23	33	94	109
RAUTIAINEN Sanna-Mattila	109	110		
REUSZ Anna	100			
ROKKA Anne Rokka	110			
SHKEDI Anita	77			
Sokolof Marilyn	109			
STERGIOU Alexandra	53	111		
STOLZ Isabel	64	114		
SULLIVAN Kezia	65			
SVOBODOVÁ Xenia	101			
TILLBERG Pia	66			
TOMISKOVA Jana	69			
TURBEVILLE Pebbles	16			
VERDÍA DE LA TORRE Roberto Pérez	78			
WONG Linda	55			
WU YI-HSUAN	106			



# INTRODUCING THE HUNGARIAN RIDING FOR THE DISABLED FEDERATION

The Hungarian Riding for the Disabled Federation was established in 1997. The aim of our Federation is to protect the interests of institutions and individuals involved in equine assisted therapy as a complex preventive, habilitation and rehabilitation solution for health and educational purposes, and to unite such entities.

Our other objectives are:

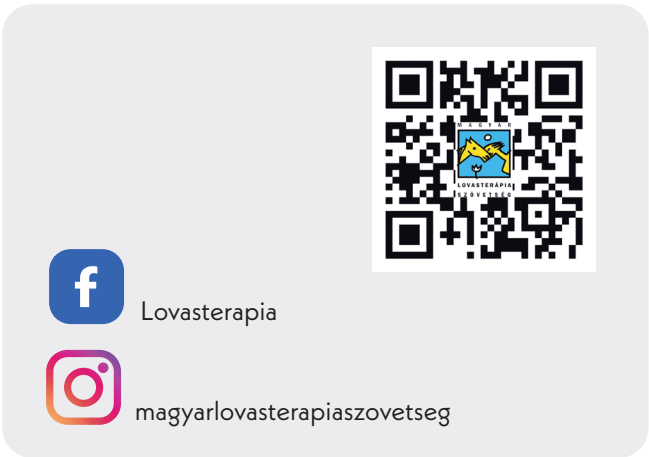
- training and special training of professionals in the field of equine assisted therapy and services
- development of norms, rules and international standards
- development of international relations
- organising courses and conferences, editing and publishing training materials and publications
- improving the working conditions of people and institutions working in the industry, and boosting the recognition of the profession
- establishment and support of (an equine assisted therapy) training and demonstration centre
- through the work of the Federation, promotion of all branches of equestrian sport
- organisation of competitions for riders with disabilities and the creation of conditions for paralympic competition

## CONTACT US

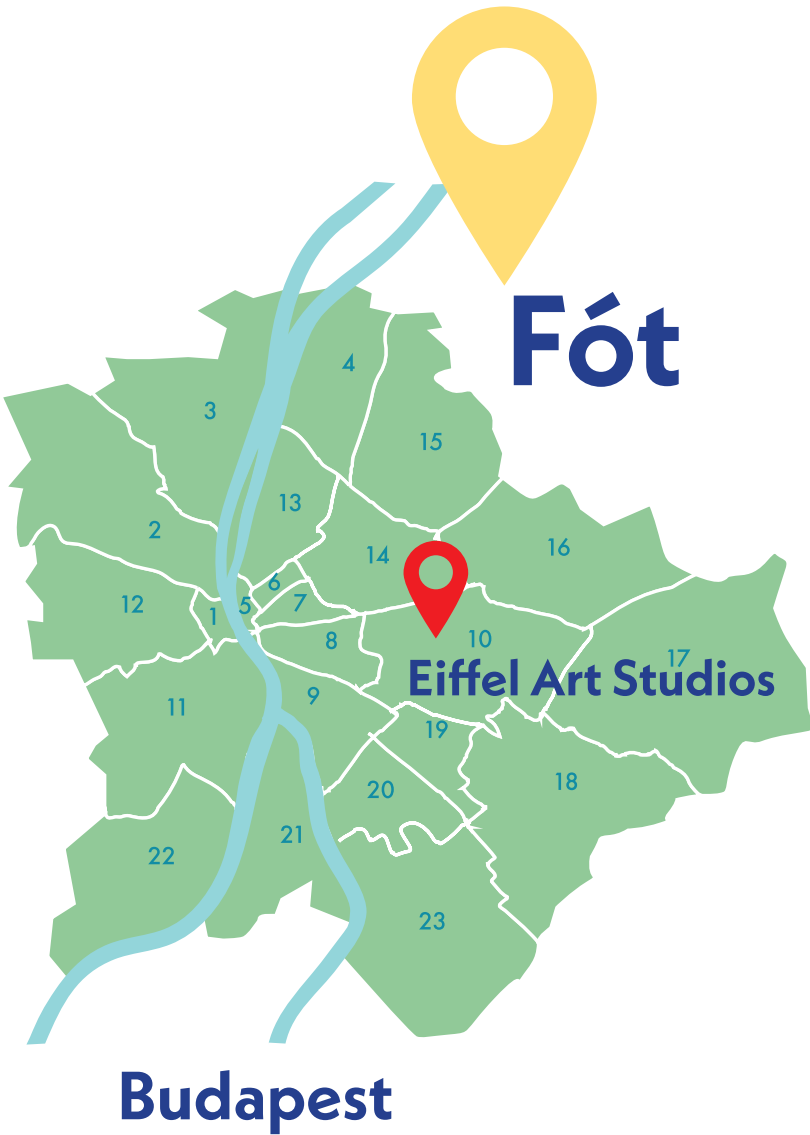
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