

Equine Therapy: A Few Good Studies

<http://blogs.psychcentral.com/equine-therapy/2012/02/equine-therapy-a-few-good-studies/>

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Equine therapy studies are hard to find. And perhaps even more challenging to find are studies that utilize sound research protocol.

This leaves many well intentioned mental health practitioners to question the validity of equine therapy, and at the same time, many potential recipients of equine therapy wishing that their insurance company would cover equine work so that they may partake in it.

That being said, lets take a look at a few good equine therapy studies:

http://www.animalsandsociety.org/assets/library/736_s3.pdf

Looking at the outcomes of 31 participants in an equine-assisted experiential therapy program, this article describes the intervention and the psychological measures that were completed prior to treatment, immediately following treatment and 6 months after treatment.

After discussing the results of the study, the article also delves into the clinical implications and limitations of the study, and makes suggestions for further research.

www.pugetsound.edu/files/resources/2804_Gamache2004.rtf

This article asks the question, "For elementary school aged children with disabilities, does participation in equine-assisted therapy improve social skills and attention?" and then compares seven separate studies of children, ages 6-12 years, with the presence of at least one disability (physical, developmental, psychosocial, or behavioral).

The studies are compared based upon level of evidence, ranked I-V, the sample size, the intervention, and the summary of results (being qualitative or quantitative).

http://www.kaytrotter.com/products/KST_JCMH_article.pdf

Comparing equine assisted counseling to classroom based counseling, 164 students identified as high risk for academic or social failure participated in 12 weekly counseling sessions. Pre and post-treatment scores were then compared in 17 different behavior areas using within group and between group comparisons.

While only three studies are mentioned here, there are numerous accounts of anecdotal evidence of the efficacy of work with horses. Additionally, compared to the lifespan of traditional psychotherapy, it is safe to say that equine facilitated psychotherapy is in its infancy. However, man's love of horses is clearly not.

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Childhood Obesity, are now available on Amazon Kindle. Further information on Claire, or her upcoming books, can be found at

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