Language Delays and the Influence of Therapeutic Riding: A Case Study of an Autistic Child

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LANGUAGE DELAYS AND THE INFLUENCE OF THERAPEUTIC RIDING: A CASE STUDY OF AN AUTISTIC CHILD

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LANGUAGE DELAYS AND THE INFLUENCE OF THERAPEUTIC RIDING: A CASE STUDY OF AN AUTISTIC CHILD

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THESIS

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Abstract

Autism is a Pervasive Development Disorder characterized by stereotype behavior and trouble with communication. One focus of working with this population is increasing the verbal and communication ability of the nonverbal individuals. The present study focused on the effects a six-week therapeutic horseback riding program would have on the stereotypical behaviors present in a six-year-old autistic child, and if this program would help the his verbalization and communication ability. The Psychoeducation Profile, 3rd Edition was used to measure possible changes the intervention might have influenced. The result of the study indicated there was a decrease in the child’s physical stereotype behavior during the riding program, but once the program stopped, this behavior started increasing. There did not appear to be an effect on the child’s verbal ability. In the future, this study needs to be expanded and have a larger group of participants.