

Makalah Akademia

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THERAPEUTIC HORSEBACK RIDING ACTIVITY FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT

By

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Additionally, Frank Anderson (2013), a journalist from a Pegasus Park, USA, equestrian centre stated that while horseback riding may be used as a therapeutic technique for children with disabilities, it also has the same positive effects on healthy youngsters.

Overview Of Therapeutic Horseback Riding In Malaysia

In purpose to provide equine-assisted activities and treatment plans, especially for children and people who have any physical restrictions, a lack of cognitive abilities, or psychiatric disorders, the Horse-Riding Program was founded in eastern North Carolina in 1991 (Anderson S.K., 2014). A participant in horseback riding therapy works with a trained riding teacher under the supervision of someone who has little to no experience riding horses. The rhythmic action of horseback riding, which resembles a human stride, is predicted to have positive effects on muscle strength, flexibility, and body balance (Stergiou A., 2017). However, in Malaysia, horseback riding is not a popular leisure activity that was offered by travel agencies or horse clubs. Horseback riding is always seen as an expensive

program focused on professional groups only. As time passed, there are few people who realize the importance of horseback riding for special needs children who initiated the horse riding activity as a leisure activity in Malaysia.

What Is Therapeutic Horseback Riding?

Therapeutic horseback riding activity is a horseback riding session that emphasizes the development of physical, psychological and social functions among riders (Patterson, 2015). Horseback riding activity may be one of the recreational activities among Malaysian in public parks or open spaces such as animal gardens. Although therapeutic horseback riding was developed with an instructor and side walkers on either side of the horse, it may not be well-liked in Malaysian culture. It is also a cutting-edge therapeutic approach that has been validated as a form of therapy programme for kids with certain developmental difficulties.

During the therapy program, an instructor will have the responsibility to teach the riders to properly ride a horse and eventually improve the rider's cognitive skills, emotional level and physical well-being.



Figure 1. Example of the therapeutic horseback riding session

Source: Google Image Search

Green Apple Hippotherapy, located in Seri Kembangan, Selangor that was established in 2014, actively conducts therapy programs especially for children with physical, mental, social and emotional disabilities. Additionally, Sekolah Kebangsaan Alor Lintah, Terengganu is one of the pioneers in implementing therapeutic horseback riding activities, especially for special needs students. The school principal, Mr. Azmi Yaakob (2016) once highlighted the implementation of equestrian therapy is for special education students in the Classroom Special Education Program for the Integration of Disabilities with Learning (PPKI) and he added that the program has positive impacts on the development of physical state and improving the psychomotor movement of the students involved.

Benefits Of Therapeutic Horseback Riding

Nur Aqilah Muhammad Som, an undergraduate student at Universiti Teknologi MARA in Shah Alam, conducted a study to determine how parents who are enrolling their children in the therapeutic horseback riding programme offered by MAEPS Rubinga Equine Center (MREC) in Malaysia Agro Exposition Park Serdang (MAEPS), Selangor, perceive the advantages of the programme.

A total of 116 respondents have participated in this study; 31% of respondents are parents working in the private sector and 22.4% of respondents are in the government services. This figure might be interpreted as that type of occupation among parent do influence the decision of parent in enrolling their child in the therapeutic horseback riding session. Additionally, respondents were asked about sources of information on the benefits of the session and the data were recorded in the figure 2. On the other hand, respondents were asked to rank their agreement level according to the Likert Scale provided on the benefits of the therapeutic horseback riding session towards physical development, psychological behaviors, social communication effectiveness and cognitive learning among their children. Results from the data collected are simplified in the table 1.

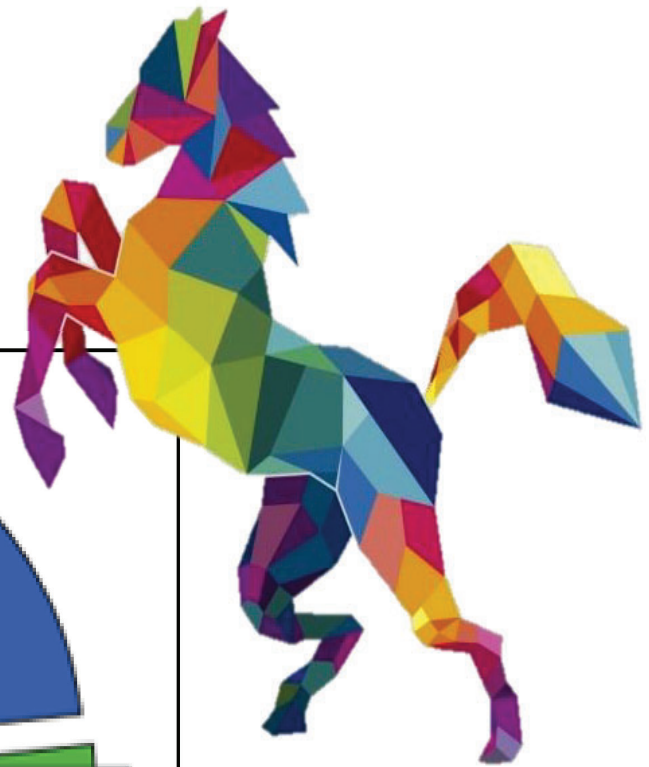
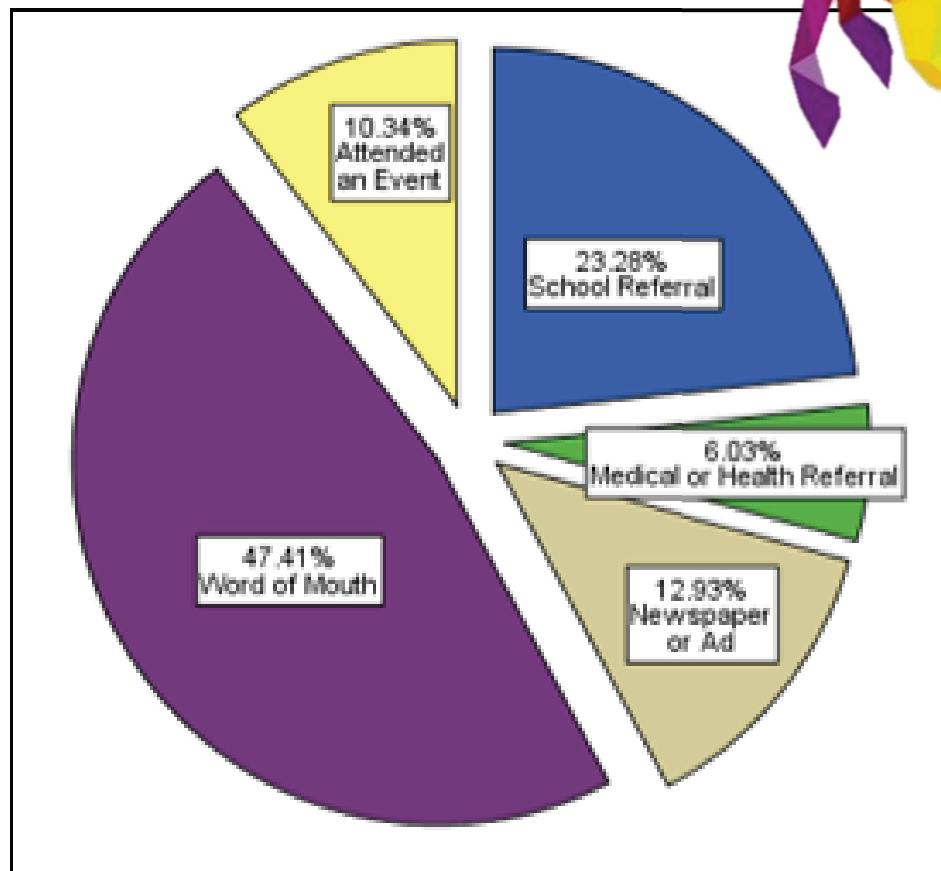


Figure 2.
Motivational
elements for
attending the
session

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics Analysis on Benefits of Therapeutic Horseback Riding

(shown in highlight)

Benefits of Therapeutic Horseback Riding Session	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
<i>Physical Effectiveness</i>					
Range of motion	38.3	33.0	11.3	7.0	10.4
Muscle strength	33.0	37.4	15.7	7.8	6.1
Mobility	33.9	28.9	23.5	6.1	7.8
Postural control	37.4	31.3	14.8	9.6	7.0
Energy level	27.8	35.7	20.0	8.7	7.8
Coordination of hands	33.9	33.0	17.4	6.1	9.6
<i>Psychological Differences</i>					
Less anxious	22.4	36.2	22.4	13.8	5.2
Less depressed	20.7	37.9	22.4	12.1	6.9
Less aggressive	19.0	29.3	35.3	11.2	5.2
Less arguing	18.1	42.4	27.8	6.9	5.2
Less fear	24.1	31.0	26.7	12.1	6.0
<i>Social Communication</i>					
Give & received information	36.2	31.0	19.0	7.8	6.0
Expressing self appropriately	37.1	32.8	17.2	6.9	6.0
Get along with family members	31.0	35.3	19.0	11.2	3.4
Get along with friends	32.8	28.4	26.7	6.9	5.2
Participate well in sports	29.3	38.8	21.6	6.9	3.4
<i>Cognitive Skills</i>					
Attention skill	30.2	35.3	21.6	5.2	7.8
Concentration	32.8	33.6	20.7	7.8	5.2
Learning	33.6	25.0	26.7	10.3	4.3
Decision making	25.9	36.2	27.6	5.2	5.2
Self-discipline	25.0	33.6	25.9	11.2	4.3

CONCLUSION

A therapeutic horseback riding programme should be seen as an alternative treatment that provides evident benefits such as physical growth and mental health efficacy. The goal is to enhance people's cognitive abilities, physical, emotional, and social well-being, whether they are disabled or not. Horseback riding as a therapeutic tool is certainly a feasible intervention choice for parents who want the best for their child. Despite types of barriers that limit the participation of people in the horseback riding activity such as financial constraints, however, the positive effects of the session should not be taken for granted.

"This therapeutic program is hopeful to help parents out there who are looking for the best therapy session for their child's development."

Imbas untuk lihat



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