

Abstract:

Therapeutic horseback riding is one of the most popular and the most used form of animal based therapy. The term “therapeutic horseback riding” itself is very broad and it consists of four basic branches. The most used, yet least described, is the branch that has been called “pedagogical-psychological horseback riding therapy” since 2011. This branch is further divided into two sub-branches, Equine assisted psychotherapy and Horse-based activities. These two sub-branches overlap each other and are usually conducted together. With school-age children they are mostly used in cases of behavioral disorders and ADHD. The goal of the thesis is to evaluate the effectiveness of the methods with children diagnosed as such.

The research was realized in “Stredisko hyporehabilitace Pirueta” which operates within the Mental Hospital in Havlickuv Brod. The method of the research was observation of five subjects within the one complete therapy unit. At the beginning and at the end of the unit the tutors of the subjects were given observational scale, which served as supplementary technique for diagnostics. Data obtained from own observation and the data gained from observational scaled matched each other approximately in 90%.

During the therapy unit all the subjects improved in areas of self-confidence, self-control, rules upholding, cooperation and empathy. In different rate, all the subjects attained the stabilization of their emotiveness which corresponded with the increase of self-confidence. Four of the subject having the problems with respecting the authority and impulsivity improved in these areas as well. Three clients having problems with aggressive behavior improved in this area in various rates. Other areas and results were more individual. The most significant of these (with 3 out of 5 subjects) were improvements in self-management, attention span and decrease of hyperactivity.