

Big Stride Therapy



Introduction to Hippotherapy and Adaptive Riding

Prepared by Bernie DeWit, OTR/L

Bernie DeWit OTR/L

- ▶ Occupational therapist since 1988 and has been practicing hippotherapy in the greater Atlanta area since 2002.
- ▶ Level 2 registered American Hippotherapy Association therapist.
- ▶ PATH International Instructor.
- ▶ Extensive experience working with children in a variety of settings including the “Babies Can't Wait” program, sensory integration and adapted listening programs



Hippotherapy

- ▶ Hippotherapy is a physical, occupational, and speech-language therapy treatment strategy that utilizes equine movement as part of an integrated intervention program to achieve functional outcomes.
- ▶ Equine movement provides multidimensional movement, which is variable, rhythmic and repetitive.



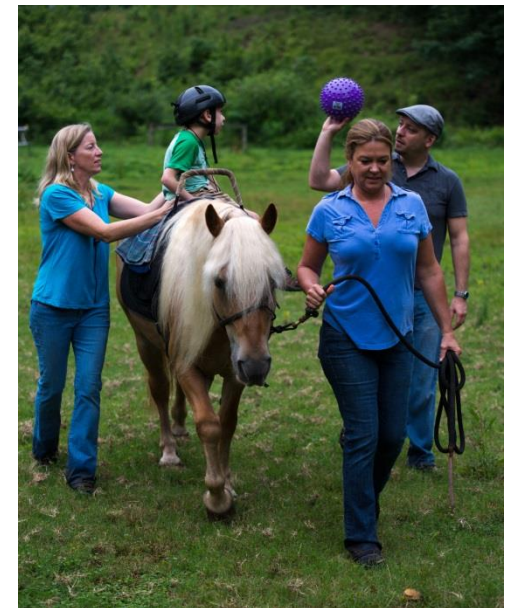
Benefits of Hippotherapy

- ▶ It is an excellent tool for increasing trunk strength and control, balance, building overall postural strength & endurance, addressing weight bearing, and motor planning
- ▶ Equine movement offers well-modulated sensory input to vestibular, proprioceptive, tactile and visual channels



Hippotherapy Functional Uses

- ▶ The effects of equine movement on postural control, sensory systems, and motor planning can be used to facilitate coordination and timing, grading of responses, respiratory control, sensory integration skills and attentional skills.
- ▶ Equine movement can be used to facilitate the neurophysiologic systems that support all of our functional daily living skills.



Who can Benefit From Hippotherapy

Diagnosis	Impairments
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Autism Spectrum Disorder• Cerebral Palsy• Developmental Delay• Genetic Syndromes• Learning Disabilities• Sensory Integration Disorders• Speech-Language Disorders• Traumatic Brain Injury/Stroke• Abnormal muscle tone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Impaired balance responses• Impaired coordination• Impaired communication• Impaired sensorimotor function• Postural asymmetry• Poor postural control• Decreased mobility• Limbic system dysfunction related to arousal and attentional skills

Adapted Riding

- ▶ Adapted Riding is riding for individuals with Physical, Psychological or Developmental needs.
- ▶ Students learn riding skills in a adapted environment taught by a licensed instructor.



Benefits of Adapted Riding

- ▶ Independence
- ▶ Confidence and Self-Esteem
- ▶ Social
- ▶ Balance, muscle strength, flexibility, joint movement and posture
- ▶ Bonding with the Horse
- ▶ Quality of Life for Degenerative Diseases



Who can Benefit from Adapted Riding

- ▶ Amputations, Attention Deficit Disorder, Autism, Brain Injuries, Cardiovascular, Accident/Stroke, Cerebral Palsy, Deafness, Down Syndrome, Emotional Disabilities, Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Multiple Sclerosis, Selective Mutism, Spina Bifida, Spinal Cord Injuries, Visual Impairment



Contact

- ▶ www.bigstridetherapy.com
- ▶ bernie@bigstridetherapy.com
- ▶ Phone: 678-665-2926
- ▶ Locations:
 - Go With It Farms, Jones Bridge Road
 - Creative Therapy Farms, Canton

