INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM:
Animal Assisted Intervention (AAI)

INVITATION
Symposium: November 16th 2017

Time
9:30AM - 5PM

Location
Stichting Bio Kinderrevalidatie
Wekeromseweg 8 Arnhem

SUBSCRIPTION: WWW.STICHTINGBIO.NL/SYMPOSIUM
ANIMAL ASSISTED INTERVENTION (AAI)

The 5th symposium of Stichting Bio Kinderrevalidatie in association Federatie Paardrijden Gehandicapten (FPG, transl. federation of horse-riding for people with disabilities) focuses on recent theoretical and practical developments in Animal Assisted Intervention. The symposium consists of three lectures and five interactive workshops. The lectures are based on the theoretical basis of AAI, the role of AAI in different patients and the welfare of horses in AAI. In the workshop we will work with horses and donkeys.

The symposium is targeting hippo therapists, equine therapists, physiotherapists, (neuro) psychologists, social workers, youth care workers, special occupation therapists and parents.

Sign up as soon as possible at www.stichtingbio.nl/symposium

The costs of participation are € 175,- for the whole day. Students and IPG-ers pay € 125,- (lunch included)

The symposium language is English/Dutch.

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**Introduction**

*Prof. dr. M.J. Enders-Slegers*

Professor of Anthrozoology, Faculty Psychology and educational sciences Open University. President of the International Association of Human Animal Interaction Organizations (IAHAIO). She is the promotor of many PhD students in the field of animal-assisted interventions in human health care.

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**Chairman**

*Professor Onno van Nieuwenhuizen, MD, PhD.*

Emeritus Professor of Child Neurology Universiteit Utrecht
Scientific Director Stichting Bio Kinderrevalidatie
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Although the therapeutic benefits of interacting with the horse were recognized as early as the year 460 BC, the more current form of Equine-Assisted Activities and Therapies (EAAT) developed in Europe in the 1950’s and was brought to the United States in the 1960’s. As more and more people experienced the positive impact of interacting with equines, programs developed all over the world, expanding to serve new populations in a variety of ways, with equines as the common thread. Today, the EAAT field is booming in the United States with over 877 PATH Intl. Member Centers serving over 66,000 children and adults through any number of offerings including therapists utilizing hippotherapy, therapeutic riding, driving or interactive vaulting, equine-assisted learning for at risk youth, leadership training, equine-assisted psychotherapy as well as programs specific to serving military veterans. The needs of the participants encompass over twenty-seven different challenges, some physical, some emotional, some social, and for many a combination. Individual needs are met through these different programs, each requiring a professional specifically trained to deliver services to help reach the participant’s goals. Historically, many of these programs were developed through experts’ experience. Today, there is a growing body of research to support the work being done in the field.

Please join Kathy Alm, CEO of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International as she shares the different EAAT program offerings found in the U.S., how they serve different populations, the qualifications of the professionals for each program, and the ultimate outcome for the participant. Hear about what research exists and why we need more. Understand the current state of EAAT in the U.S., and what the future may hold – for the participants, the professionals and the field. Discover how working together throughout the world can benefit us all.
Many people active in the field of Animal Assisted Interventions (AAI) appear to have insufficient methodological, theoretical and specialist knowledge for working with clients and (!) animals. The reason for this lies in the history of AAI in Europe. Here AAI is still a grass roots movement. And people often think that working with animals is easy. However, the opposite is true. Incorporating animals in therapy or education is a complex and demanding job. In the context of the rapid development of AAIs in recent years the development of a differentiated system of quality indicators seems to be important. Against this background, ISAAT and ESAAT have decided to establish common quality criteria. They are intended to offer a framework of suggestions and criteria that can be used to assess the quality of one’s own work in AAI.

Performing “good work” should be a central element of the self-image of people working in AAI. But: What characterizes “good work”? In everyday language “good work” is mostly used in connection with high or good quality. But: What does “high quality” in AAI mean? The quality of animal-assisted interventions is meant in a general sense – when desired effects are achieved and unwanted effects are prevented. On the basis of the central dimensions of quality I will discuss the relevant aspects of quality management in AAI.

Animal well-being is a difficult to define concept. A clear definition is: the condition of the animal as it is perceived by the animal itself. It is not so much about what we think is good for an animal or what brings animal well-being to the animal; it is about subjective experiences of the animal over a recent period: so it is about avoiding negative experiences and promote positive ones.
But how can we measure these subjective experiences (or emotions): how can we predict negative as well as positive experiences for animals and how to can we adjust our actions (be they preventive or curative). What can happen if there is insufficient knowledge of well-being, or that well-being is not guaranteed. Ultimately, it is a matter of success and safe working with animals (and certainly with horses) within the AAI is directly linked to the well-being of those animals. In short, animal well-being determines to a large extent the outcome of an AAI intervention, so knowledge about this is essential for animal, client (patient) and therapist.

Workshop Fine tuning in the relationship between man and horse in equine assisted therapy

Mag. Roswitha Zink, Managing Director, e.motion Equotherapie Vienna, (Austria)

Horses are by nature masters in nonverbal communication and experts in reading body language. Equotherapy uses this skill by training and refining the natural potential of certain horses to become a highly sensitive meter. Prerequisite to becoming an Equotherapy horse is a strong interest to interact and communicate, to be caring and stand up for others, also in the herd.

We use a special method and train our horses for three years. The basis is a mixture of nonverbal body language skills and elements of dressage to build up the horses’ muscles, make it supple and responsive. The horses learn by social modeling (learning from a relationship partner) to reflect their feelings and show the ones of the client. That body language enables the therapist and the client to see the problems from a different “horse special” perspective. In addition, trained therapy horses start communicating about self efficacy and try to get in contact with the client. Equotherapy horses primarily speak through head and facial expressions, and to the whole body movement quality. Our therapists know this language in detail and use the fact that horses have special skills to read and express nonverbal body language.

The work of my team gives hope to 500 children a year, mostly with cancer and other serious illnesses.
We do as much scientific work as we are able to effort, especially nonverbal communication; interaction and relationship in focus (see the homepage for detail).
I am far away from naïve perspective, because 15 years’ experience with a private therapeutic device in the middle of a hospital makes me very realistic.
I am used to teamwork and “farm”-life made me strong.
**Workshop** Effect of animal assisted interventions on the development of children with Down syndrome and children with autism spectrum disorder; 
*Richard Griffioen, PT, MT, MA, PhD Cand, Stichting Sam, The Human Academy, Utrecht*

Children with Down syndrome (DS) and Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) have difficulties to be part of society, due to a delay or incompetence in their psychological/emotional development. These children most commonly have attention problems, social problems and language deficits. The inability to have a normal social interaction and a proper use of language may lead to emotional and behavioral problems.

Since several decades it has been suggested that animal assisted interventions, such as hippo therapy, dolphin-assisted therapy and working with farm animals, supports the treatment of disabled persons. It is assumed that affect and behavioural atonement influences the interaction and thereby develops the bonding between child and animal in the same way as the bonding between mother and child. The effect of this bonding is secure attachment and development of social interaction that may generalize to other bonds and other interactions as well.

**Workshop** The power of vulnerability. 
*Drs. Peggy Duckers. Lecturer Zuyd University, Faculty of Healthcare, Bachelor Social Work. Projectmanager Spirit of Youth (www.spiritofyouth.nl). Researcher Social Integration. Social Worker, Equine Assisted Therapist en Sociologist*

Working in a stud farm on the edge of a forest with young people in the age of 12-25 who sleep inside the fences of juvenile jail or a homeless shelter is what happens at Spirit of Youth. These young people are known as victims of the system. Their files are filled with diagnoses like attachment disorder, ADHD, ODD, autism or mentally disabled, but I don’t read their files....

I will not speak about theory or research, but will explain to You, based on real life cases, what I’ve learned from these young people. I will talk about what we do and how we do it, based on Equine Assisted Interventions. I will inspire You to take my experiences home with You so You can inspire others and together we can work on a society in which everybody feels at home.
**Workshop** Mindfulness with donkeys

_Brigitte Wijnen, Owner of Ezelstal Hans and Grietje (care farm) and Asino Centrum Nederland (therapy farm)_

I graduated in Health Sciences (Drs.) at the University of Maastricht in 1984. I already had a Propedeuse Psychology (KU Nijmegen) and after completing my degree, I followed some modules of Business Studies (Open University) and Sociology (University of the Netherlands Antilles).

After years of a career as an organizational advisor in the care at home and abroad, I chose a drastic turn. I wanted to set up a care farm with my donkeys, which I already kept for a while as hobby. Step by step, it has become an institution in which we fit the donkeys in various therapeutic modes. In ‘Mindfulness with Donkeys’, we focus on ‘this and now’. The donkeys play a key role. They are deeply involved in the various meditation techniques which we will demonstrate in the workshop.

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**Workshop** Equine assisted therapy in psychotherapy and counselling

_Nina Ekholm Fry, MSSc. Director of Equine Programs, Institute of Human-Animal Connection Coordinator, Associate Professor at Prescott College, University of Denver, (USA)_

Nina Ekholm Fry, MSSc., has specialized in equine-assisted therapy in psychotherapy and counseling for the past 10 years. She is Director of Equine Programs at the Institute for Human-Animal Connection and is Associate Professor at the University of Denver where she is the head of the new Equine-Assisted Mental Health Practitioner Certificate Program.

Nina was previously Director of Equine-Assisted Mental Health at Prescott College and worked as Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and Counselor Education until 2014. She is a member of the Executive Board of the National Certification Board for Equine Interaction Professionals (CBEIP) and has worked as a trainer in a number of equine-assisted approaches in North America and Europe. She is a Certified Clinical Trauma Therapist and has worked with people with trauma / PTSD, ASD, ADHD, anxiety and addiction disorders, as well as with children at risk, cancer patients, military and veterans, and is a consultant for psychotherapy clinics in the USA who equip horses.