

Friday November 5th 9:15am – 12:30pm

Workshop Title: Measuring The Effects of Therapeutic Horseback Riding in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders; A Collaborative Project Between The Children's Hospital, Denver and The Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center.

PRESENTER INFORMATION

Dr. Robin Gabriels, Psy.D., Associate Professor and Principal Investigator at the University of Colorado at Denver and Health Sciences Center. Founder and Director, Neuropsychiatric Special Care Program, The Children's Hospital.

Amy Shoffner, MSW, Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center (CTRC) Community Site Coordinator, Advanced Instructor and NARHA Faculty/Evaluator.

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| 9:15-9:20 | Introductions and overview |
| 9:20-11:00 | Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders & Intervention Strategies |
| 11:00-11:30 | Pilot Study: Measuring the Effects of Therapeutic Horseback riding in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders. |
| 11:30-12:15 | Children with autism in the THR setting: Specific intervention strategies utilized at the Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center |
| 12:15-12:30 | Future directions and questions |

For more information contact Dr. Gabriels at 720-777-3404 or gabriels.robin@tchden.org

Or Amy Shoffner at 303-652-9131 or visit www.ctrcinc.org



The Children's Hospital

November 2, 2010

Thank you for your interest in our research that is studying the effects of therapeutic horseback riding on children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders, a collaborative project between the Children's Hospital, Denver and the Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center, Longmont.

From 2007-2009 Children's Hospital and the Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center (CTRC) conducted a pilot project that studied the effects of therapeutic horseback riding on 41 children ages 6-16 years. The results of the pilot study showed that, compared to when the study started, the children showed significant improvements in levels of irritability, lethargy, stereotypic behavior and hyperactivity as well as improvements in expressive language, motor coordination and motor planning, on well-regarded measures.

In order to build upon the positive results of this pilot project, our team was successfully awarded a grant funded through the National Institutes of Nursing Research of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). This ground-breaking four-year project will continue to study the effects of therapeutic horseback riding on school age children with autism spectrum disorders with the addition of an active control group on site at CTRC. In addition, the study will track the long-term effects of therapeutic riding.

WANT TO HELP? There are several ways you can help the Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center (CTRC) continue to function as a research site.

- Consider volunteering at the CTRC for on-going classes; being a class volunteer for the research study requires training and experience. Spaces in these classes will be filled with the most experienced volunteers first, so please come and get started as soon as possible!
- Donate a horse or make a monetary donation.
- Please see the CTRC website for a link to information about the many ways to support CTRC (www.ctrcinc.org) or call CTRC at 303-652-9131.

Keep checking CTRC's websites for updates and ongoing project needs. Also, please see the enclosed study recruitment flyer for more information.

Again, thank you for your enthusiasm about this ground-breaking THR research project! This research has the potential to benefit the lives of many children and to shape the future programs of the more than 800 therapeutic horseback riding centers across the United States.

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www.thechildrenshospital.org
Approved

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COMIRB

Do you know a child with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)?



The **Children's Hospital** and the **Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center** are working together to learn more about the effects of Therapeutic Horseback Riding (THR) for children with an ASD. This treatment is very popular, but not very well researched. We want to know if THR will improve agitation behaviors, coordination, and communication skills. Is actual contact with horses necessary for children to improve?

In order to investigate this, we are offering two **FREE** ten-week therapeutic groups: **one will include horses and one will not.**

We are looking for children, ages 6-16 years old who meet the following criteria:

- Have an ASD diagnosis
- Are able to come to Colorado Therapeutic Riding Center in Longmont, CO once a week to participate in a ten-week group therapy program

What are the benefits to being involved in this study?

- You will receive a summary of your child's initial assessments
- The therapy will be provided at no cost
- You will be reimbursed for your trips to the riding center and The Children's Hospital

If you are interested in learning more or to see if you qualify, please contact:

Laurie Burnside, 720-777-4655



Thank you!

Robin Gabriels, Psy.D.
Principal Investigator
COMIRB# 07-1148

