



ANIMAL'S THERAPY

PLANÇO SCHOOL

2016

HORSE THERAPY



- **Horse therapy activities, with the type of students that attend the school, entail an active student attitude that will result in movements to stretch, relax, and improve the coordination and the balance. The fact that it is an outdoor activity, has a positive impact on the results because the student takes it as a fun activity and it also allows the student to enjoy the Surroundings.**
- **With this activity you get physiological effects such as the increase of the perception capacity to stimuli, and also psychological effects such as the stimulation of the attention, the concentration and motivation towards other movements. In addition the student improves his/her confidence and sense of security.**

GOALS

- **Develop social skills: reduce isolation and increase relations with the surroundings through the contact with the horse.**
- **Stimulate emotional skills: maximize the relationship between the student and the horse to avoid unrest and the appearance of misconducts.**
- **Encourage communication: boost physical contact and increase interaction with the animal through physical elements (ball, brushing, placing the saddle,...)**
- **Physical effects: improve muscle tone and coordination. The horse's body temperature provides the student with a warmth when he/she hugs/ touches. the horse. The rider is subjected to stimuli and has to adapt and react to the horse's movements.**

ACTIVITIES

- **We work with the students on different aspects and materials to improve the therapeutic value of the activities:**
- **Brushing the horse.**
- **Walking the horse holding a rope.**
- **Placing the saddle.**
- **Neuro-motor rehabilitation exercises with balls and hoops.**
- **Static and dynamic balance exercises, as well as coordination exercises.**

METHODOLOGY

- **Each child has a 20 minute session with the horse..**
- **In the planning of the activities we incorporate getting the horse ready and the exercises while riding in order to create routines that help the students to get ready for the activity and to achieve greater autonomy.**
- **The activity is carried out by two school teachers (Julia as the physiotherapist and another teacher as the group mentor) and a support person (usually a student teacher).**

Work guideline

- **Place the students in a new environment .**
- **Enjoy a fun interactive activity, that is based on psychomotor skills and where verbal and non-verbal communicative patterns will gradually increase in difficulty.**
- **Teach routines and habits related to the handling, cleaning and getting the horse ready, encouraging interest, strengthening the learning capacity and improving attentiveness.**
- **Work on personal safety to improve self esteem and we help them with the planning “what have we done?”, “what do we have to do now?”, “what are we going to do afterwards?”.**

- **Stimulate the bonding between the students and the animals (empathy, affectivity) and develop participation and dynamic behaviours. Seek for the trust between the student and the horse.**
- **Handling and spatial orientation activities with the horse, while standing next to the horse.**
- **Body awareness games on the horse, where we will gradually work on posture, improvement of the muscle tone, coordination, balance, sensory and motor development. Slowly starting to control the horse's movements.**
- **Work to develop motor, behaviour, cognitive and rhythmic skills.**
- **Strive to improve the students' frame of mind and boost their attention span.**

Benefits

- **Thereby the students enter in a motivating dynamic to enrich personal development; the students work with animals that depend upon them, instead of the students being the dependent ones.**
- **This involvement is very different from what the students are used to, since they usually work and exercise with inanimate objects.**
- **On the other hand, we have to emphasize that the horses respond to our actions and due to their sensibility, the horses are grateful. The horse does not know if a student is in a wheelchair or has a disability, hence the horse treats everyone with great respect.**



Dog therapy

- **GENERAL GOALS**

- **To be the most amount of time possible interacting with the dog, adults and classmates.**

- **Increase the register of interactions and activities with the dog.**

- **SPECIFIC GOALS:**

- **Participation in activities.**

- **Maintain physical and visual contact with the dog.**

- **Expression of emotions during activities with dogs.**

- **Spontaneous interaction and initiative during the sessions.**

- **Use verbal communication to relate with the dog, classmates and adults**



Activities

- **Physical contact with the dog. Pet, tickle, groom.**
- **Give water and food.**
- **Walk the dog on a leash.**
- **Games with the dog. Kick and/or throw the ball, pull the leash.**

Areas to work on

- **Verbal and nonverbal communication.**
- **Acceptance of the activity.**
- **Visual contact.**
- **Physical contact with the dog.**
- **Expression of emotions: fears, satisfaction, ...**
- **Interaction with the dog, classmates and adults.**
- **Initiatives.**
- **Evolution within the session.**

PROJECT METHODOLOGY

- **The sessions will be done individually or in pairs.**
- **During the activity there's a monitor who leads a known dog and a teacher from the school who knows the child. The activities are coordinated and the goals are established between the two.**
- **The monitors will bring three dogs and depending on the child and the goals that are proposed one or another will be chosen.**
- **The activities will start from the least to the most active, as the sessions advance. The therapy will start with a calm dog and will take place on top of a table, later on it will take place on a mattress and finally places like the schoolyard, road, parks... there the dogs are more active. The approach to the dog will never be forced - the child should approach it themselves.**
- **The sessions will be done once weekly and can last from 10 to 40 minutes depending on the attitude of the child.**

