

ARTICLE THREE

The Potential of the Horse in Adolescent Aggression Management: A Review of the Literature

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ABSTRACT

Aggression is a natural part of living but aggressive behavior is often a sign of inadequate skills emotion management and insufficient social skills. Aggression education, psychosocial education about aggression, is connected to emotional skills education and psychosocial growth. The purpose of this study was to explore how equine-assisted activities and therapies (EAAT) can be incorporated into aggression education with an emphasis on children and adolescents. Literature specifically about aggression education and equine assisted activities and therapies is scarce. A secondary purpose was to create a dialog between different scientific theories and equine-assisted work.

Results of this exploration indicate that equine-assisted work as a form of aggression education has many potential elements. These elements are: positive physical sensations and body awareness; synchrony of being and moving; motivation; empathy training; encountering feelings of disappointment and overcoming them; forming a potential space; creating positive interactions and feelings of connectedness. Very few therapeutic or educational interventions can combine these psychosocial and psychomotoric elements.

KEYWORDS

Adolescence, Aggression, Equine-Assisted Activities, Equine Therapy, Aggression Education, Emotional Skills Training.