

What is the State of Hippotherapy Research and Where Should We Go from Here?

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Abstract

In order to answer these questions, regarding the status and development of hippotherapy research and where we should go from here, it is necessary to include the larger umbrella label of therapeutic horseback riding (THR). If one were to consider only hippotherapy, this chapter would be very limited in space, content, and benefit to the reader. By including the larger body of literature regarding THR, then we have a larger body of material to examine and analyze and from which we can move forward.

The purpose, then, of this chapter is to examine the research that has been generated in recent years, critically analyze it, and make some comment about the limitations of the research with regards to the researchers' purported objectives in performing the research. To undertake this exercise, it was reasonable to look to a body responsible for the leadership and generation of research in this domain. While there may be other sources, it was appropriate, valuable and manageable to review all the research articles published in *The Scientific and Educational Journal of Therapeutic Riding*, an international journal on riding for the disabled, first published in 1997. From the analysis of these writings, a pathway can be created along which hippotherapy researchers may direct their energies.