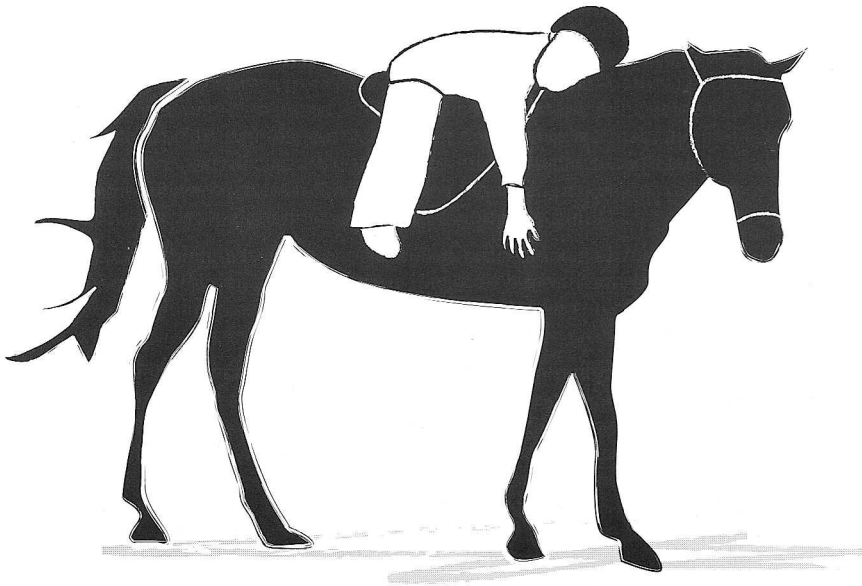


ARTICLE SIX

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS IN CHILDREN WITH DELAYED SPEECH DEVELOPMENT DURING HIPPO THERAPY SESSIONS

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ARTICLE SIX

THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATIVE SKILLS IN CHILDREN WITH DELAYED SPEECH DEVELOPMENT DURING HIPPO THERAPY SESSIONS

I have been working for the last twelve years as a hippotherapist and speech therapist with children having various kinds and degrees of disability. Many of my patients experience serious difficulties in communicating with their surroundings due to varying levels of mental handicap, central nervous system damage, or simple delay in speech development. These problems are manifested either in the lack of or difficulties with verbal expression, or in the lack of any understandable forms for conveying messages using sound or gesture.

The basic question I ever address is, "exactly how is speech to serve my handicapped patients?".

I wish to present in this paper my thoughts and experience in working with children with serious difficulties in communicating, along with the way in which hippotherapy sessions are helpful in developing their communication skills.

To begin with, let us examine some notions connected with communication.