

**CONVERSATIONAL SKILLS INSTRUCTION DURING THERAPEUTIC HORSEBACK RIDING
FOR ADOLESCENTS WITH MILD DISABILITIES**

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of using direct instruction and verbal prompting to teach conversational skills to adolescents with mild disabilities during therapeutic horseback riding (TR) lessons. A multiple probe design was used to assess the participants' fluency and generalization of conversational skills practiced during riding lessons. Participants received direct instruction and were prompted to practice conversational skills with their horses, other riders, volunteers, and the TR instructor during lessons. Following the TR lessons, participants completed scavenger hunts during un-mounted activities to assess their fluency and generalization of skills. The results indicate all three participants demonstrated increases in fluency of skills and two participants maintained the skills one month following intervention. Suggestions for future research and implications for practices are discussed.

KEYWORDS

Therapeutic Riding; Conversational Skills; Mild Disabilities.