

***THE UNIQUE MEANING OF EQUINE ASSISTED ACTIVITIES (EAA) FOR RIDERS, PARENTS, AND VOLUNTEERS IN A THERAPEUTIC RIDING PROGRAM***

## **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study sought to identify the meaning individuals associate with equine-assisted activities (EAA), including riders, parents of riders, and volunteers participating in a therapeutic riding program through semi-structured interviews. Data was analyzed using phenomenological methods to find broad and role specific themes associated with EAA. Results suggest that doing, being, and belonging (Wilcock, 1998), all aspects of what the American Occupational Therapy Association defines as the daily life activities in which people engage, referred to as occupations (American Occupational Therapy Association, 2014), were common themes experienced among those participating in EAA.

## **KEYWORDS**

Equine Assisted Activity; Therapeutic Riding; Meaningful Engagement; Purposeful Activity.