

Presenter's name: Pia Tillberg

Degree, affiliation: Licensed Physiotherapist, certified in EAI, Operations manager at Stall Kungsgården

Curriculum vitae:

Licensed physiotherapist, OHI certified in EAI, rider since childhood, has worked with EAI since 1989 within neurological rehab, young persons with NPF and parariders.

Category: oral presentation

Topic: Special program / project

Authors:

Pia Tillberg

Title: EQUINE ASSISTED INTERVENTIONS TO APPROACH SCHOOL AFTER LONG TERM ABSENCE – THE STALL KUNGSGÅRD MODEL

Keyword 1: Problematic school absenteeism

Keyword 2: Neuropsychiatric disorders

Keyword 3: Relationships and trust

Abstract:

At Stall Kungsgården students with long-term and extensive school absences can receive support to approach school and learning settings again.

The model has been developed in close collaboration with Central Student Health's Team and their Special Unit for Long term Attendance Deficit in a smaller municipality near Stockholm, Sweden. It started in August 2021 as a project with support from the Special Education School Agency (Spsm). After a positive evaluation of the project in June 2023, the collaboration is part of the Children and Education Administration's regular interventions for students' health in elementary school.

The staff at Stall Kungsgården have many years of knowledge in working with children and young people with neuropsychiatric challenges in Equine Assisted Interventions. Staff members provide equine-related activities and an alternative learning environment where teachers, school psychologists and other supporting staff members can start to build a relationship with the students.

Project evaluation shows that all fourteen attending students felt that they experienced better mental health, felt safe in the stable environment and that they had approached school and teaching environment to a varying degree. Parents testified that the intervention had a crucial impact on their children's life and the whole family's situation. Specific examples mentioned by parents were disappearing social isolation as the stable provided security, and the fact that students became more motivated. Students established their own routines and a world of their own choice where they were allowed to grow, gain positive experiences, and dared to challenge themselves. The initiative helped students to look at themselves in a more positive way and see strengths and not just weaknesses.

In the oral presentation we intend to focus on the key factors that we have identified as vital for the good outcome.

