



## 2016 Program Evaluation

In 2015 we adopted the Results Based Accountability (RBA) framework for our program evaluations. This is based on the work of Mark Friedman at the Fiscal Policy Studies Institute. The RBA framework encourages the measurement of how much was accomplished, how well it was performed, and what difference was made in the lives of those served.

**How much did we do?** This is a question of quantity and is most easily answered (assuming proper records are kept). For example, a school might say that they taught 700 students in a given year.

**How well was it performed?** This question moves the focus from quantity to quality. Is there a distinct quality difference between classes with 35 students each compared to classes with 20 students each; classes with adequate resources and classes with exceptional resources?

**What difference was made in the lives of those served? Is anyone better off?** This is the most difficult of questions to answer because of the long term implications that must be measured. How can you determine if children in small classes with exceptional resources are better off than children in larger classes with adequate resources? Would you measure by graduation rates? College acceptance? Standardized test scores?

We decided that the Saddle Up program would be our initial focus for the RBA framework and it would be rolled out to other programs in the coming years. Indications for improvement in each program's evaluation methods are noted.

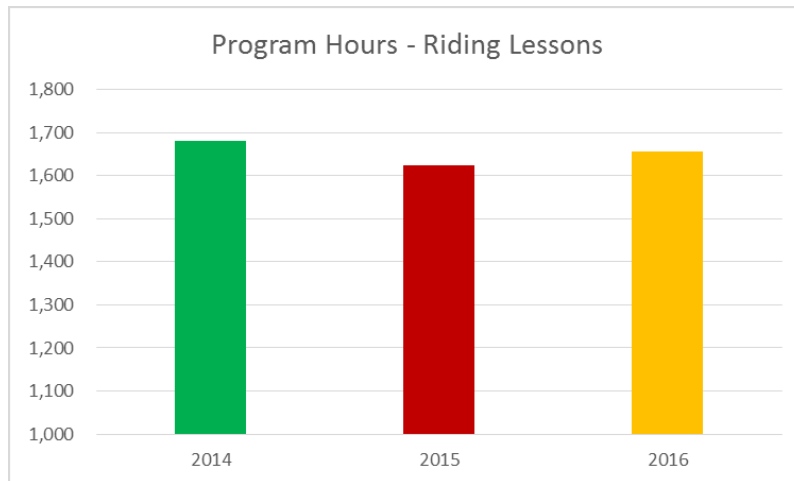
The use of documented results to guide our program development is an essential concept of the barn's Specific, Methodical, and Consistent (SMaC) model that outlines our strategies for success.

## SADDLE UP

### HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

#### How many lessons did we teach in 2016?

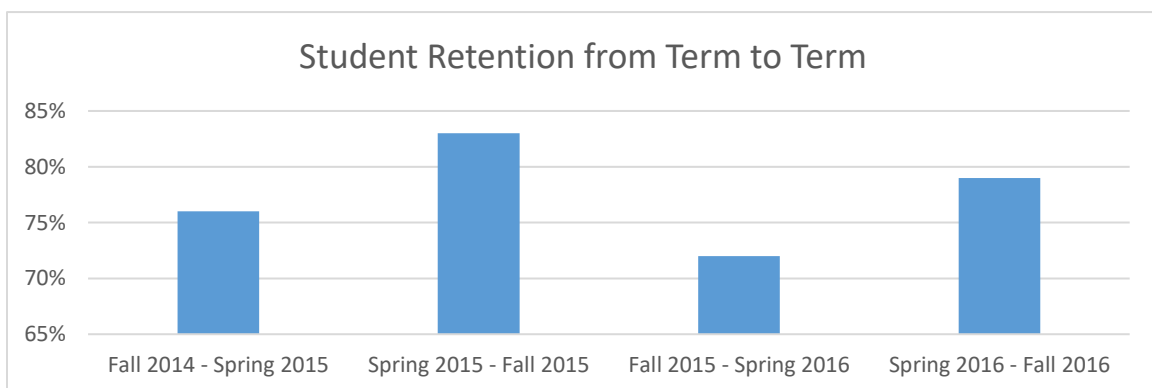
We taught 1,513 lessons, totaling 1,656 program hours in 2016. Almost all lessons were individual, with 38% being a small group of two or three students (usually siblings).

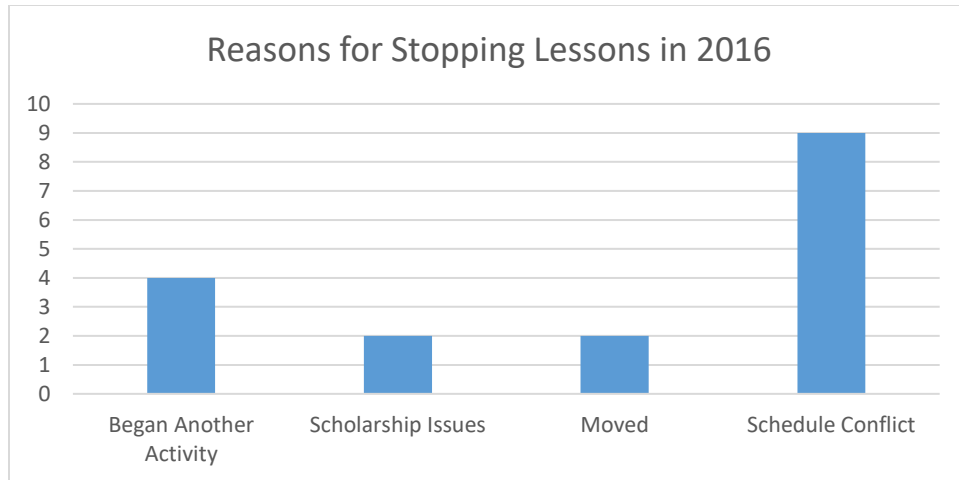


### HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

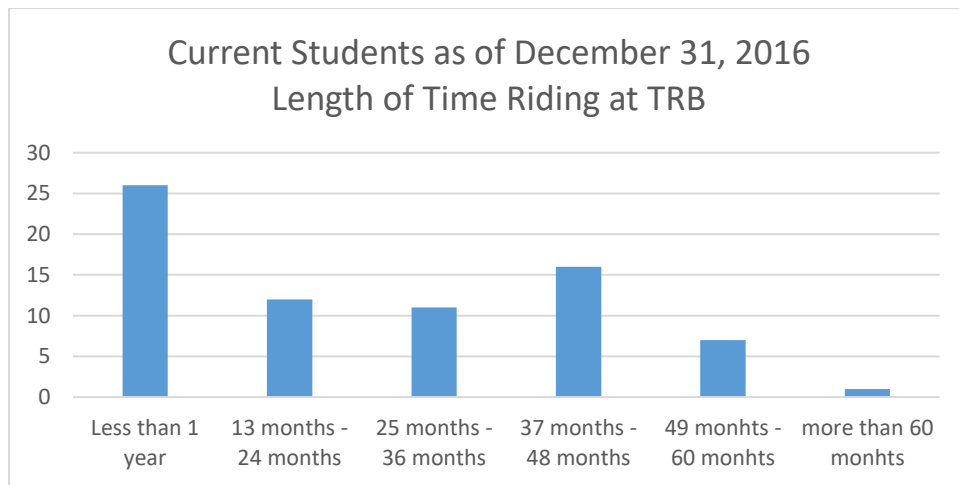
#### What is our student retention?

Student retention rates are shown below, along with the reasons given for leaving the program and the length of time students in the fall 2016 have been riding with us. With such high retention rates, the only way our riding lesson numbers can significantly increase is to expand our number of horses and instructors.





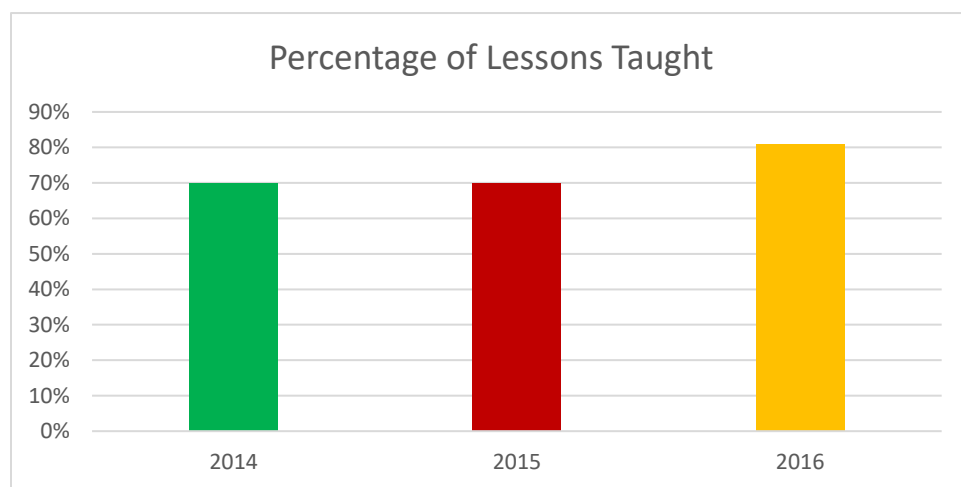
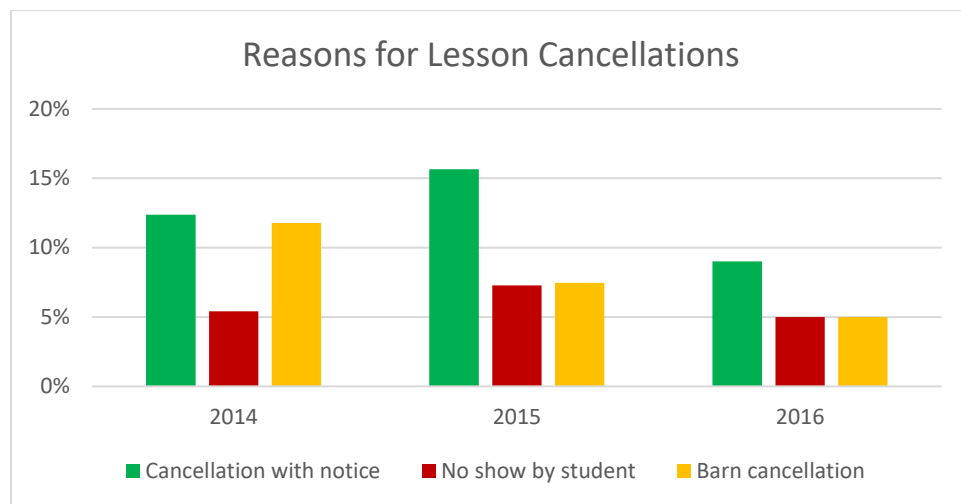
Note: In 2016 we began a new scholarship process based on the school lunch sliding scale. If a family feels that they have additional expenses (medical costs, legal fees, counseling fees, etc.), they can request an exception by our scholarship committee. Two students did not qualify for a scholarship – one chose to not apply for an exception and the other was not granted an exception.



#### **What percent of scheduled lessons was taught?**

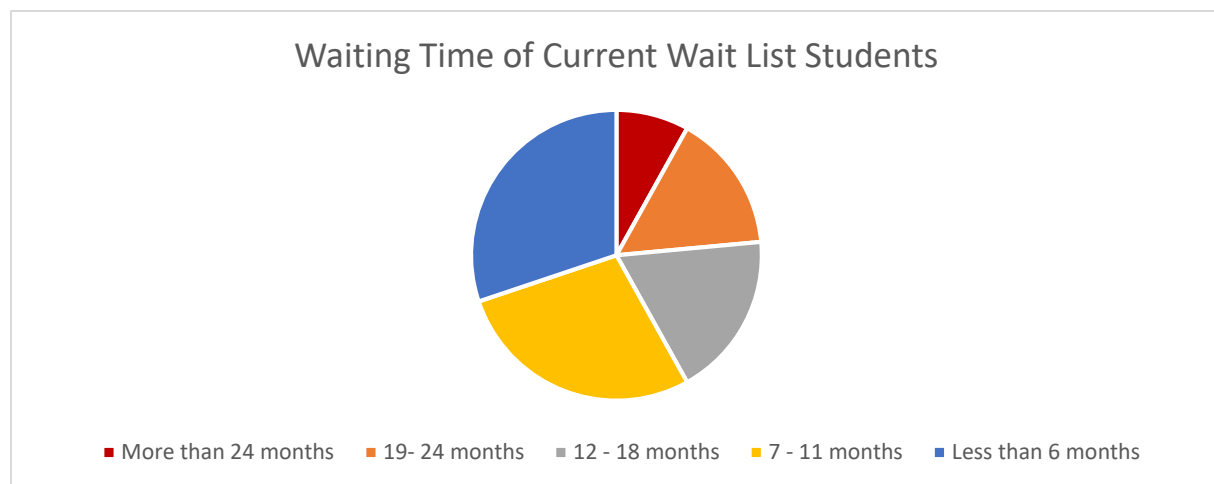
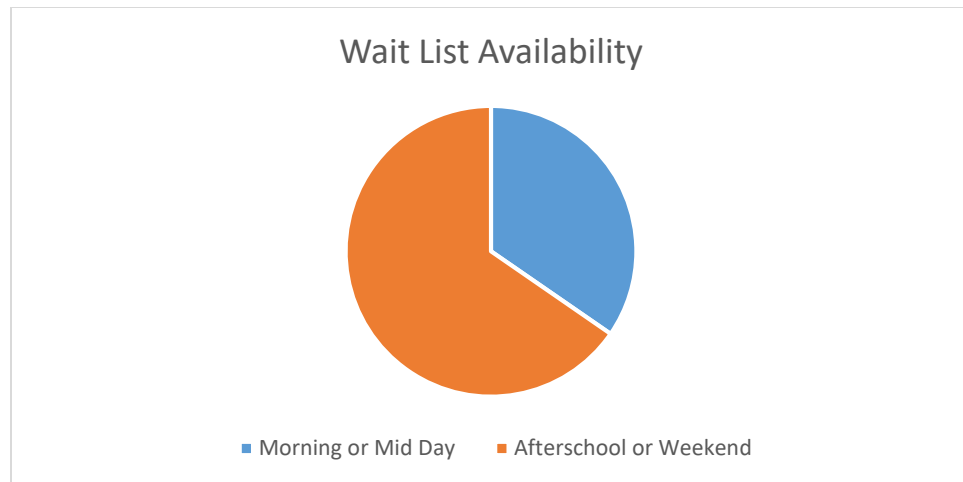
In 2014 we began tracking the reasons why lessons were cancelled to improve our efficiency. The number of barn cancellations has decreased dramatically in large part due to hiring more instructors so that lessons don't have to be cancelled if an instructor is absent. We have also made a point to educate parents about the costs of no-show cancellations (defined as less than 24 hours' notice). Of course, some no-show absences are due to circumstances such as illness where parents could not give 24 hours' notice. In 2016 we stopped offering "make up lessons" if a student had to miss their regularly scheduled lesson. It was too difficult to fit in make-up lessons because our schedule is maxed out. As a result, parents were more consistent in

coming each week, as evidenced with an increase of teaching 81% of scheduled lessons, compared to 70% in previous years.



#### **What is the demand for the program?**

There are currently 135 children on the waiting list and several agencies that currently attend our camps and classes have indicated that they would also like to have their students ride. Unless we hire additional instructors and bring in more horses, we will not be able to increase the number of lessons taught, especially given that the great majority of wait list students want to attend at the same time – after school or weekend. The most common disabilities of children on the waiting list include trauma (31), autism (30), and emotional or mental health issues (30). Approximately half of the students on the waiting list indicate that a scholarship is needed in order to attend. The average age of a wait list student is 9.45 years old.



### Diagnoses of Students on Waiting List

Note: may be more than one per student

Diagnosis	Number of Students on Waiting List
Trauma (abuse, adoption, foster care, RAD, molestation, PTSD)	31
Autism	30
Emotional or Mental Health (depression, anxiety, bi-polar)	30
Learning, Developmental, or Cognitive Delays	17
Speech, Language, or Hearing Impaired	12
Cerebral Palsy	12
ADD/ADHD	12
PDD NOS	5
Misc	21

### What did the students think?

A survey was sent to our students who rode at some point during 2016 (see attached example). We received back 22 surveys, for a 30% response rate. The results were as follows:

	Happy Face	Frowning Face
I like coming to the barn.	100%	
I like to groom.	91%	9%
I like to ride.	100%	
I want to come back to the barn.	100%	

Students were also asked how they feel when they are at the barn. Some examples of their answers are below:

How do you feel when you're at the barn?

Happy and Proud

How do you feel when you're at the barn? I feel Hot BeCAs  
the sun is out and that makes my Bottom  
Barn a lot.

How do you feel when you're at the barn? Safe, calm, relaxed, excited, enjoy  
my self, some one to talk to, someone I can practice my  
social things, makes me feel soccer, some one to  
confer + me when I have hard times at school practice  
to keep calm, practice not to be flighty (has  
improved since I started with the barn (master  
improvement)) (to much in such a little space)

How do you feel when you're at the barn?

I feel excited  
and ready to follow  
directions. My horse is  
ready to follow my direction.

### **What riding skills were mastered?**

In 2014 we began using the Rider Instruction and Evaluation System (RIDES) to track the mastery of riding skills divided into five levels. Each level contains both mounted and unmounted skills and mastery is checked at the end of each term. The levels are:

#### Level 1

This level of rider is primarily walk only on lead. Trotting is minimal, if at all.

#### Level 2

This level of rider is learning basic riding skills at the walk and trot on lead.

#### Level 3

This level of rider is learning to ride off lead at the walk and on lead at the trot.

#### Level 4

This level of rider is proficient at riding off lead at the walk and is learning to ride off lead at the trot.

#### Level 5

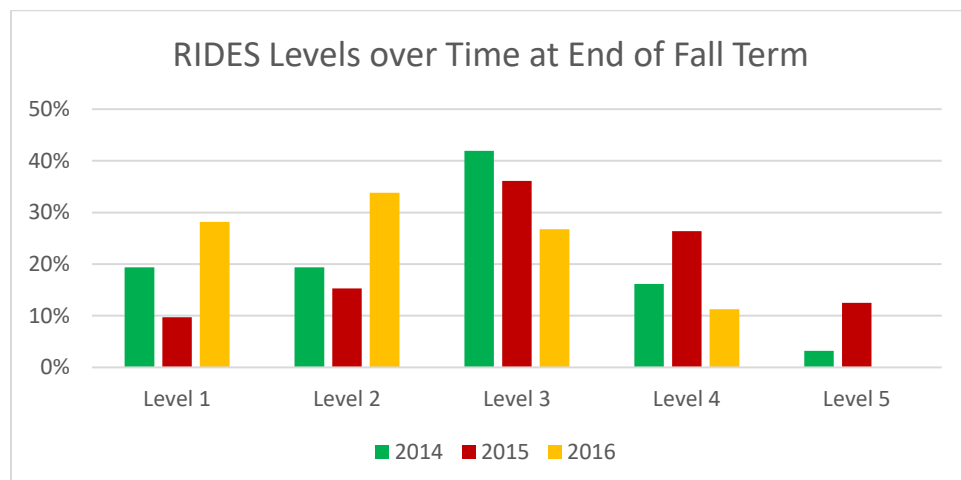
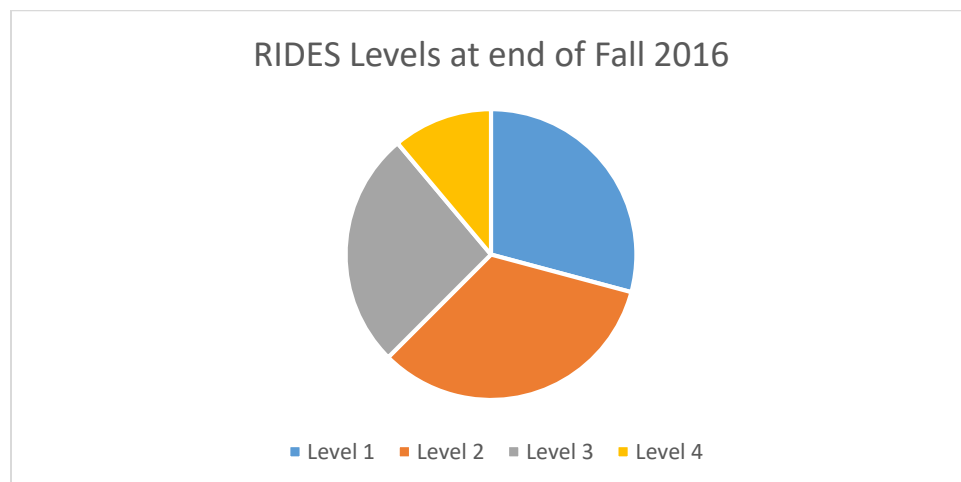
This level of rider is working on more advanced skills off lead at the walk and trot and is learning to canter. When our students complete this level, we consider them to have graduated from our programs.

Students progress at their own pace, but in a methodical way. Some skills are mastered quickly, and sometimes it may take longer to master others. 31% of the students who have been riding with us since Spring 2014 when RIDES was first implemented have remained on the same level, even though they have mastered skills within that level. The point of the RIDES system is not to compare students to each other, but only to identify that skill mastery is indeed taking place over time.

The chart below lists progress of students from end of Spring 2016 to the end of Fall 2016.

Stayed on level 1 from end of Spring to end of Fall	8%
Began riding in Fall and ended on level 1	22%
Went from level 1 at the end of Spring to level 2 by end of Fall	10%
Stayed on level 2 from end of Spring to end of Fall	15%
Began riding in Fall and ended on level 2	8%
Went from level 2 at the end of Spring to Level 3 by end of Fall	4%
Stayed on level 3 from end of Spring to end of Fall	22%
Stayed on level 4 from end of Spring to end of Fall	7%
Began riding in Fall and ended on level 4	4%

The RIDES levels also help us identify the types of horses and volunteers that are needed for use in the programs. For example, the graph below indicates that almost half of our weekly students are on levels 1 or 2, which requires the horse to have a volunteer leader.





**Were there any incident reports?**

We had two incident reports in 2016. In both cases, the student fell off the horse, but was not injured.

**IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?****What did the parents think?****Parent Surveys Fall 2016**

In addition to identifying specific goals for the term, parents were given a survey at the beginning of fall 2016, asking them to identify areas where their children were having difficulties. The top 3 results we received were as follows:

- Forgets steps to a task (70%)
- Does not have good listening skills/seems distracted (57%)
- Has emotional outbursts (55%)

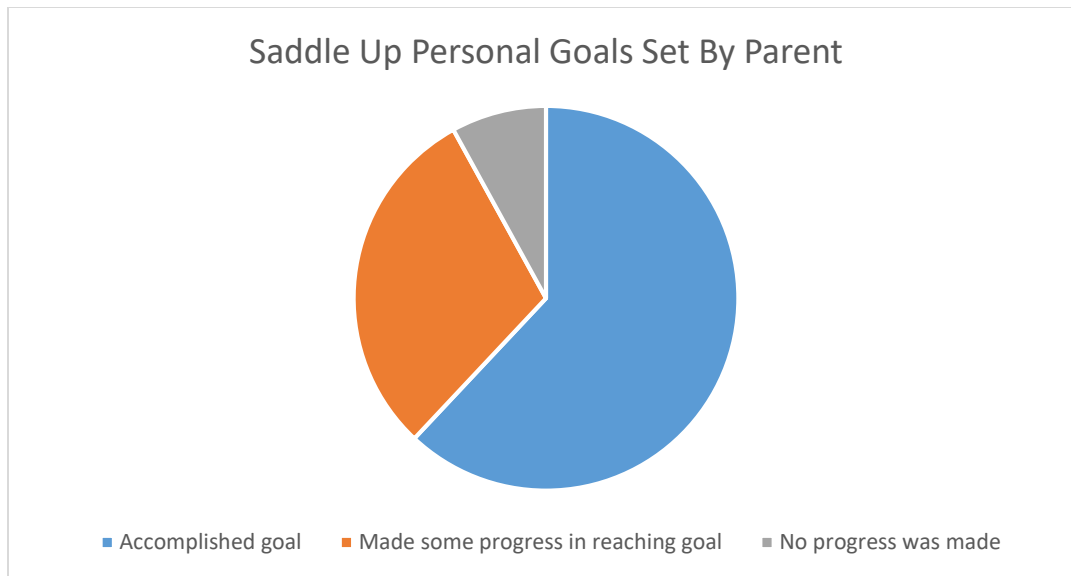
The above data is why we structure our lessons the way we do. We focus on our students remembering the steps to grooming and the steps to getting a horse to move. Instructors may set up obstacle courses with multiple steps that the students must remember in order to lead the horse through it. Each time a student is asked to complete these tasks, his or her brain is creating connections that increase focus, attention, and memory.

This rewiring of the brain holds true also for the 55% of our students who have emotional outbursts. According to Dr. Bruce Perry in *Rhythm Regulates the Brain*, patterned, repetitive rhythmic activity is required to move the brain from a state of super high anxiety to a calmer, more cognitive state. Thus, the act of riding itself has a regulating effect on the brain. It is fascinating to observe our most dysregulated children naturally choose to ride bareback and even to lie down on the horse. They seem to instinctively know that they need more input from the horse and that this will help them feel calmer and more regulated.

**Parent Goals**

At the start of each term, parents are asked to identify a few personal goals for their children. One difficulty in this method is that oftentimes parents may set vague goals that may be outside of our ability or control. Some examples of vague goals include increasing core strength, improving social skills, and to relax and play. These are goals that could show improvement over the course of years without exactly knowing when they are accomplished. Still, we take the parent's goal into consideration when planning the lesson and do our best to incorporate them into the term's activities.

Phone surveys were conducted at the end of the term to ask parents if their personal goal had been accomplished, had made some progress, or had no progress made. We received a 72% response rate.



The items listed as not having any progress are explained below:

**Student #1**

Did not learn to recognize numbers 0 – 9. But, did learn to count from 1-7 and properly use the pronouns he and she.

**Student #2**

Did not show a decrease in aggressive behaviors. But, did meet the goals of showing a decrease in anxiety, increasing confidence, verbalizing emotions, and feeling successful. This student also made some progress towards a decrease in the need for control and improvements in self-regulation.

**Student #3**

Did not generalize the interest in doing barn chores to interest in doing chores at home and still had to have directions repeated in order to remember them. But, did increase his physical strength, felt he was successful, and initiated more responsibility for self.

**Student #4**

Did not show a reduction in repetitive behaviors (stemming). But, did stop screaming at home and made some progress in reducing compulsive behaviors and being more aware of tightly fit clothing.

The mom states: "His screaming has virtually stopped. He still likes his shoes tied tight. He is still more particular, but is now more willing to relax when reminded to do so. He still though has several repetitive behaviors."

#### Student #5

Did not make progress towards the goals of problem solving for self rather than asking for help, taking responsibility for own actions rather than blaming others, and becoming more mature. But, did make progress towards not giving up too quickly and doing chores at home as willingly as at the barn.

The mom states: *"She is aware of the need to do these things, but struggles with the ability to do them. Some of these things she can do at the barn, but I want them transferrable to home."*

#### Student #6

Did not make progress towards his goals of increasing comprehension, becoming more stable, increasing focus, and becoming more independent. He did not make progress towards any of his goals. But, it should be noted that he missed almost half of his lessons.

### Parent Surveys January 2017

Surveys were sent to parents in January 2017 asking about their satisfaction and improvements they'd seen in their child(ren). We received a 67% return rate with the following results.

	Met Expectations	Did Not Meet Expectations
Services your child is receiving.	98%	2%
Progress your child is making.	98%	2%
Communication with your child's instructor.	85%	5%
Volunteers working with your child.	98%	2%
Facility Appearance.	98%	2%
Safety features provided at the barn.	100%	

The surveys were not anonymous so we contacted the one parent who was dissatisfied with everything except safety features. She was unhappy that we could not offer make up lessons for her son for the lessons he missed, even though our cancellation policy clearly states that we cannot offer make up lessons since our schedule is full. We suggested that she might try other riding facilities, but she did not want to leave the barn.

We also contacted the one other person who felt that we did not meet her expectations regarding communication. It was her first term at the barn and she had expected a meeting with the instructor after each lesson. She said that she now understood why that wasn't possible due to back-to-back lessons, but had wanted to honestly indicate that the experience was different than her initial expectation.

Parents were also asked to indicate specific areas in which they had seen improvement since beginning riding lessons. Keeping in mind that not all children may have needed improvement in these areas, the top answers included:

Increased self confidence and self esteem.	76%
Forming relationships with peers and/or others.	65%
Following directions.	58%
Increased communication with parent.	45%
Sequencing steps of a task.	45%
Ability to cope with anxiety.	43%
Ability to cope with frustration.	43%
Appropriate expression of emotions.	40%
Better self regulation and control.	38%

When asked about suggestions for improvements to the barn's programs, many parents indicated they wished their child could ride more than once a week. At this point, due to financial constraints, we are not able to offer this. However, with additional funding we would be in a position to hire and train more instructors as well as invest in additional horses, which would allow us to offer students multiple lessons per week. Ideally, students would be able to ride more than once a week, thus decreasing the amount of time necessary for these generalizations of behaviors to occur.

Another common suggestion was to offer an opportunity for the entire family to participate – both parents and siblings. In response to this suggestion, we plan to expand a family program that was piloted in 2016 (more on that in a separate section).

#### **What did the students think?**

Students were asked what they learned at the barn. In addition to identifying the riding skills they learned, some students identified skills that went beyond the traditional riding skills:

**Listen - AND FOLLOW  
INSTRUCTIONS.**

How to whoa my horse  
with a powerful voice.

To use my words,

What have you learned at the barn? I have learned about trusting and how horses communicate.

What have you learned at the barn?

Listen - and follow instructions.

Learning trot  
A Plus Position  
Steering

What have you learned at the barn? I have <sup>learned</sup> ~~learned~~ how to groom and pet horses I also <sup>learned</sup> ~~learned~~ how to ride it to I can now go on a horse.

What have you learned at the barn? Self control, stay calm, less feisty, social skills, temper management, how to be a better friend to people or animals

## CONCLUSION

We estimate it costs \$204.47 per program hour to operate the Saddle Up program, for a total cost of \$338,602 in 2016, with program income of \$49,431. These costs are higher than other similar agencies due to our teaching primarily private lessons rather than group, but we believe the individualized lessons provide greater and faster results for our students.

There continues to be strong demand for our riding lessons as evidenced in the ever-growing waiting list and parents requesting multiple lessons per week. Students have made progress in their parents' personal goals, as well as in learning to ride. But, the best indication of the program's success is most evident in quotes from the parents:

*I never worry or have any concern what Caison is participating in at The Red Barn. I love the Christian base that leads this amazing group of people to help children succeed. These employees and volunteers have a mission and they are not just at work. They truly care and have a passion for what they do!*

*The Red Barn is so much better than any other activity that we do. Positive reinforcement and self-image building and excitement for others' success is not matched anywhere else. The best thing is that it's genuine and kids can tell the difference.*

*He gets to have the full attention of his instructor and volunteers, and they really understand how he works, or at least take the time to try to understand how his mind works so that they can work towards a common goal together. All of his experiences are positive, even in times of frustration or misunderstandings, because his instructor and volunteers take the time to help him work through and understand different situations. He gets to be himself, so he feels very relaxed and comfortable. It's no pressure. He gets to be creative and give input into his lessons, instead of just being told what to do.*

*The barn is not just an activity, but is an outlet for his feelings and a display of who he is inside.*

*He would come all day every day if he could.*

*Thank you for everything you do for our family. You are heaven sent angels blessing us all immeasurably. It is such a positive, fun place for my child to grow and a balm to this mom's soul. The peace at The Red Barn is palpable and for one hour a week, this special needs mom can rest. Thank you!*

*The barn is an amazing refuge and haven for my daughter. The impact is profound and continues to unfold as time progresses forward. Truly no words can express the gratefulness in our hearts.*

*In the beginning he was afraid of horses. Then, he only wanted to ride the small ones. Now, he wants to ride a big one! He's gotten so much braver. I think this is another amazing way for him to get out of defense mode and improve on our goals for him.*

*Before her brother's death, my daughter was a confident and self-reliant little person. After his death, she had night terrors. She would cry at the drop of a hat. She lost confidence when meeting new people. The opportunities to succeed in a safe environment while being pushed in the right direction have helped her come back out of that shell at a faster rate than before working with all the wonderful people and horses at the barn. Thank you for supporting our family and so many others. It reaches further than you know.*



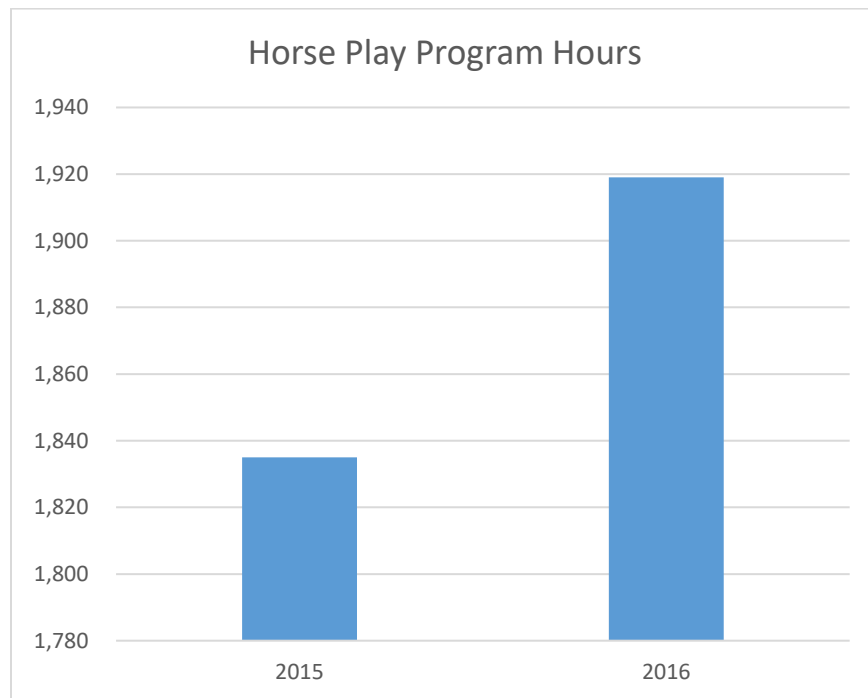
## HORSE PLAY

Our Horse Play program continues to be in high demand. These programs impact students in a different but equally important way than our riding program. Horse Play programs allow those on the waiting list to take part in barn activities. Many of our students do not have a lot of extracurricular activities because of their disabilities. Our Horse Play camps give these students the opportunity to participate in fun activities while learning important life skills. The inconclusiveness of our camps provides our typically developing students the chance to develop empathy while serving as peer models for our students with disabilities.

### HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

#### How many hours of programming were provided?

We held 1,919 hours of Horse Play camps in 2016. Horse Play offers students on the waiting list an opportunity to participate in the Barn experience; however, current Saddle Up students or others from the general public often choose to participate as well. Occasionally riding is offered in a Horse Play session, but this is not typical.



#### Who participated?

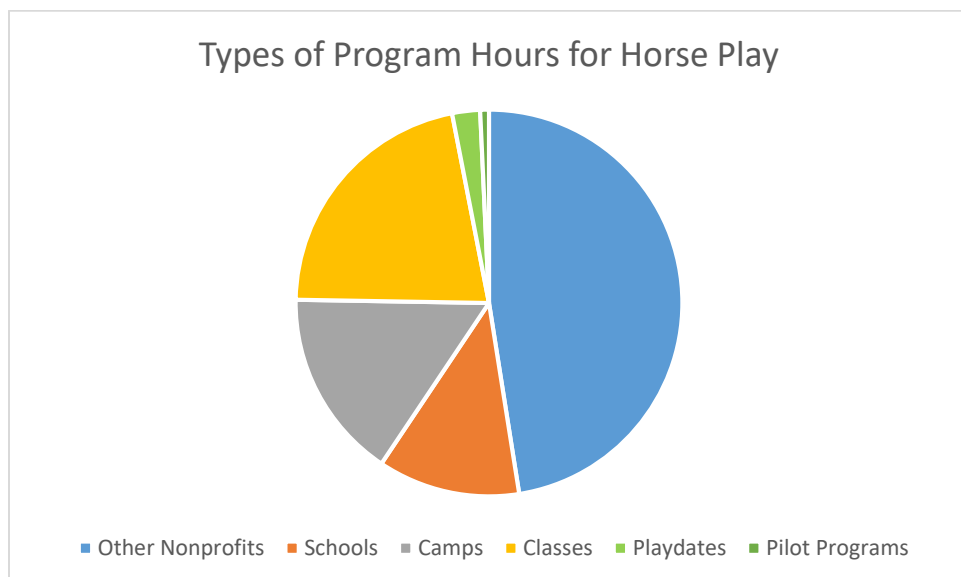
Horse Play is our most diverse program, serving both other organizations and individuals from the community in a variety of programs.





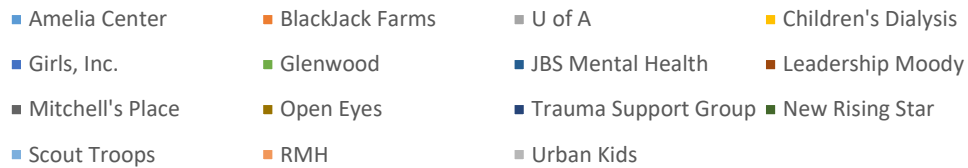
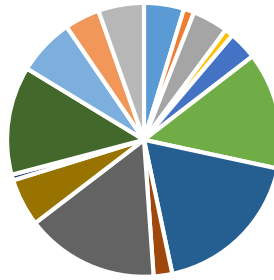
The Horse Play program includes:

- Experiential learning opportunities for other nonprofit agencies and schools.
- One time camps for our current student, wait list students, and the general public.
- Classes that are open to our current students, wait list students, and the general public.
- One time “playdates” for individuals that may not do well in a group setting.
- Pilot program testing.

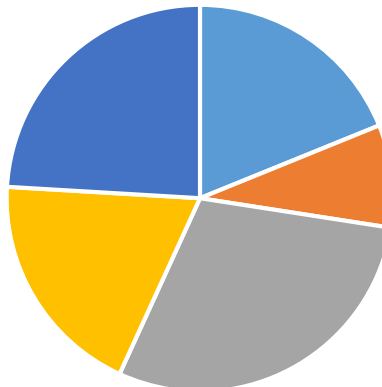


The breakout of program hours for the two largest types (other agencies and classes) is shown below.

### Breakout of Other Nonprofit Agencies Participating in Horse Play



### Breakout of Horse Play Classes



## HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

### What did other agency leaders say?

Surveys were sent to 19 agency contacts, but only 4 were returned. The survey respondents all indicated that they were satisfied (as opposed to not satisfied) with the following statements:

- I am pleased with our experience at The Red Barn.
- I have confidence in the knowledge and abilities of The Red Barn staff.
- I am satisfied with the communication I had with The Red Barn staff.

- If I have a problem at The Red Barn, I know who to contact.
- The facilities at The Red Barn are appropriate for accommodating my agency and clients.
- I feel that my clients are safe at The Red Barn.

Due to the low response rate, we attempted follow up interviews with agency leaders. Debbie Ward, the parent of a past participant, conducted these interviews. The transcript of nine interviews is attached to this report.

Some notable quotes include:

*A lot of my kids are ADHD. During the summer their parents give them a break off their medication. So, we have this one girl who is a lovely child, but just high energy, high energy, high energy! When she got next to Shiloh, she just threw her arms around him and stayed there for like the whole time. Just that calming effect, and some of our kids are really small, just being around a big animal. That was so calm. That was such a good experience for them. Kind of helped them feel, you know, help them feel less afraid. I witnessed first hand the calming effect of the animal, big animals, have on our kids. And, also the empowerment, you know they didn't feel afraid. You know, just felt a little bit braver.*

*I think [the Barn is beneficial on several levels for different children.....I know one person had difficulty just making social connection and things like that, but that was a great way for him to feel comfortable and in that environment to connect socially. For the other kids, it seemed very beneficial just to hang out with other kids who had experienced death like they have so that they know that they are not the only ones out there. Even for the adults it seemed like a really cool connection place too because they would start talking and similar stories came out. So the environment in and of itself seems...relaxed and just that relaxed atmosphere encourages that connection. Grief is lonely, so when there are people who get it, it's really help to them.*

*Like, we did it because he was getting to participate, but he wasn't knowing how therapeutic it was for him. It wasn't something like going to a counselor. And, it had similar results giving him something to be prideful in, something calming. Giving him, you know, responsibility. Little chores. So, it was very helpful. Very beneficial.*

*What I loved is that we talked to them about it and said, "Here's what we are looking for and here's what we kind of do with our program," and y'all just kind of ran with it. We rotated through the different stations through the day, so it was very easy for me because the planning of the day was well taken care of.*

Eight of these interviews indicated that the agency leaders were extremely pleased. The representative from one organization was displeased because she had expected for her participants to ride. Upon hearing this, we looked at the surveys (more on this below) completed by the girls who had attended and their answers were as follows:

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Did you have fun?	15		
Do you want to come back?	12	2	1
Would you recommend your friends to come to the barn?	14	1	
What were your favorite things?	Painting the horses, grooming the horses, taking the nature walk, doing art, and learning about rocks.		

So, even though the agency leader may have been disappointed, it was still an overall pleasant experience for the girls.

### **What did the students think?**

At the end of each group, we ask students to complete a short survey.

The responses for all groups are listed below:

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Did you have fun?	97%	2.6%	.4%
Do you want to come back?	95%	.1%	4.9%
Would you recommend your friends to come to the barn?	93%	2%	5%

The responses for all individuals are listed below:

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Did you have fun?	100%		
Do you want to come back?	97%	3%	
Would you recommend your friends to come to the barn?	90%	6%	4%

The listing of favorite things for both individuals and groups includes almost every activity we could possibly do at the barn.

While we'd like to have 100% of all students agreeing with all questions, we recognize that some of the students attending Horse Play are disappointed that they are not getting to ride and that most of the Horse Play programs take place over the summer when the barn is really hot. Most were being exposed to horses for the first time and it may simply not be their choice of activity.

### **IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?**

This continues to be a difficult question for us to answer about the Horse Play programs. We believe that we could use a standardized measurement instrument for the ongoing classes, but have had difficulty finding one that is appropriate for so many different types of students across a wide range of ages and abilities. We believe that one time experiences can broaden a child's perspective, but do not know yet how to measure that impact.

### **CONCLUSION**

Overall, the Horse Play program provided amazing opportunities for children and adults who would not otherwise be able to participate in our riding lessons due to lack of capacity. But, it is still difficult to determine if attending has actually made an impact on their lives. For our ongoing classes, we will continue to look into appropriate measurements that may be used. We estimate that it costs \$75.80 per program hour to provide the Horse Play program. Using this figure, it cost us \$145,460 in 2016 to provide Horse Play programs, yet they only brought in \$8,345 in program income due to the vast majority of participants not paying at all to attend. As part of our strategic plan, we will examine the structure of continuing this program.

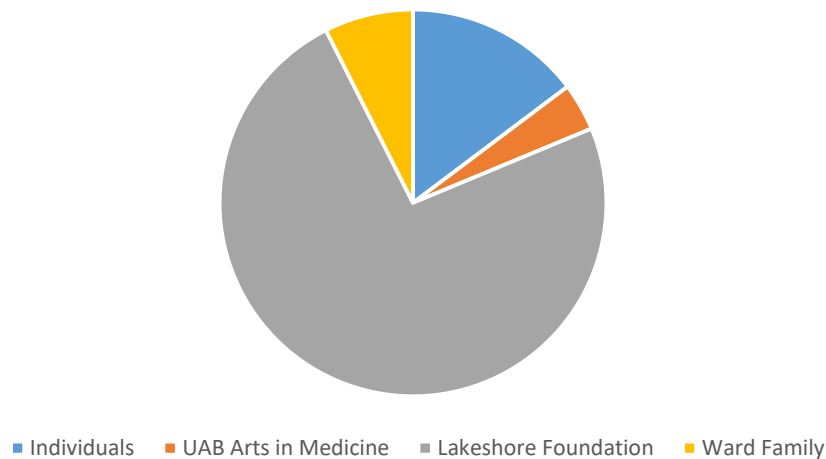
## TAKE THE REINS

Our Take the Reins program is offered to active or inactive military personnel and their families. We offer ongoing sessions for individuals, as well as one time sessions for agencies who work with veterans.

### How Much Did We Do?

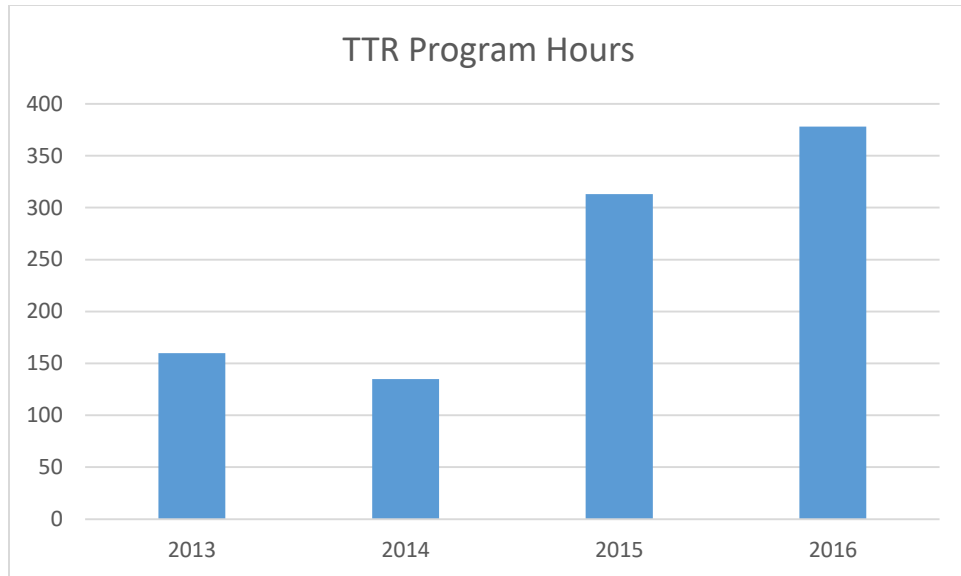
In 2016 we offered 378 hours of Take the Reins programming to individuals and groups.

Take the Reins Program Hours for 2017

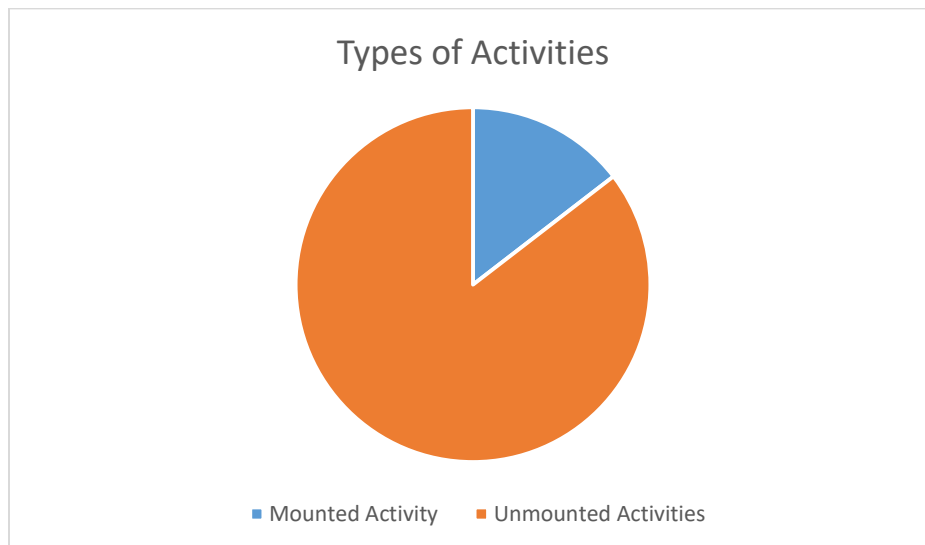


The individuals included 2 children of veterans and 3 individual veterans. The groups included a group of female veterans from UAB's Arts in Medicine Program, 3 groups of veterans from the Lima Foxtrot program at Lakeshore Foundation, and a group of marines visiting with the Ward family before our annual Take the Reins Run.

We are continuing to seek individuals to participate in this program, but as noted by other similar organizations, recruitment can be difficult. In 2017, we had three additional veterans registered for the program, but complications from their diagnosis prevented them from following through with attendance. This was especially frustrating because we had kept their spots open in hopes that they would eventually attend.



Most Take the Reins sessions are unmounted activities with horses, but some individuals participating in weekly sessions do ride. The unmounted activities include painting, leading, and grooming horses or other activities such as art, music, and nature.



## HOW WELL DID WE DO IT AND IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?

The goal of Take the Reins is to provide a relaxing environment for attendees, so we do not want to interrupt their experience by asking them to complete a survey. However, interviews with participants and participating group organizers indicate that participants appear more relaxed at the barn and that the barn's atmosphere promotes conversation and relaxation. Some quotes from the interviews are below:

*The barn has provided a place for them to discuss the invisible wounds they carry with them every day. He [one of the participants] told me being able to discuss and share with one another has allowed them to be able to see what they endured is no longer a detriment, but can now be labeled as a 'life experience.' That tells me that they are learning to 'reframe' their story. I feel like this is a wonderful advancement in social skills and communication. - Leader of a group visiting The Red Barn*

*The [leading exercise with Kaspar] by itself was great, but the application to the rest of my life was really good, too. You have obstacles in life that you have to go over, around, or through. So we discussed obstacles that I have in the rest of my life that in the past I've gone over, around, or through. And, ones that I am facing now. It was a really good lesson for relationships. - Individual adult participant*

*I am always more relaxed and I feel more at peace when I am leaving than compared to when I get there. Instead of being anxious about something that is going to happen or about something that has happened, I'm more in the here and now. - Individual adult participant*

*The doctors told us he'd never walk, talk, or crawl and that he'd be a vegetable the rest of his life. Well, he beat those goals and now we've set new ones - like riding a horse. When we first started the side walkers....bless their hearts...they would have to take turns, stop, and change sides because their arms and shoulders were so tired doing their job keeping him on and secure. Now, this spring, they were at one finger on his leg. This summer, no fingers on his legs at all. He's got his hands out to the side like he's just flying. Like on the Titanic almost! The freedom that I see in his face and the friendship and fellowship is amazing. The trust he has in this facility has brought such peace to him in his life. - Mother of a military child with CP.*

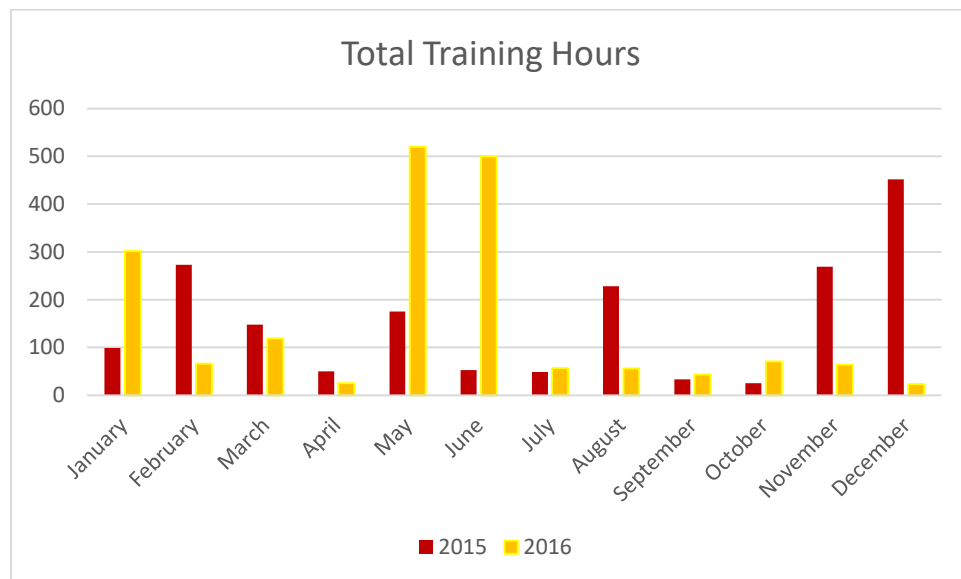


## TRAINING

The training program was created in 2015 due to a shortage of available training programs for our current staff, future instructors, and volunteers. More explanation about the reasons for creating this program can be found in the 2015 program evaluation.

### HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

We provided 1,845 hours of training in 2016, compared to 1,855 in 2015.



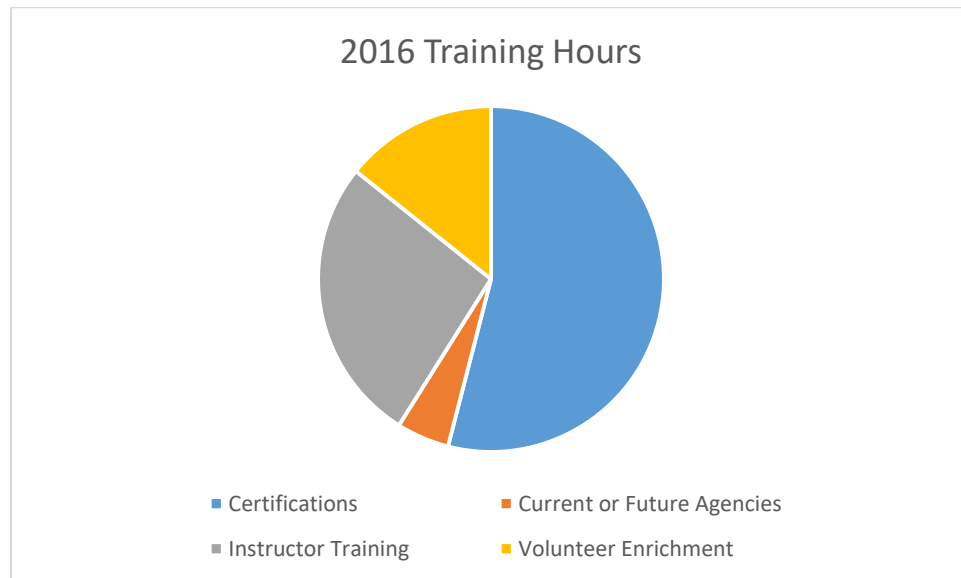
The following types of trainings were provided:

**Certifications:** We held a Natural Lifemanship Fundamentals training, a PATH workshop and certification, several Horse Boy certifications for movement method and horse boy riding, and a Special Olympics riding coach certification. There is more information on these trainings below.

**Instructor Training:** We provided ongoing continuing education for our own instructors, as well as assisting individuals to begin the instructor training process. These hours included riding lessons, hands-on horsemanship, guest speakers, how-to seminars, and mentored hours for those wishing to become riding instructors.

**Volunteer Enrichment:** We provided our current volunteers with ongoing educational opportunities about disabilities and horsemanship. This does not include the basic training and orientation to become a volunteer.

Current or Future Agencies: We provided informational clinics and meetings for nine agencies at various stages of development.



### HOW WELL DID WE DO IT AND IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?

We are still struggling to determine the best way to answer these two questions without creating too much administrative burden. Below is information that attempts to answer these questions.

### CERTIFICATIONS

We hosted four different certifications in 2016: Natural Lifemanship, Horse Boy, PATH, and Special Olympics.

**Natural Lifemanship** is a 3 day training based on contemporary research that explains the physiological and psychological impact of chronic stress and trauma on human development. Their methods intentionally use horse physiology to regular human physiology and horse psychology to heal human psychology. They focus on developing the relationship between the student and their horse as the foundation of developing healthy relationships with other people.

Eleven of our employees completed the training, as did two of our volunteers. Four individuals from other organizations completed the training. Five other individuals attended part of the training, but did not complete it.

**Horse Boy** offers two certifications: movement method and horse boy riding. The movement method certification is primarily for educators and does not include any work with horses. Instead, it replicates some of the benefits of basic horse movements by using other methods of

bi-lateral, repetitive movement, such as bouncy balls, trampolines, running, walking, etc. There are three levels of movement method certification.

Six of our employees and one individual from another agency were certified in movement method level three. Twenty four individuals from the community were certified in movement method level one. Fifty occupational therapy students attended a three hour introductory lecture about the benefits of movement method.

The horse boy riding method focuses on training the horses to give maximum input for the rider, especially riders with autism or other neuro-psychological disorders. There are four levels of certification in the horse boy riding method. One of our employees received level four certification, after receiving level three earlier in the year at a training held in Texas.

**The PATH workshop** is a 2 ½ day workshop that is required to become a riding instructor candidate. It is common to attend the workshop at least twice, but sometimes more in order to become confident in all of the material covered. The **PATH certification** is a 1 ½ day test that is given to instructor candidates. It is recommended that individuals may take the workshop and certification at separate times. Nine individuals attended the workshop. Four of those nine also attempted the certification test, but only one passed. None of these individuals attending were from The Red Barn.

**Special Olympics** is a half day training that is required to become a Special Olympics coach. After attending the training, individuals must complete an online test and have documented hours of working with Special Olympic eligible children. Eight employees attended the training and passed the certification.

## **CURRENT AND FUTURE AGENCIES**

We hosted six training sessions targeting current and future agencies. Twelve individuals total attended these training sessions in 2016. These participants represented agencies that can be divided in to three equal parts: Newly started agencies, already established agencies and not-started agencies.

A survey given after they participated evaluated their satisfaction in their time at The Red Barn. When asked what they were hoping to gain by attending the training, participants responded that they either wanted to gain equine knowledge, better business practices, or knowledge on how to become a certified therapeutic instructor. 100% of participants responded that they we met their training goals, that they would recommend us to similar agencies, and that they are better prepared in running their agency because of their time at The Red Barn.

## **INSTRUCTOR TRAINING**

These hours can be divided into two primary types: hours spent to help individuals either become certified instructors or to help current instructors improve their skills.

In 2016, two of our program assistants were able to attend a CHA clinic to become certified riding instructors. A third program assistant became a PATH certified riding instructor. Three employees were certified in Horse Boy Riding Method at level three. Note, that we did not host either of these trainings, but rather sent the employee to another location to become certified.

One of our major events in this program is our CEU-palooza, which is designed to help riding instructors complete their continuing education requirements, but is also open to anyone from the community interested in the topics. The design of this event makes it the easiest to evaluate since it has a definite beginning and ending, unlike the hours spent training someone to become an instructor.

Thirty unduplicated individuals attended the event and we received twenty-nine post-event surveys indicating:

- 100% of all respondents enjoyed attending.
- Half of the respondents would like to attend a similar event once a quarter and 43% indicated they would like to attend a similar event once a month.

### **VOLUNTEER ENRICHMENT**

The volunteer evaluation is a separate document and gives more detail about the impact of the volunteer enrichment hours. However, note that 100% of volunteers completing the survey felt that they had adequate training in order to perform their assigned tasks with excellence.

### **CONCLUSION**

Overall, we provided approximately the same amount of total training hours in 2016 as we did in 2015. The continuity in number of hours and participant satisfaction indicate that this is a meaningful and worthwhile program. In the future, our goal is to evaluate how trainings are classified in Salesforce so that we can improve upon our record keeping and Program Evaluations.

## **PILOT FAMILY PROGRAM**

Two families participated in a pilot program in 2016. Families were selected at the recommendation of instructors because they were known to be struggling with their relationships. Families met weekly for eight weeks with an occupational therapist and other staff.

Family #1 included a mom and her 13 year old daughter. The father and other siblings (older brother and sister) were not able to attend. The daughter has language and gross motor delays.

Family #2 included a mom, dad, and their 11 year old newly adopted daughter. The daughter has been through significant abuse and neglect in the past and also has ADHD and a developmental delay.

At the end of the term, the parent completed this survey:

### **What parts of the program were useful? Why?**

Family #1: I found the whole program to be useful and beneficial to us. Some specific things are:

- The color cards to help communicate emotion.
- The fidget toys for refocus.
- Hearing what things are important to Anna (named changed) as strengths and why. This helps me to understand her perspective better.
- Using the horses! Seeing how they respond to pressure much like people do.

It was great to hear new ideas and try and get a different view point of ways to diffuse situations. It was nice to be able to talk about what's going on and not feel like you're being judged as it often feels in real world situations.

Family #2: Hands on experience with the horses. We were able to practice what we had talked about and it helped in understanding why we do things.

### **What parts of the program were not useful? Why?**

Family #1: I didn't feel that any areas were not useful. Each session I was able to take away useful information that we could use.

Family #2: The technical part. Neither my husband nor our daughter understood the different levels of the brain and which part we were currently in.

**Are there any particular topics you were hoping to get help with that we did not address?**

Family #1: Did not answer.

Family #2: There are so many topics to choose from that there isn't enough time. We addressed our frustration getting ready for school and bed. That was very helpful.

**What other suggestions do you have to improve the programs?**

Family #1: I cannot think of anything. The daily session length was good. The teachers worked well together. The program had a good balance of us working together as a team and also separately on our own tasks. Thank you for letting us be a part of the program. We have already seen changes in behavior coming from ideas in the class and look forward to continuing implementing these strategies!

Family #2: Each family will have their own agenda and topics they want to work on. I feel that Brenda (name changed) really didn't understand what was going on or what was required of her. When we began working with the horses I think she understood better. In our case a hands on approach is better than a written or reading approach. The schedule that was created was excellent!! The staff was awesome. They enjoy what they do and really want to help others. Thank you for letting us be in the pilot program.

Due to the positive feedback from both families, we will continue this program in 2017.