



2017 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.

One day, we would also like to use independent case studies as a program evaluation tool.

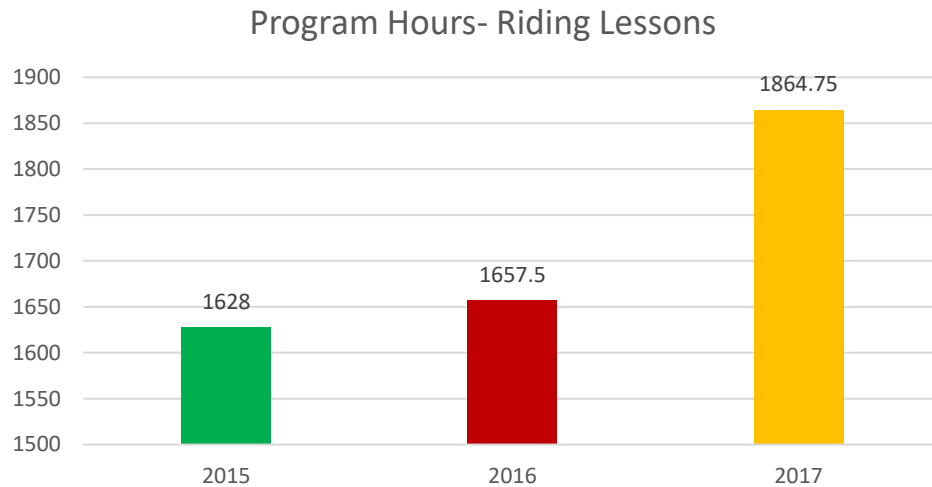
The use of documented results to guide our program development is an essential concept of the barn's Specific, Methodical, and Consistent (SMaC) model that outlines our strategies for success.

SADDLE UP

HOW MUCH DID WE DO?

How many lessons did we teach in 2016?

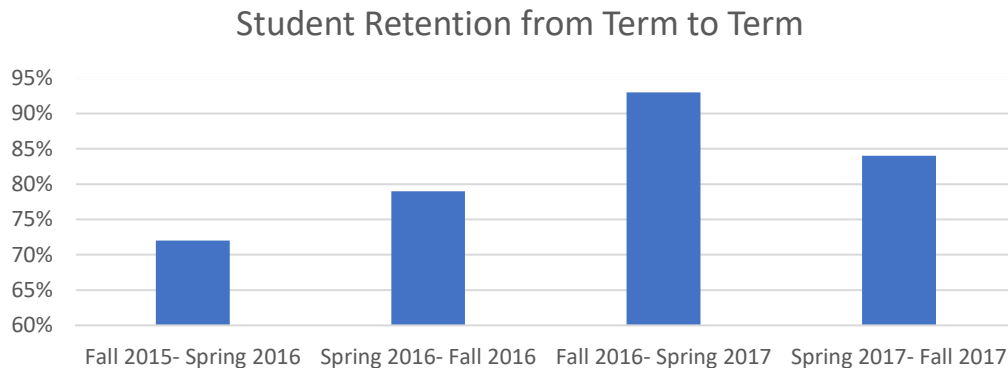
We taught 1,741 lessons, totaling 1,864.75 program hours in 2017. Almost all lessons were individual, with 30% being small group lessons of two or three students.



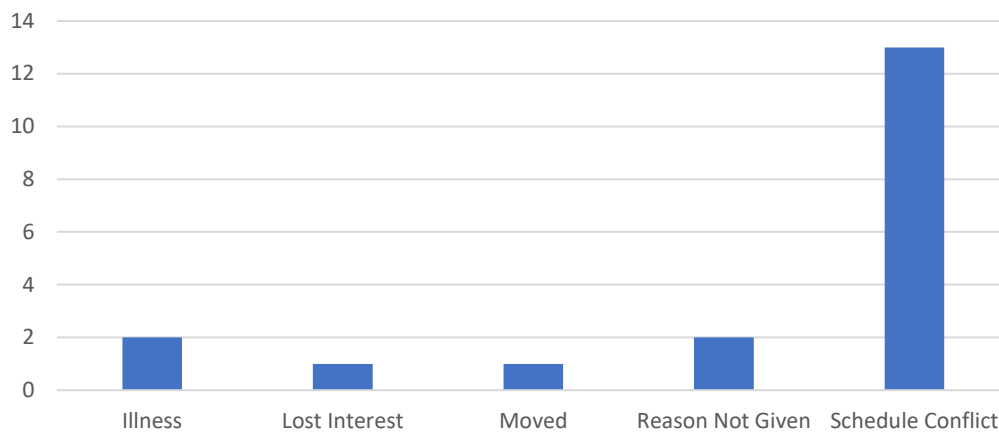
HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

What is our student retention?

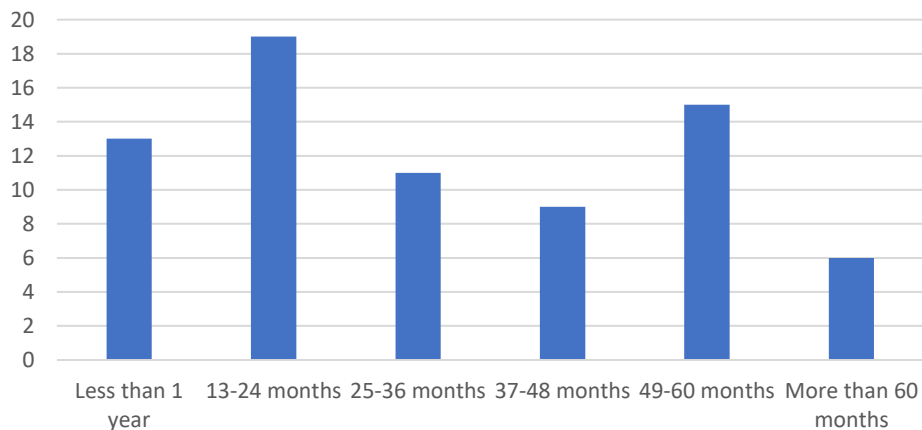
Student retention rates are given below, as well as the reasons given for leaving the program. The length of time students in the fall of 2017 have been riding with us is also shown. The reasons for stopping lessons are predominantly out of our control, indicating that there is not much we can do to increase student retention. Our student retention rate almost always drops from Spring to Fall, as student's school and extracurricular schedule changes and they may not be able to continue riding due to schedule conflicts. With such high retention rates, the only way to increase the size of the program would be to increase our number of horses and instructors.



Reasons for Stopping Lessons in 2017



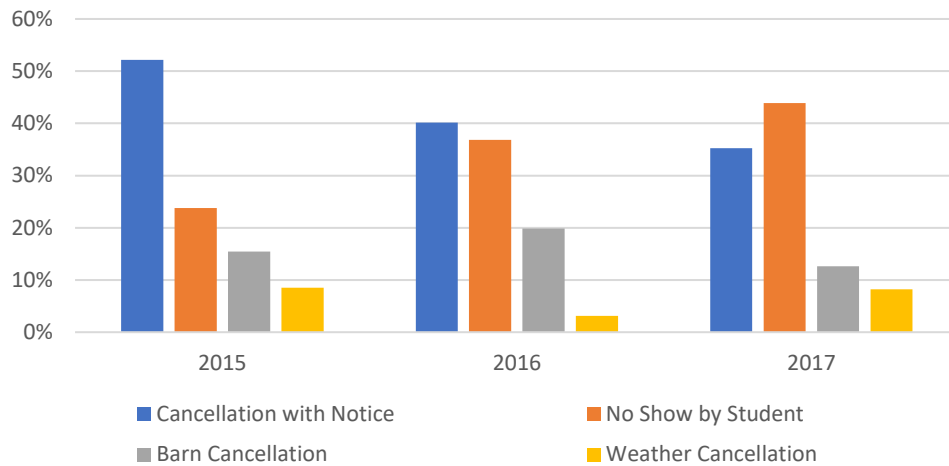
Current Students as of December 31, 2017 Length of Time Riding at TRB



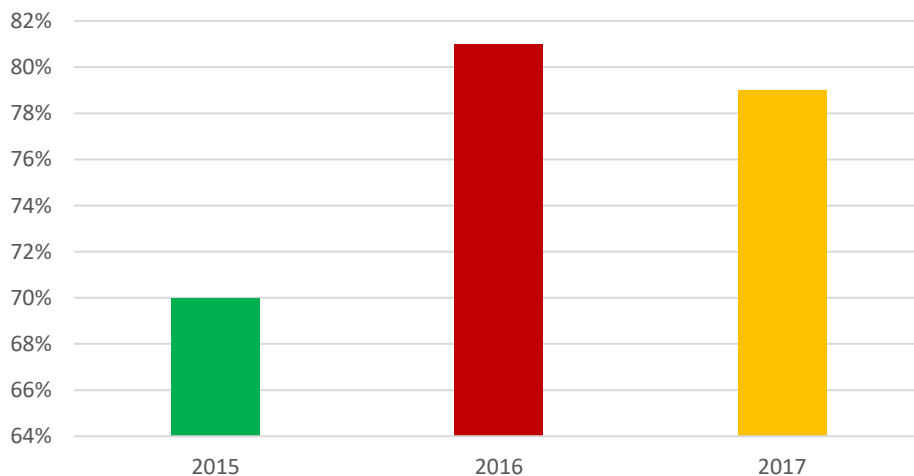
What percent of scheduled lessons was taught?

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. In 2017, the percentage of lessons taught dropped 2% from 81% in 2016 to 79% in 2017. However, weather cancellations and student no-shows both increased in 2017, both of which are out of the barn's control.

Reasons for Lesson Cancellations



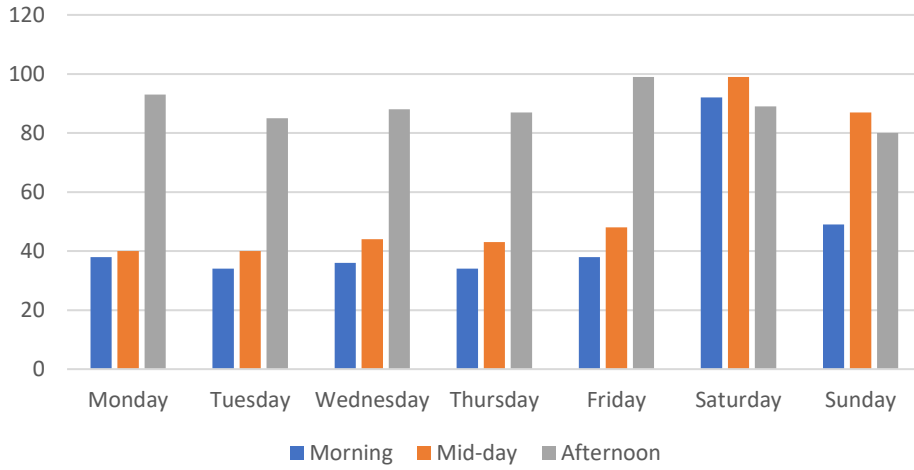
Percentage of Lessons Taught



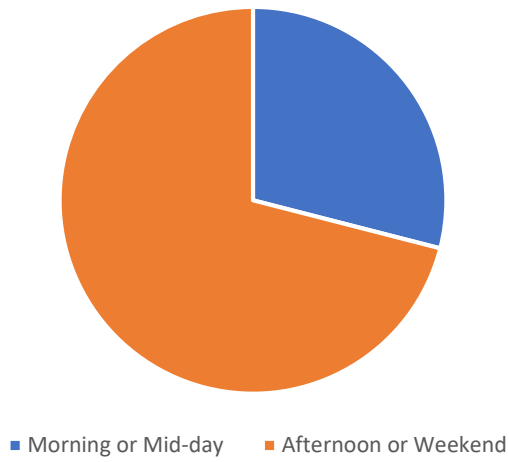
What is the demand for the program?

There are currently 189 students on the waitlist. We are working to get more students off the waitlist and in to programs. In 2017, we started conducting waitlist evaluations on Saturday with help from AED student's from UAB. These evaluations allow us to interview the parents and observe the students around horses and with their peers, giving us a better understanding of where they would fit at the Barn. Ideally, we would like to complete these evaluations as soon as possible after receiving their initial paperwork, allowing us to best match them with a program as quickly as possible. However, the majority of wait list students indicate afternoon or weekend availability. To accommodate for this, we would have to hire more instructors and expand our horse herd. Approximately 42% of the students on the wait list indicate that they need a scholarship in order to attend. The average age of a waiting list student is 11 years old.

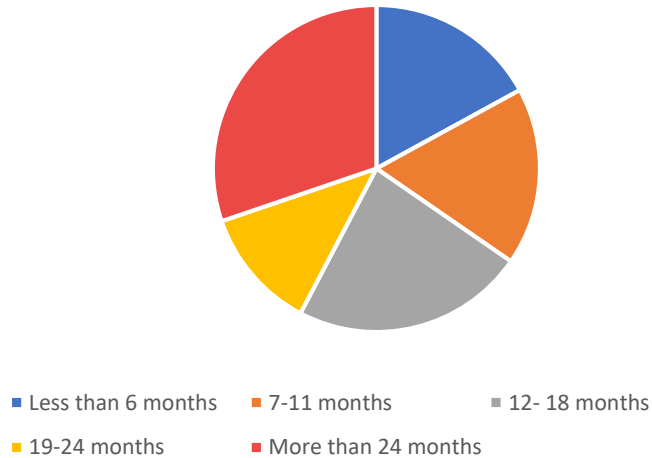
Wait List Availability by Day



Wait List Availability



Waiting Time of Current Wait List Students

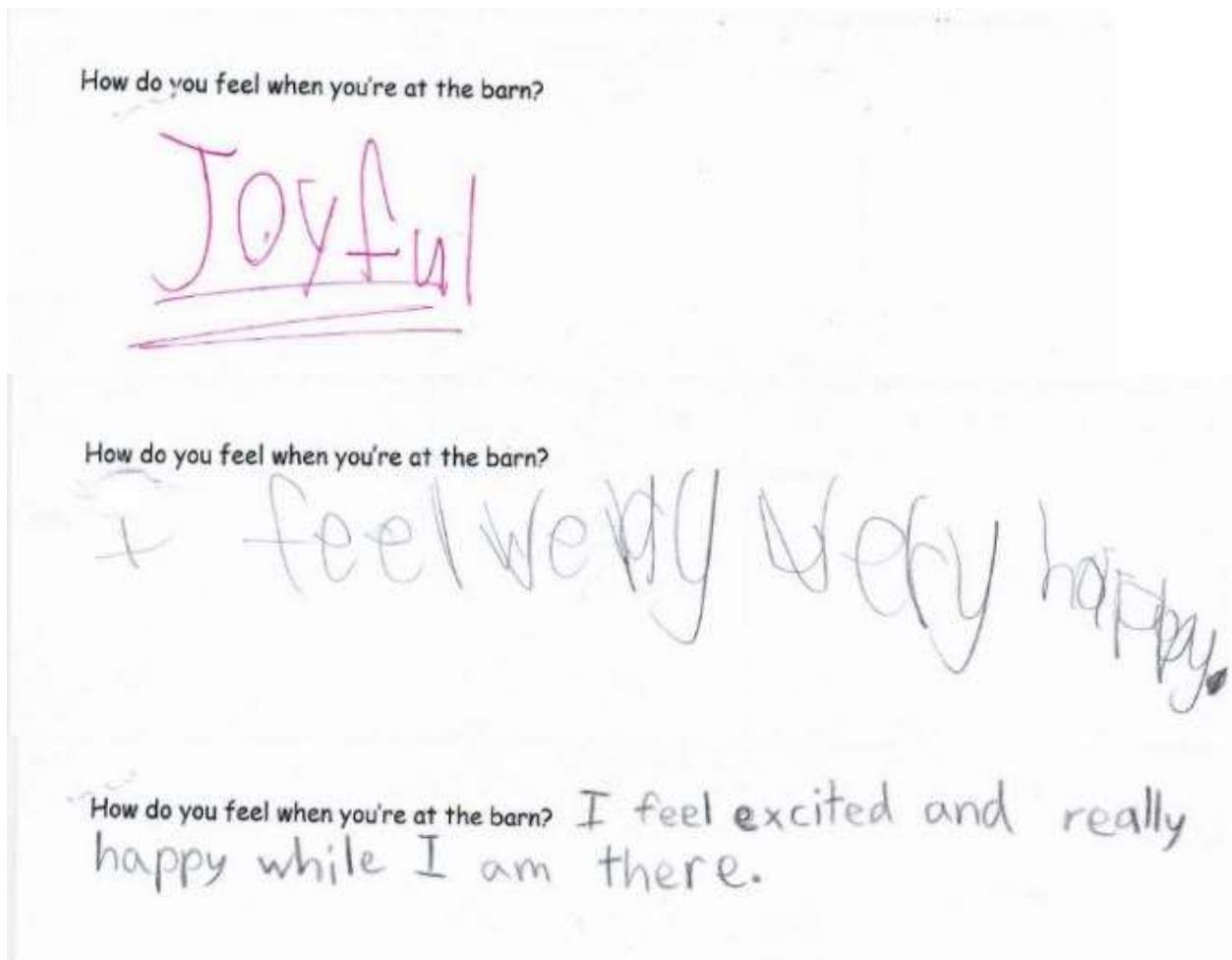


What did the students think?

A survey was sent to all 91 students who participated at Saddle Up at some point during 2017. We have received 15 surveys back, for a 24% response rate. The students who indicated that they did not like grooming said that they have allergies that make grooming unpleasant. The results were as follows:

2017	Happy Face	Frowning Face
I like coming to the barn.	100%	0%
I like to groom.	87%	13%
I like to ride.	100%	0%
Coming to the barn is one of my favorite things to do.	93%	7%
I want to come back to the barn.	100%	0%

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



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.

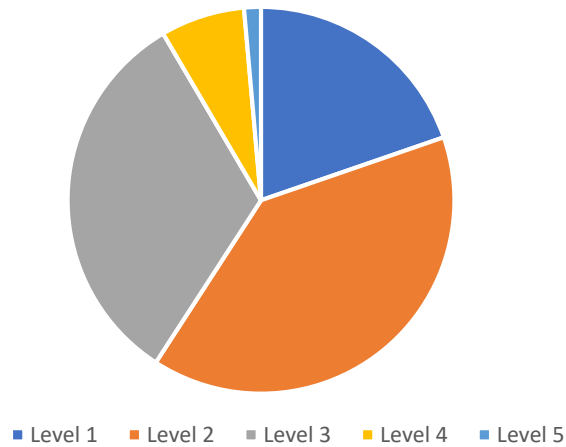
Level 5

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.

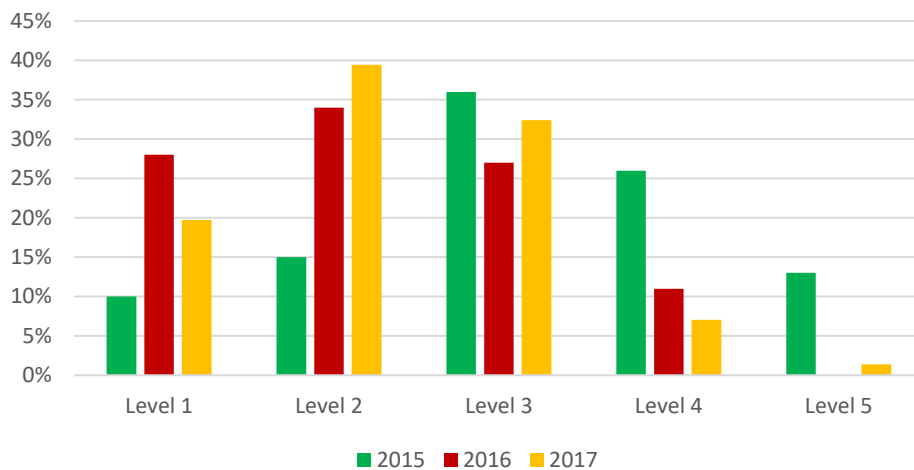
Students progress at their own pace, but in a methodical way. Some skills are mastered quickly, and sometimes it may take longer to master others. The point of the RIDES system is not to compare students to each other, but only to identify that skill mastery is indeed taking place over time and to outline logical riding skill progression.

RIDES levels also help us identify horse and volunteer need. For example, the graph below indicates that most students are on levels 1 and 2, which require the horse to have a volunteer leader.

RIDES Levels at end of Fall 2017



RIDES Levels over Time at End of Fall Term



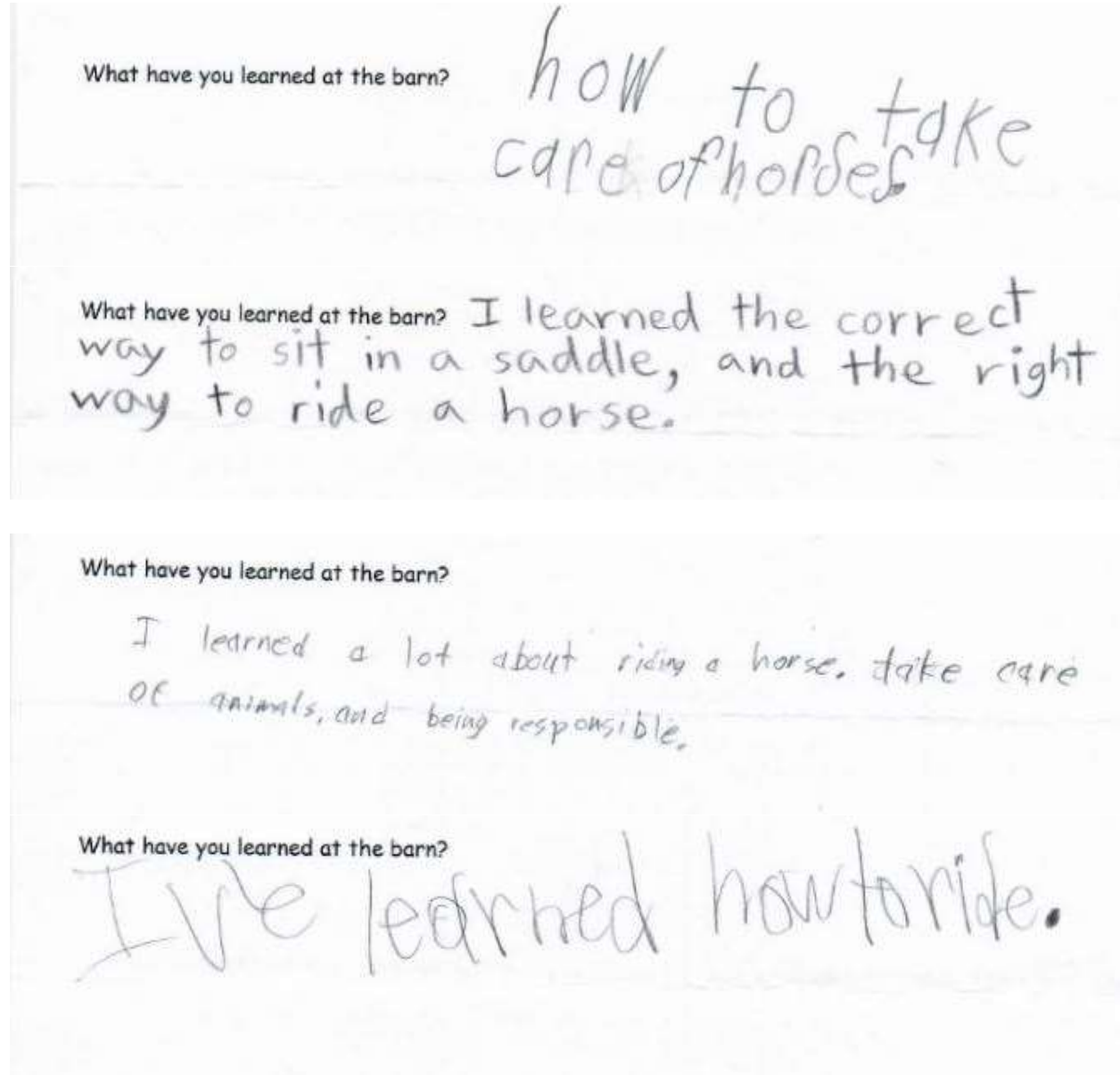
Were there any incident reports?

In the Saddle Up program, there were five incident reports in 2017. While this may initially look like a large number, it represents less than .2% of our total lessons taught. Four students fell off during a lesson. Of those four, three students remounted to finish their lesson and one student went to the hospital after falling off. Although she was not injured by the fall, an ambulance was called as a precautionary measure due to a pre-existing condition. The final incident report was due to a student being dismounted after a horse stumbled during their riding lesson.

IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?

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:



What have you learned at the barn?

how to take
care of horses

What have you learned at the barn?

I learned the correct
way to sit in a saddle, and the right
way to ride a horse.

What have you learned at the barn?

I learned a lot about riding a horse, take care
of animals, and being responsible.

What have you learned at the barn?

I've learned how to ride.

CONCLUSION

We estimate that it costs \$209 per program hour to operate the Saddle Up program, for a total cost of \$389,785 per year. These costs are higher than other similar agencies because we focus on teaching private, rather than group lessons. We believe that individualized lessons allow us to customize each session for that student's unique needs, allowing them to progress faster accomplish more. However, individual lessons do require more staff, horses and volunteers to operate, hence the higher cost per hour.

The demand for our programs remains strong, as evidenced by our growing waitlist and high student retention.

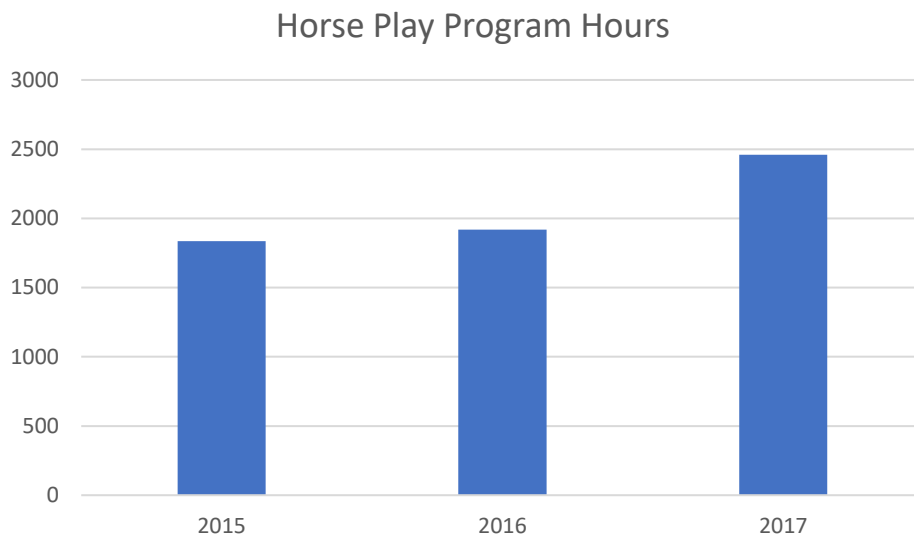
HORSE PLAY

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 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?

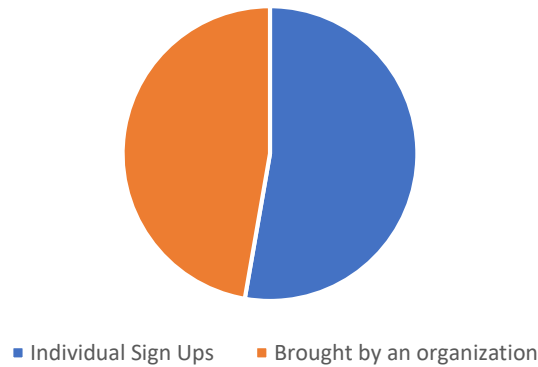
We held 2,433.5 hours of Horse Play camps in 2017. Horse Play offers students on the waiting list an opportunity to participate in the Barn experience; however, current Saddle Up students or others from the general public often choose to participate as well. Occasionally riding is offered in a Horse Play session, but this is not typical.



Who participated?

Our Horse Play programs serve both other organizations and individuals from the community. In 2017, our number of individual sign ups has increased as we have focused on offering more ongoing camps, classes or individual sessions.

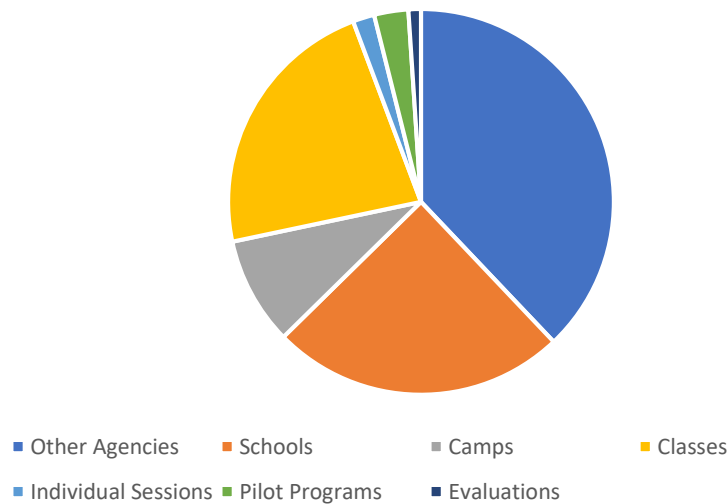
Horse Play Participants



The Horse Play program includes:

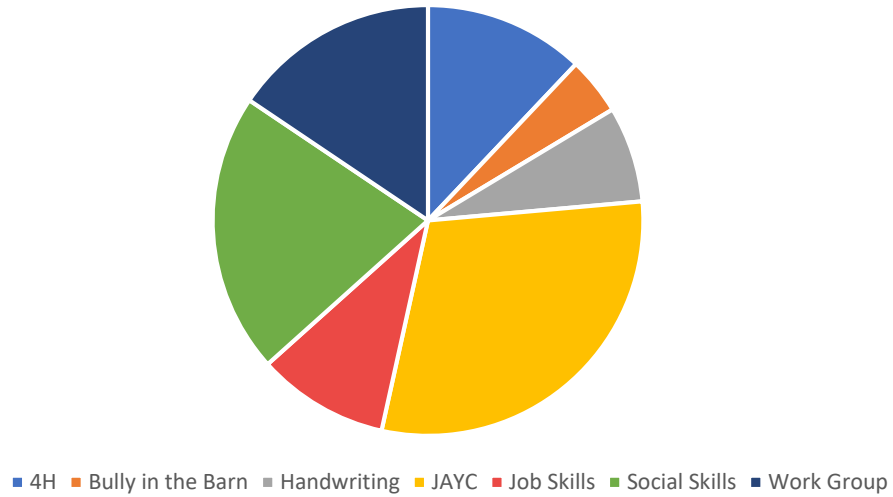
- Experiential learning opportunities for other nonprofit agencies and schools.
- One-time camps for our current students, wait list students, and the general public.
- Classes that are open to our current students, wait list students, and the general public.
- Individual sessions with participants that have a specific focus.
- Pilot program testing.
- Evaluations for wait list students.

Types of Program Hours for Horse Play

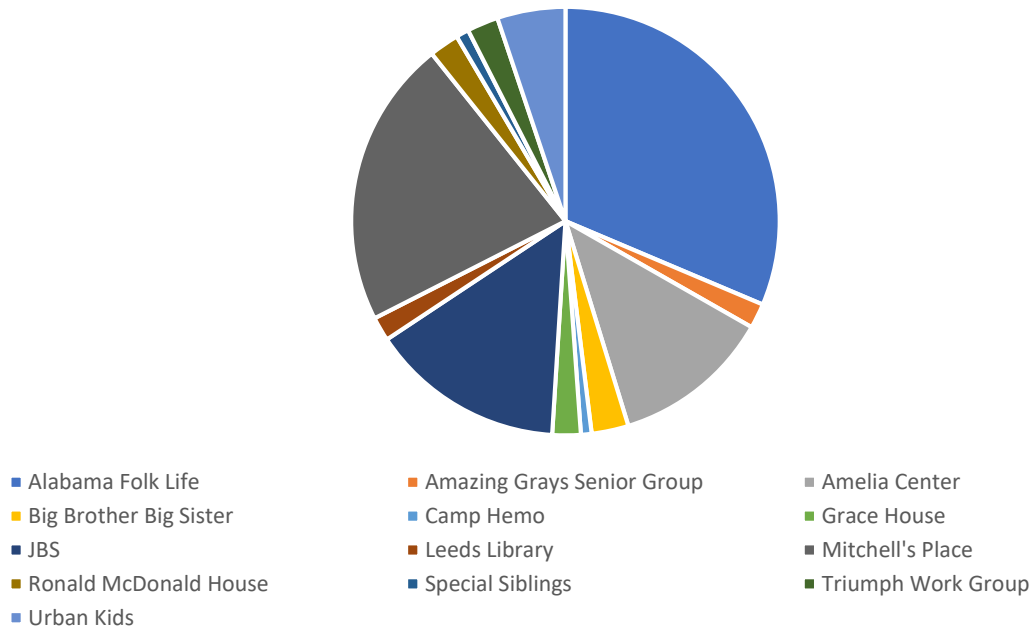


The breakout of program hours for the three largest types (other agencies, schools and classes) is shown below.

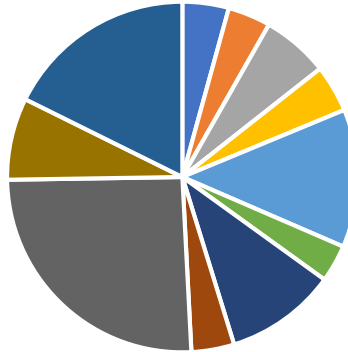
Breakout of Horse Play Classes



Breakout of Other Nonprofit Agencies Participating in Horse Play



Breakout of School Groups



- Altamont School
- Cahaba Academy
- Center Point High School
- Faith Community Christian School
- Georgetown College
- Leeds Elementary School
- Leeds Key Club
- Moody High Special Ed
- UAB AED
- UAB Low Vision
- Westminster

HOW WELL DID WE DO IT?

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:

2017	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Did you have fun?	95.2%	4.4%	.4%
Do you want to come back?	90.7%	7.3%	2.0%
Would you recommend your friends to come to the barn?	91.8%	6.6%	1.6%

The responses for all individuals are listed below:

2017	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Did you have fun?	99%	1%	0%
Do you want to come back?	98%	1%	1%
Would you recommend your friends to come to the barn?	88%	11%	1%

There was such a wide array of favorite things listed that it was impossible to narrow it down to one list. It included everything from nature, painting, the horses, and the goats.

IS ANYONE BETTER OFF?

This continues to be difficult to answer for Horse Play programs. While using a standardized assessment would be beneficial to measure improvement, we have had difficulty finding one that is appropriate for such a wide variety of students and experiences. To determine impact following our summer horse play sessions, we asked our student's parents to provide feedback. The responses were overwhelmingly positive, supporting the idea that while our Horse Play programs do make a lasting impact on the students we serve. Several quotes from the parents are listed below.

He had a blast! I have never seen him so motivated to participate in something. He absolutely loves the horses. They have really made a difference with him. Thank you for providing this wonderful camp.

He felt proud of his work and would share what he had done with others. They were able to choose from available jobs - so that they were doing something of interest to them. He got positive reinforcement for some emerging behaviors - social and workplace interactions with adults. He has good instincts and that was able to be acknowledged. I didn't see him working with horse - but I'm sure that meant a lot to him. His favorite part was probably having people to interact with - Connor, Ellen, etc. were great at having good conversations with him. He is a people person!

The Red Barn job skills training program was more than just how to perform and interact in a job situation. The program increased his self-confidence. The life-skills of goal setting, performing and self-reflection were developed - crucial skills as he moves into adulthood.

Supporting the Red Barn gives children and families a place of solace. Peace exists in an indescribable way when you drive through the gates. Not only are the children strengthened physically and emotionally, but parents are renewed and families thrive because of all the Red Barn continually gives to its participants.

CONCLUSION

The Horse Play program provides invaluable opportunities for students who can not participate in our riding lessons. These programs also provide a safe space for our students to practice appropriate social interactions with their peers. While it is still difficult to determine the degree of impact, we believe that the demand and positive feedback from both participants and parents indicate that these programs are beneficial. We will continue to look for more appropriate assessment tools as we further improve our program evaluation practices. We estimate that it costs \$68 per program hour to provide a Horse Play program. It cost us \$165,512 in 2017 to provide Horse Play programs, yet we only made \$7,248 from providing these programs. The vast majority of participants are not paying to attend, and we are planning to examine the financial structure of this program as a part of our strategic plan.

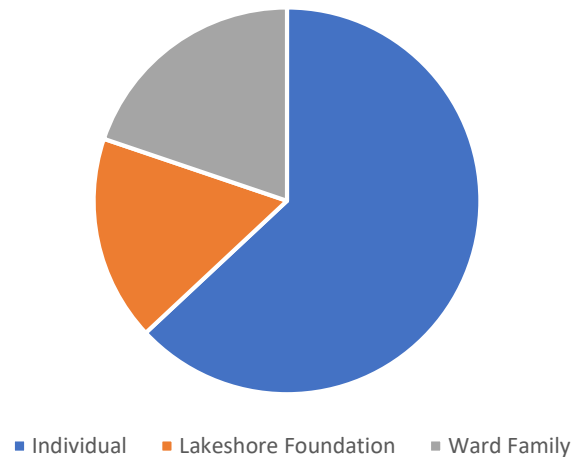
TAKE THE REINS

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 2017 we provided 226.25 hours of Take the Reins programs to individuals and groups.

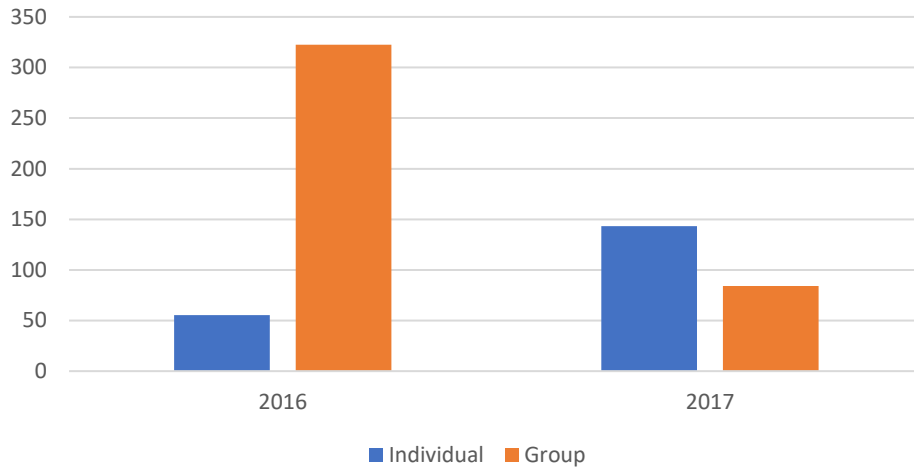
Take the Reins Program Hours for 2017



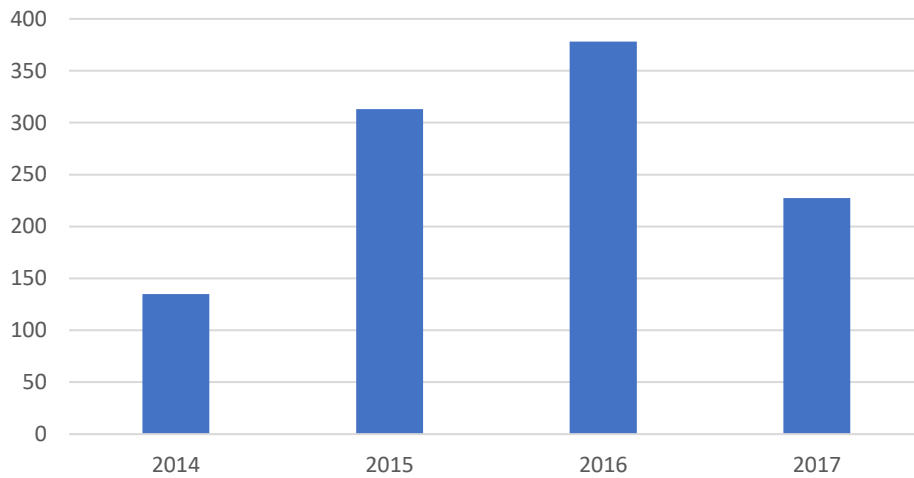
While our total hours for the Take the Reins program has decreased since 2016, we have drastically increased the hours provided to individuals in the Take the Reins program. Individual sessions are able to be individualized to the student's needs, giving more depth to their time spent at the barn. A group of marines visiting with the Ward family visited the barn prior to the Take the Reins race. In 2017, we only had one group of veterans from Lakeshore visit, as opposed to three groups in 2016. This difference explains the drop in Take the Reins program hours in 2017. A graph displaying this information is below.

Recruitment for this demographic has always been difficult, but we are hoping that the increase in individual sessions indicates more interest in our services. We had three additional veterans register for the program in 2017, but complications with their diagnosis prevented them from attending.

Individual or Group Take the Reins Hours by Year

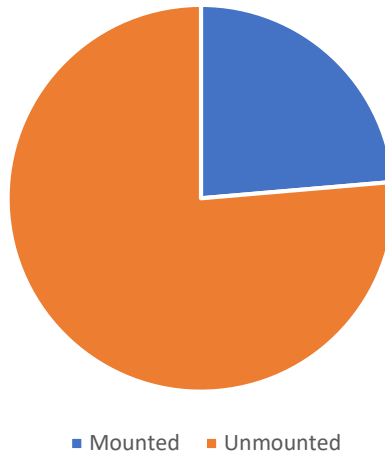


TTR Program Hours



Most Take the Reins sessions are unmounted activities such as painting, leading, grooming, art, music or nature. Some individuals participating in weekly sessions do ride, and the percentage of mounted hours has increased with our increase of these individual sessions.

Types of Activities



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.

Were there any incident reports?

One participant stumbled and fell while doing an unmounted activity, but was uninjured.

CONCLUSION

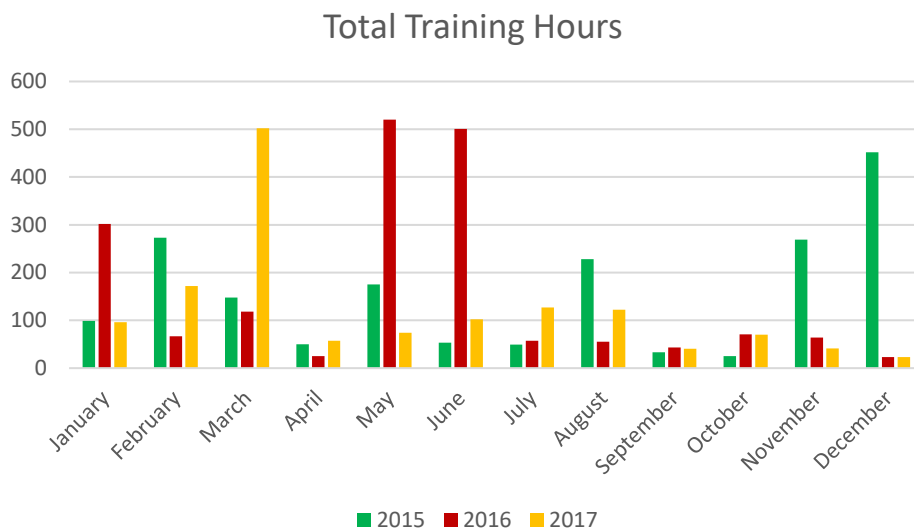
We estimate it costs \$303 per program hour to operate the Take the Reins program, for a total of \$68,478 per year. These services are free of charge, so we do not make any income from these programs. However, we are very passionate about providing affordable and meaningful programs to our veterans. We will continue to examine the best method of evaluating our veterans program.

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 1,428.15 hours of training in 2017, compared to 1,845 hours in 2016.



The following types of trainings were provided:

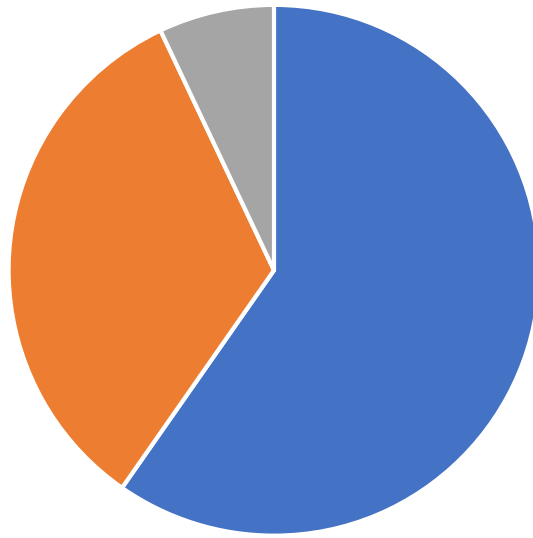
Instructor Training: We provided ongoing continuing education for our own instructors and program staff, as well as assisting individuals to begin the instructor training process. These hours included riding lessons, hands-on horsemanship, guest speakers, how-to seminars, and mentored hours for those 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 15 individuals who were either working at an already established similar agency, or who were wanting to establish their own in the future.

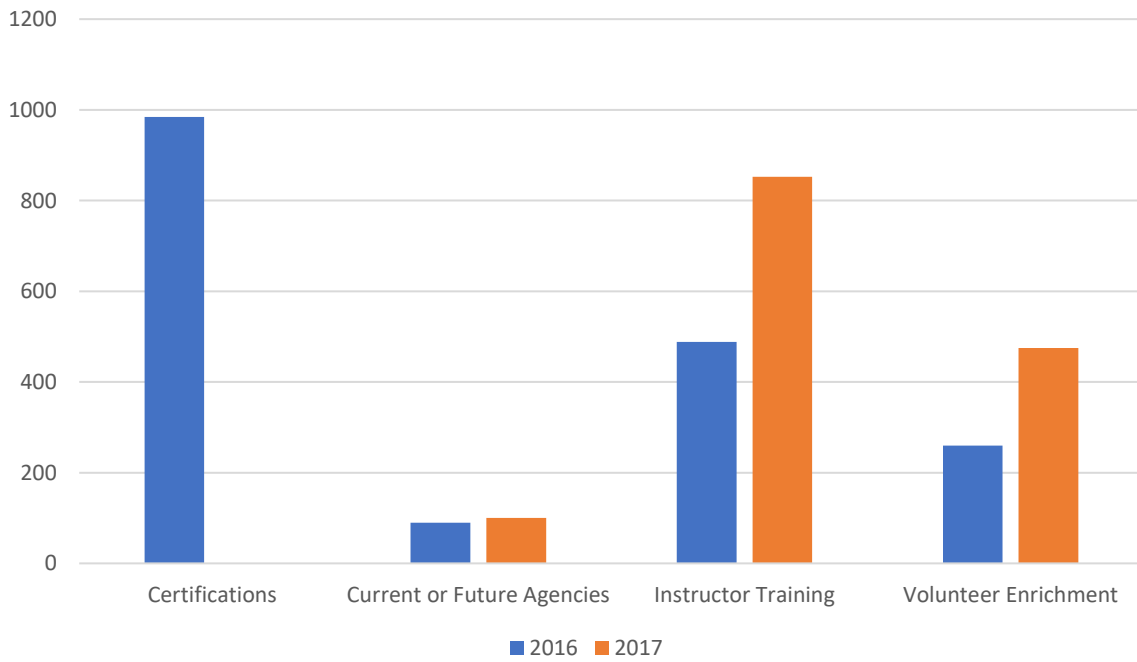
In previous years, most of our training hours were earned by hosting different certifications. We chose not to host any certifications in 2017, and instead chose to focus on training our current instructors and providing them with opportunities to expand their knowledge and expertise.

2017 Training Hours



■ Instructor Training ■ Volunteer Enrichment ■ Current or Future Agencies

Hours per Training Type



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

CURRENT AND FUTURE AGENCIES

Twenty-two people attended training for current and future agencies. These participants represented individuals that can be divided into three categories: Newly started agencies, already established agencies and not-started agencies. 63% had not started agencies, 27% were newly started agencies and 10% were already established agencies.

A survey given following their training session evaluated their satisfaction with The Red Barn. When asked what they hoped to gain by attending, participants responded that they wanted to learn how to start a center and about daily operations and activities of an existing center. 100% responded that we met their goals, that they would recommend us to similar agencies and that they are better prepared to run their agency because of our training.

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 2017, two program assistants attended certifications at other agencies to become riding instructors. One attended a CHA clinic while the other attended a PATH clinic.

Our largest Instructor Training event this year was our CEU-palooza, which is designed to help riding instructors from both The Red Barn and similar agencies. The nature 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.

Forty-two individuals attended the event, and we received thirty responses to our post-event survey. When asked if they enjoyed the event, twenty-nine respondents indicated that they loved it, and one respondent did not answer. We also asked whether they would be interested in short lunch-and-learn events on a variety of different topics, such as Equine First Aid, Working with Volunteers and Succession Planning. Every respondent expressed a desire to attend these lunch-and-learns. The most popular topics were Working with Veterans, Specific Disabilities and Horse Desensitization and Training. Half of the participants indicated that they would like to attend such events once a quarter, and 44% indicated that they would like attend once a month.

VOLUNTEER ENRICHMENT

The volunteer evaluation is a separate document and gives more detail about the impact of the volunteer enrichment hours.

CONCLUSION

We estimate that it cost \$60 per program hour to operate our Training program, for a total of \$85,680 per year. Overall, we provided nearly 400 less training hours in 2017 than we did in 2016. However, we drastically increased our Instructor Training, and Volunteer Enrichment hours. We have made a commitment to improve our staff and volunteer skills to ensure a safe and efficient work environment.

We are working to continue to improve upon our record keeping in order to best track our progress in this program. However, instructor training hours can be difficult to calculate, as it is hard to discern what activity exactly comprises a training hour. This becomes especially difficult with staff, when many of their activities could be considered continuing education. Overall, the positive feedback, high hours and increase in staff education indicate that this is a meaningful and worthwhile program.