



International Association of
Human-Animal Interaction
Organizations

IAHAIO in Amsterdam, 24-26 October 2018

DEMONSTRATIONS/VISITS TO AAI PROGRAMMES

*Attendees at the symposium have the opportunity to attend **TWO** demonstrations/visits during the symposium. Please read a synopsis of each demonstration below and make your selection online (1st, 2nd and 3rd choice). Please note that it may not be possible to accommodate your choice due to number restrictions, but we will do our best.*

Demonstration 1: Visit to Zoo Program (off-site, bus transport provided)

The program 'With animals more fun in life' takes place in the Onky Donky House next to petting zoo De Grebbehoeve of Ouwehands Dierenpark Rhenen and is an animal assisted activity. The interaction between child and animal is central. The program has been developed for children with Down syndrome and children with autism (ASD) aged between 6 and 14 years. These children often have problems with participating in activities that society requires from them. Working with children in a petting zoo in this way is an innovative approach. The animals on the farm are trained animals and can partner safely in all kinds of activities. Many children like the interaction with animals. Under the guidance of a therapist/pedagogue and an experienced animal caretaker from Ouwehands Dierenpark Rhenen, they learn how to perform various activities with the animals thus improving and acquiring (new) life skills.

Demonstration 2: Virtual reality Dolphin swim program * (on-site)

For some time there has been a keen interest in the therapeutic qualities of being close to dolphins. Dolphins are highly intelligent, very sensitive and live in complex societies. For that reason there is much opposition to them being kept in captivity and engaged in animal-assisted programmes, and alternatives continue to be developed. Virtual Reality is one such alternative, and this demonstration will introduce you to the work of the Dolphin Swim Club. Wild Dolphin Waterproof VR Club founder Marijke Sjollema and her husband Benno Brada (producer) invite you to put on their newly developed waterproof VR goggles and lower yourself in the water. Then you are close to becoming a 'member' of the Dolphin Swim Club, an organization that helps patients with multiple disabilities, without compromising the welfare of dolphins.

**You are invited to participate in this workshop by standing in the water, so do bring your swimming costume. If you prefer, you can also observe at the side of the pool, without going in to the water.*

Demonstration 3: Working therapeutically with horses and adult populations (off-site, bus transport provided)

At SPEL Psychologen Putten qualified health and clinical psychologist/therapists, working in the field of Mental Health, have developed an innovative methodology: EFPP: Equine Assisted Focal Psychodynamic Psychotherapy, designed after the challenging treatment of seriously mutilated youngsters after a terrible fire in a cafe. This method, already used for many years, involves nature and animals in the treatment. This visit will explain why and how the therapists work -assisted by horses, dogs and handlers - with clients with attachment problems and traumas from early childhood (e.g. physical and emotional abuse). With the help of volunteers, this visit will demonstrate how the therapist works, focused on sensory stimulation, attunement and corrective emotional experiences etc.

Demonstration 4: Happy dogs = sustainable dogs (on-site)

This demonstration is presented by a team of 8 trainers from the Nordic Schools for Therapy Dogs – and their dogs – led by CEO Sara Karlberg. They believe that working dogs need to be trained and treated with the respect they deserve and by doing so, they will work for us for a long time. They have worked out a concept whereby dogs are trained to choose their own position around a participant in an intervention.

- 1) How do we train our dogs to be happy at work? How do we train our dogs to choose their own pace and own positions and still be hard working dogs?

They believe that by teaching and reinforcing our therapy dogs to make their own choices, they will be more sustainable to us as pet-handlers. They will show participants how to take care of our dogs own way of working.

- 2) Fun exercises that you can apply to different populations

They will show you a great variety of exercise that can be applied to different populations.

Demonstration 5: Children with horsepower (off-site, bus transport provided)

Practical examples that show how horses can strengthen executive functions in children (6-18) who have dropped out of school. There are three ways to strengthen executive functions: by changing environment, by learning/teaching skills and by the use of rewards. Horses can play an important role in strengthening, as well as an account of the biological and physical effects (release of oxytocin and dopamine, lowering cortisol, increased blood flow in the brain) as well as on the social-cognitive effects (self-efficacy, performance accomplishment, personal agency, role theory and the theory of the transitional object) of the horse.

Both effects result in improving the working memory, cognition and behaviour, illustrated in this workshop by case studies.