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Through extensive study of research from leading medical schools and research universities, SpiritHorse International has developed specific methods for treating autism through equine-assisted therapy

Charles Fletcher

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*Good News! We congratulate SpiritHorse for their hard work in the research in the treatment of autism...
THANK YOU Charles Fletcher! JRB*

Through extensive study of research from leading medical schools and research universities, SpiritHorse International has developed specific methods for treating autism through equine-assisted therapy. These methods have been utilized in over 30,000 sessions with children with autism during the past five years. A study in 2007 - 2008 by the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, a leading medical school, showed statistically "**Significant Improvement**", the statistical "**Gold Standard**", the group of 24 having moved from "**severe**" to "**mild**" autism in six months of intervention. One child measured non-autistic at the end of the study. The study is scheduled for publication in the leading peer-reviewed medical journal, May/June 2011 issue, of *The Journal for Alternative Therapy in Health and Medicine*. It will be the first study published with statistical results in healing of autism.

Following a year of further improvements in the SpiritHorse methods for children with autism, representatives from Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, The Netherlands, visited SpiritHorse for its spring, 2009 semester to study the results of the SpiritHorse program. Vrije has been for many decades considered one of the leading academic research centers in Europe. Their study of 47 children with autism spectrum disorder, just released, also showed a statistically "**Significant Improvement**", again the "**Gold Standard**", with 12 clients moved from "**severe** autism" to **mild/moderate** autism. They also measured nine children who, after ten weeks treatment at SpiritHorse, measured non-autistic on the Childhood Autism Rating Scale, a single blinded measurement. This study will be published in a European medical journal.

Charles Fletcher, Founder and CEO of SpiritHorse stated that he was very pleased with this confirmation of the success of their work with children with autism spectrum disorder. Mr. Fletcher stated that the specific methods used to re-start the development of the left brain hemisphere (which is underdeveloped

in people with autism) are now being used successfully in the affected brain hemisphere with patients with traumatic brain injury from shaken baby syndrome or other causes, stroke, and cerebral palsy.

Roberto, at 17 months of age, was brought to SpiritHorse in 2009 suffering from traumatic brain injury, sadly the result of shaken baby syndrome. The right side of his skull had been crushed, with significant damage to his brain's right hemisphere. After several life-saving operations, his neurosurgeon recommended treatment at SpiritHorse. At that time, Roberto could not move the left side of his body, crawl, stand, or speak. SpiritHorse converted the successful methods developed for children with autism to restart the development of Roberto's brain's right hemisphere. After four months of intervention at SpiritHorse, Roberto is crawling ninety miles an hour, walking, and starting to form words!

Many people around the country and around the world have been moved by the incredible work SpiritHorse is doing in the lives of children with special needs and want to start their own centers. In response to these caring people, they have begun a training, certification, and licensing program to provide free therapy to children all over the nation and the world.

SpiritHorse has trained instructors free of charge at their facilities in Corinth, Texas as well as conducting free training sessions in other areas of the world, as done in the Czech Republic in 2009, and the Czech Republic, South Africa and Mexico in 2010. They travel to other countries on airline points, staying in a barn in this past summer in the Czech Republic, and an abandoned, unheated house in South Africa during their winter in 2010. The travel and accommodations were due to a shortfall in revenue resulting from the recession. They have utilized the millions generously donated by Texas foundations to serve their children with over 110,000 free lessons over the past nine years, while using this opportunity to develop these pioneering methods, the first in the forty year-old therapeutic riding industry.

They currently have 40 licensed centers and 28 centers with SpiritHorse certified instructors worldwide and receive enquiries every single day from groups who have discovered this award-winning program on their website. They have trained and certified 207 instructors in the past 18 months. They are leveraging this growth to achieve major changes in the physical, mental, and emotional development of children with disabilities worldwide. They often reference children because improvement is more readily achieved in the early ages; however, services are available to people of all ages. This program is expanding at a rapid pace as SpiritHorse continues to develop specific methods for all disabilities and its training program grows.