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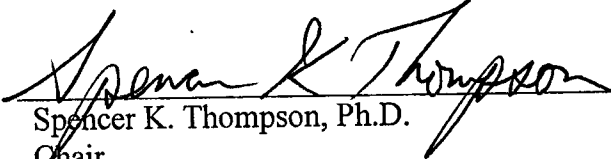
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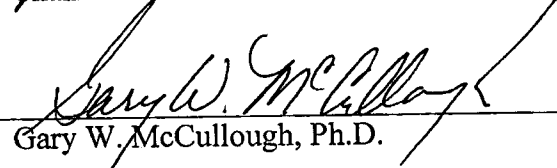
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EFFECTS OF THERAPY DOGS ON ANXIETY IN CHILDREN PARTICIPATING IN
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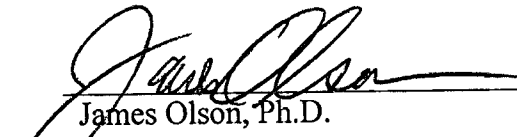
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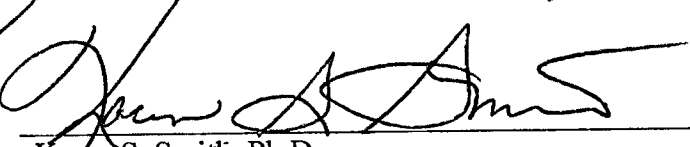
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EFFECTS OF THERAPY DOGS ON ANXIETY IN CHILDREN
PARTICIPATING IN SEXUAL ABUSE FORENSIC
INTERVIEWS AT A CHILDREN'S
ADVOCACY CENTER

by

ANDRA K. CHAMBERLIN, B.A.

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Faculty of Psychology

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for the Degree of

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Abstract

This study investigated the effect of therapy dogs on physiological and psychological measures of anxiety before and after a forensic interview in children who may have been sexually abused. A convenience sample consisted of 37 children ages 6 to 12 years who presented at a children's advocacy center for sexual abuse forensic interviews. Twenty children had a therapy dog present during their time at the Center and 17 did not. Researchers measured systolic blood pressure (SBP) and heart rate (HR) using a Zelwa WS-TS Touch Screen Wrist Blood Pressure Monitor. State-anxiety was assessed using the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children. All measurements were taken before and after participation in a forensic interview. Results indicate no significant differences in state-anxiety and physiological arousal in children who had the dog present in the waiting room compared to the children in the dog absent condition.