

The Value of a Dog in a Classroom of Children with Severe Emotional Disorders. *Katherine L. Anderson and Myrna R. Olson, Department of Special Education, Minnesota State University, Moorhead, USA
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The purpose of the present study was to determine how a dog's presence in a self-contained classroom of six children diagnosed with severe emotional disorders affected students' emotional stability and their learning. Across an eight-week period of time, the children were observed, the children and their parents were interviewed, and behavioral data were recorded when students went into emotional crisis. Qualitative analysis of all coded data indicated that the dog's placement in this self-contained classroom: a) contributed to students' overall emotional stability evidenced by prevention and de-escalation of episodes of emotional crisis; b) improved students' attitudes toward school; and c) facilitated students' learning lessons in responsibility, respect and empathy. Address for correspondence: M. R. Olson, Department of Teaching and Learning, PO Box 7189, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, North Dakota 58202, USA. Ph: 701-7773229; fax: 701-7773246; e-mail: myrna_olson@und.nodak.edu.