

# Empowering Youth Leaders “Trygga Ledare”



Supporting youth leaders in  
equestrian sports for value-based  
leadership and social sustainability

FULL PROJECT REPORT 2019–2021

  
friends

Trygga  
ledare



SVENSKA RIDSPORT  
FÖRBUNDET

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“Trygga Ledare” is a collaboration project (2019 – 2021) between the Swedish Equestrian Federation and the Friends Foundation, founded by the Stenbeck Foundation. The overall aim of the project is to promote equal rights, non-discrimination, and a safe environment that prevents bullying, harassment, and other sorts of violence in stables and riding schools.

To ensure a knowledge-based plan and follow-up of the project, the initiative started with a benchmark analysis. Based on the youths’ needs and experiences, new tools and methods have been implemented as a comprehensive mentorship model for adults who support youth leaders within the Swedish Equestrian Federation’s structure and activities. Through in-depth and continuous education, thousands of young and adult leaders are being trained every year to take a stand against negative actions, exclusion, and violence. In addition, the leaders are given the tools to create an inclusive and sustainable social climate for children and young people.

With adult responsibility as a core pillar, the project promoted systematic change to increase the youth leaders' empowerment and to improve the social climate for all children and youth in the equestrian sports.

Thanks to the Stenbeck Foundation, both Friends and the Swedish Equestrian Federation can continue to scale up their work for a safe sport.

To meet children and youth where they are and consistently include them in the project process forms the foundation of "Trygga Ledare". We hope that this project can inspire to strengthen children's rights, well-being, and mental health both in and outside of sports.

**Catrine Andersson**

Project Manager Trygga Ledare, Swedish Equestrian Federation

**Li Åsebring**

Method Developer, Friends





# Introduction



According to The Swedish Sports Confederation equestrian is the third largest youth sport (7–25 years) and the sixth largest overall sport in Sweden, giving half a million Swedes a place for leisure and competition. The Swedish Equestrian Federation shapes the leaders of tomorrow by educating 500 youth leaders every year. Riding schools and stables are places where many children get their first experience in leadership. More than 900 riding schools with about 155 000 athletes around Sweden are among the largest contributors to young people's social development outside of compulsory school.

The Swedish Equestrian Federation has built a comprehensive training program for youth leaders where they learn how to create an inclusive and caring

climate within the training groups. The Youth Leadership Course (ULK) is the core of the Swedish Equestrian Federation work with youth leadership, but youth leaders must be continuously empowered and supported by adults to make a sustainable change.

The stables, as any social arena, also have a negative side where hierarchy can lead to bullying, fear, and violations. Every fourth child active in a sports club has been violated by another athlete in the club. This has been shown by a representative survey conducted by SIFO on behalf of the Friends Foundation in 2013.

**During the past** two decades, the Friends Foundation has worked to empower youth to take a stand against violation and bullying. Friends has developed tools to be used to create a safe and positive social climate with peer support, mentoring, and leadership training. Friends has great experience in supporting youth and endorsing adults to take responsibility to create long-term change. Research in peer support, youth mentoring, and youth leadership shows unanimously that support from responsible adults is the most important factor to empower youth and give them the possibility to create a positive change in their environment. In the past five to ten years, Friends has made a switch from focusing on training youth to focusing on training adults within the organizations to do exactly what the research says; to support and empower youth.

**Between 2012 and 2015**, Friends and the Swedish Equestrian Federation worked together with the projects “Safe Sports” and “Safe Stables.” They have developed different types of training and toolkits for

creating a safe and secure environment and preventing bullying and harassment among the youth. “Trygga Ledare” partly continues with those earlier projects and focuses on youth empowerment, mentoring, and youth sponsors.

**The cooperation project** between Friends and the Swedish Equestrian Federation has been based on the existing organizational structure and has identified needs of the Swedish Equestrian Federation. The purpose is to improve conditions for complementing existing work, to create long-term stability, and to

increase opportunities for sustainable organizational development.

Three representatives from each organization were responsible for the strategic decisions within the project. The project manager at the Swedish Equestrian Federation and the method developer at Friends were responsible for the operative work within the project. The steering committee had regular meetings each month and a longer planning session two times a year. All forums were important to support the project overall and also to incorporate learnings from the project into the organisations’ other activities.





## The Operative Project group

### **Catrine Andersson**

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### **Li Åsebring**

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## Steering Committee



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### **Sandra Wiklund**

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### **Maria Persson**

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### **Hanna Danewid**

Youth Manager, Swedish  
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### **Andreas Friman**

Chief Financial Officer,  
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### **Henrik Karlsson**

Quality Manager, Friends  
(from January 2019 –  
December 2020)



# Project aims and goals



T

he overall aim of the project is to promote equal rights, non-discrimination, and a safe environment that prevents bullying, harassment, and other sorts of violence in stables and riding schools. To achieve this

the project has developed a sustainable and systematic approach that involves youth leaders and adults and is based on past experiences of the youth leaders.

A mentorship support program has been developed where adult leaders are being trained as mentors to empower youth leaders to feel safe, comfortable, and to develop as leaders. The result will be youth leaders who take a stand against negative actions, exclusion, and violence and who have the tools to create an inclusive and nurturing social climate.

Another goal has been to improve the social climate in the stables, make riding more attractive, and to encourage the youth to continue and grow as people and leaders within the sport. This will benefit the youth and contribute to a future leadership that focuses on creating a society based on human rights, non-discrimination, inclusion, and a caring social climate.

## **Project goals for the first year**

- Carry out benchmark analysis for future effect and result metrics
- Create an overall systematic analysis of the youth leaders' experience and needs as well as the key factors of the most successful riding schools
- Based on the analysis, develop the first pilot training in mentorship for trainers and riding instructors
- Obtain a strategic development plan for the long-term training program

## **Project goals for the second year**

- Continue with broad communication efforts to build visibility and trust with local organizations, youth groups, and in the sport as a whole
- Develop a variety of adapted training modules that will be tested and evaluated with the target groups
- Produce a framework for the mentorship model based on the adapted modules and learnings
- Further develop a strategic long-term development plan for the program in cooperation with the ongoing system change processes of the educational structures

## **Project goals for the third year**

- Develop a comprehensive mentorship model for adults that support youth leaders and can be used in all kinds of sports and other youth activities; promoting leadership and empowerment among youth
- Develop adapted training modules that provide resources to adults on how to create a positive social climate through mentoring, empowering, and supporting youth leaders in sport clubs and youth activities in general and horse riding in particular
- Implement a program that increases the youth leader's empowerment and improves the social climate for all youths in clubs associated with the Swedish Equestrian Federation

## **Target group: Leaders in equestrian sport**

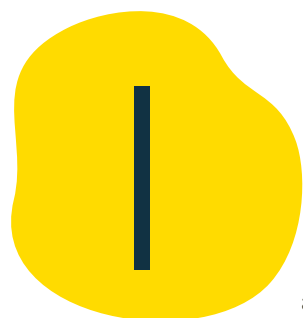
The target group includes both young and adult leaders, riding instructors and trainers, at central, district and local level. One of the starting points was the Swedish Equestrian Federations Education program. Leaders also include elected representatives within the organization. The target group is limited to leaders over the age of 15, who in various ways are or have been active as leaders in equestrian sport during the past year.







# The pre-study



**In order to** do knowledge-based planning, the project started with a benchmark analysis. The project activities and interventions are based on the results of the analysis.

## Some of the key themes of the studies:

- The leaders' experience working with value-based leadership and social sustainability
- Their experiences of negative jargon, abuse, and violations among youths in their activities
- Their assessment of how to act in situations when children are experiencing abuse and violations
- Their assessment of how to integrate preventive work into their activities
- Their experience of local and national support for their role and responsibilities
- Their experience of local collegial cooperation

## The results

The survey was sent out to just over 1 700 persons in various leadership roles (including elected officials on a local, regional, and national level of the organization), and got 640 replies (38 percent).

## Respondents age range

- 15 – 18 years: 107
- 18 – 25 years: 92
- 25 years and older: 404

8 follow-up interviews in 4 different local organizations were conducted with 10 active youth leaders. Out of the 10 active leaders 5 were younger youth leaders (14 – 18 years).

Below is a selection of results from the five categories in the analysis.

## About knowledge and competences

***"Do you have the knowledge and skills you need to be able to work actively with security issues in your assignment as a leader?"***

More than half of the two younger groups feel that they have **(yes)** knowledge and competence to work actively with safety issues. Compared to about 7 out of 10 of the respondents over 25 years. Regarding all age groups a large proportion answered the question with **partly**.

***"Do you feel that you have gained your knowledge and competence on safety issues through your leadership training in the equestrian sport?"***

More young leaders (about seven out of ten) than older leaders (about three out of ten) feel that they have gained their knowledge of competence on safety issues through their leadership training.

## Definitions

**Violation** can be described as an act that makes the person who is exposed to it feel sad, hurt and less worthy.

**Abusive treatment** is a term that implies conduct that violates a child's dignity.

**Harassment** is when someone is violated on one of the seven grounds of discrimination. One incident is enough for someone to be guilty of harassment.



# 1/3

of all respondents are aware of one or more cases where a child or youth has been violated by a leader during the last year.

Almost half of the respondents over 25 report **partially**, compared to two in ten of the younger ones.

About a quarter of the older respondents (25+) answer **no** to the question, which can be interpreted as feeling that they either:

- Don't have that knowledge or
- gained that knowledge through own experience.

## Negative jargon

The results indicated a great need to strengthen the work for a safe environment with norm awareness and norm criticism. The areas where negative jargon was most common were *Performance*, *Equipment/Clothing*, *Appearance* and *Who you are friends with*.

The results showed the need to strengthen the work on the grounds of discrimination.

There were major differences between the younger groups and the adults (25+).

## About violations

In total, one-third of all respondents were aware of one or more cases where a child or youth had been violated by a **leader** during the last year.

In total, almost half of all respondents

were aware of one or more cases where a child or youth has been violated by **another child** during the last year.

## About being able to take action

**Some respondents expressed the need for:**

- more knowledge and clearer guidelines on how to handle conflicts
- more assistance to know when and how to act in a situation when someone is being violated
- more support connected to responsibilities as a leader
- action plans and concrete tools to be able to act

## About support, consensus and collaboration

Half of the respondents felt that they had the support they needed (a third felt they had only partial support).

**Respondents also expressed the need for:**

- clear action plans and guidelines
- more dialogue/discussion forums within their own organisation and outside
- more time and resources
- more centrally organized supervision
- among the younger ones, more engagement/support from the older leaders was also mentioned



Adults are responsible for keeping children safe.

## Overall key findings from the survey and interviews

- ♥ There is a comprehensive commitment at a local level for value-based leadership and social sustainability.
- ♥ There are important differences in experiences among the different age groups regarding how they view their own abilities

to act for the best of the children.

- ♥ Most of the respondents say that they are acting to the best of their abilities, but that they need more knowledge, training, and support on how to act.
- ♥ The younger youth leaders take a big respon-

sibility in both preventive roles and as key actors when children are abused or violated.

- ♥ The expressed needs for organizational support and educational efforts are significant in all the age groups.



The results indicated a great need to strengthen the work for a safe environment with norm awareness and norm criticism.

The areas where negative jargon was most common were Performance, Equipment/ Clothing, Appearance and Who you are friends with.



## **VOICES OF LEADERS**



**“They put all the responsibility on us youth leaders, for example, to tell the children if they do something in the stable. The adults pass by without acting, even if they see something and if we point it out, they only say that it is our responsibility.”**

**YOUTH LEADER**

**“We need more adults that do not close their eyes to what is going on around them. More support from adults. It usually feels as if adults in our association leave the social safety issues to us younger because ‘we are hanging out more in the stable’. Which in my opinion is wrong.”**

**YOUTH LEADER**

**“Some students find it extremely important to wear designer riding clothes and bully others who do not have the same clothes.”**

**ADULT LEADER**

**“It would have been great if there was a training for leaders that is only about social safety issues. I would have liked to get tools to be able to work on everything from exclusion to sexual harassment and abuse.”**

**ADULT LEADER**



**“There is a reluctance to be with those who do not speak Swedish.”**

**YOUTH LEADER**

**“One of my students’ other trainers favors certain students during group riding sessions, which creates sadness and poor self-esteem in those who do not get the attention.”**

**ADULT LEADER**

**“**

**“I am a youth representative at the board meetings in our association, yet several of the adults from the board ignore me when we meet in the stable.”**

**YOUTH LEADER**

**“This is something that should be included in our leadership trainings. Clearer instructions on HOW we should act and who to turn to for support.”**

**ADULT LEADER**

**“Your ability to ride the horses is important. Social status increases when you are a good rider.”**

**ADULT LEADER**

**“The adults have a very old mindset. We, the youths, have a little more innovative mindset, we believe that you should think more forwardly, look at new research etc. It would be great to work more together, maybe have a meeting and brainstorm ideas some weekend, both young and adults”**

**YOUTH LEADER**



# The activities

A

fter the survey was concluded the project pivoted over to be more focused on the activities.

## The activities have a variety of purposes:

- To promote equal rights, non-discrimination, and an inclusive culture among youth.
- To establish partnerships with the national and local youth groups in the organization.
- To make the purpose and focus areas within the project, visible to all members of the organization on several communication platforms.
- To further spread and implement the “Safe Sports” and “Safe Stables” material.
- To establish good networks in the whole organization (the Swedish Equestrian Federation), as a resource for the ongoing structural change work.
- To develop methods and training models based on the needs of the youth leaders.
- To build implementation and co-operation.
- To develop adapted methods and tools for a comprehensive mentorship model.

The combination of the different project activities created conditions for both the implementation of the mentorship model and for the sustainability of the project’s long-term impact.

## Network meetings

The project regularly arranged and active-

ly participated in network meetings together with the different target groups. These meetings included thousands of children, youth leaders, young adult leaders, and adult leaders from all over Sweden.

One of the main focuses of the project and a theme that was identified in the survey is the need to create forums where the different age groups and roles can meet.

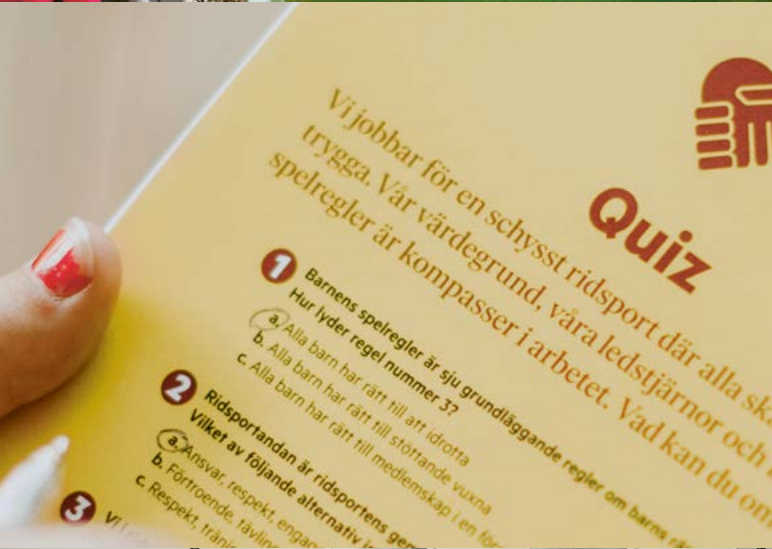
**The project has** arranged for network meetings for the trained mentors, the youth leaders, and mixed networks where youth leaders and mentors meet. These

## Four main project impacts

- 1 Youth involvement for a safe sport.
- 2 Identification of local challenges, needs and possibilities.
- 3 Identification of the need for systematic changes.
- 4 Establishing relationships with leaders in all age groups and at all levels within the organization.







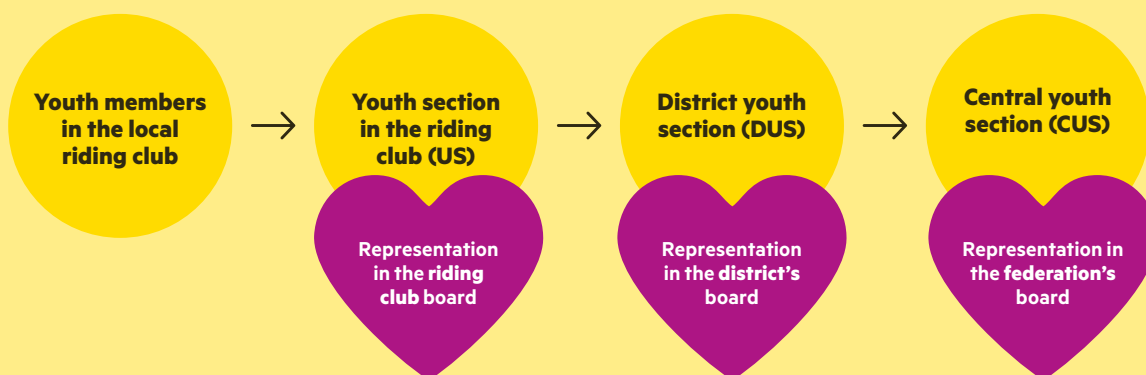




**In equestrian sport, young people work for young people and for the stable to be a safe and pleasant place to be. To meet children and youth where they are and consistently include them in the project process, forms the foundation of “Trygga Ledare”. Promoting participation and strategic partnerships of the various equestrian youth organizations and leaders in the country, is a method for the project to be able to make an impact on the systemic level both sustainable and long term.**



# Unique possibilities to influence



Young people are experts in their time and participation is a prerequisite for success. One way of involving the youths and making sure that they have influence in issues related to themselves is to make them active in reference groups and involve them in decision making processes.



## Youth impact

The Swedish Equestrian Federation works on the issue of strengthening young people's influence and place in democracy. 61% of the members of the Swedish Equestrian Federation are under 26 years old and an important aspect for "Trygga Ledare" has been to create even more contexts where young people can make their voices heard and have an impact on the sport. The image above describes the different levels of impact from the youth sections on a local, district and central level of the Swedish Equestrian Federation.



meetings have been used to evaluate the project and improve the content of the interventions. Follow-up measures have been a key factor to ensure the usefulness of the content and to see how different leaders use the available resources in different ways. This is important for the sustainability in different contexts in the future, so that the new findings and method material can be used and implemented in the existing organizational structure.

Youth Leadership Course (ULK) is the

core of the Swedish Equestrian Federation education activities for youth leadership, which educates about 500 young leaders each year. The course is conducted in the districts in Sweden by educators that are trained internally every other year. The project involves the educators within all 19 districts. The activities and meetings with all focus groups, provide important contextual information for the ongoing review of all educational programs organized by the Swedish Equestrian Federation.

## Some examples from the activities

### **1 National Youth Meeting (Riksungdomsmötet), May 4–5, 2019**

The National Youth Meeting is the forum for young people's voices in equestrian sport. It takes place every two years and then members of the Central Youth Section are elected. Those entitled to vote are all persons under the age of 26 who are members of a riding club affiliated with the Swedish Equestrian Federation. On this occasion, the project was presented to the target group of young leaders for the first time, and the participants (a total of 50 youths) attended a workshop as part of the first-year benchmark analysis.

### **2 The Swedish Championships at the Equestrian Centre of Strömsholm, June 6–9, 2019**

Youth activities with the safe stable toolkit “Trygg i stallet”, the “Friendship Tree” and quizzes about the safe sports material.



During 2019 the project planted “a friendship tree” at various shows, competitions, and equestrian meeting venues to collect over 500 notes with children and youths’ own words about friendship, social media, and leadership. The youths’ voices have been used in different social media channels, and the “tree” was printed and sent out to all riding schools in Sweden. Several youth sections in local riding schools also made their own “friendship wall” in the stables.



Between 2012 – 2015, Friends and The Swedish Equestrian Federation worked together with the project “Safe Stables” and developed different types of training and toolkits for creating a safe and secure environment and to prevent bullying and harassment among the youth. All 900 riding clubs have received their own “Trygg i stallet” toolkit. The distribution, implementation and education program of the already existing tools has played an important role to further empower youth through specific support from adults in the stables and riding schools. The toolkit was initiated by the Swedish Equestrian Federation's Central Youth Section.



### 3 Stockholm Horse Week and Global Champions Tour, June 13 – 16, 2019

Youth week with workshops and activities for children and youth together with the Stockholm District Equestrian Federation (Stockholms Läns Ridsportförbund). During the week the project also produced new filmed material for social media channels together with several riders and equestrian influencers.

### 4 Youth Pep Rally (Ungdomspeppen), September 21 – 22, 2019

Together with the Swedish Equestrian Federation's Central Youth Section, the project has contributed to the development of a new forum where youth can meet to discuss important matters and be inspired and supported by older mentors or role models. In September 2019, the new annual event called “Ungdomspep-

pen” (“youth pep rally”) had a successful start. This inspiring weekend brought together 82 young equestrians (13-25 years old) for conversations about safe sport and youth leadership. Young people are highly engaged and eager to contribute to the project and the work for a safer equestrian sport. This was a way to give something back, to strengthen the positive engagement further, and to inspire others, both in and outside the organization, to do the same.

→ [Suverän samling kring trygghet och ledarskap](#)

### 5 Youth empowerment for youth sections in the District Federation of Skåne, October 10, 2019

The District Youth Section arranged a network meeting for the youth sections in the local riding clubs in the “District Fed-





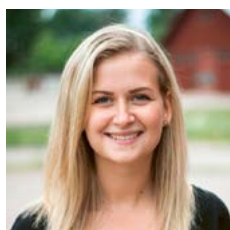




“

**“We must show courage and always take action – before a child is subjected to bullying or harassment. It is our responsibility.”**

**ADULT LEADER**



**“I’ve been lucky enough to have leaders who believed in me, saw me for who I am and let me know it was ok to make mistakes.”**

**Elin Gustavson**, former chairman for the Central Youth Section at the Swedish Equestrian Federation.

eration” in the southern part of Sweden, “Skånes Ridsportförbund”. During the meeting the project held a training and workshop to present the new safe sports material that was being tested and evaluated at the time.

**6 Meeting with educators, October 26 – 27, 2019**

Workshop and network meeting with educators of the Youth Leadership Course (ULK) to talk about the project and collect valuable input for the method development.

**7 Workshop with all employees at the central office for the Swedish Equestrian Federation, November 19, 2019**

The project arranged for a presentation and workshop together with all employees at the federation’s office. The first-year benchmark analysis was presented and

Friends organized a workshop about systematic work for a safe equestrian sport. This meeting played an important role going into the next year’s development work. This meeting was also part of a series of workshops together with both elected decision makers and employees of the Swedish Equestrian Federation. The different strategic partnerships were a key aspect for the project to be able to support the identified needs in the best way possible.

**8 Network meeting and panel discussions during Sweden International Horse Show, November 30, 2019**

During this event around 100 leaders of all ages and equestrian backgrounds met to discuss important matters regarding youth, safe sports, and value-based leadership. The overall focus for this new event and discussions was how to create





supporting structures of mentorship for young leaders.

→ [Ridsportprofiler i paneldebatt om trygghet och ledarskap](#)

### **9 Mentorship program for equestrian trainers, December 12, 2019**

During the first year of the project, the Swedish Equestrian Federation council for riding instructors and trainers initiated a mentorship program for trainers within the equestrian sport. The purpose of the program is to support trainers in their roles as leaders through mentorship from more experienced trainers and riding instructors (Fellows). The mentorship program is a long-term program and the “Trygga Ledare” project was part of the start-up meeting for the upcoming mentors.

### **10 Convention for riding instructors and trainers in Sweden, February 1–2, 2020**

At the beginning of 2020 the project arranged a presentation and workshop with 130 riding instructors and trainers that focused on how to promote equal rights and to always act in the best interest of the child.

→ [Hästvälfärd och ledarskap för ridlärare och tränare](#)

### **11 Riders Development Level 3, February 12, 2020, October 20, 2020 and November 29, 2021**

Trygga Ledare arranged 3 training sessions for the Riders Development Program (level 3). One in 2020 and two in 2021. The program is for young equestrians from different disciplines and competition levels. The meetings gave valuable perspectives

## **VOICES OF LEADERS**

**“It should be mandatory for all clubs to know how to behave towards others. To greet everyone, include everyone, and so on. For example, there could be a course for all clubs on safety issues.”**

**“Talking about violations, bullying and abuse at an early age. Increase knowledge and offer support to both young and adult leaders.”**

**“It would be great to have material that you can go through at home and go back to. Kind of like the guiding principles, but just for this subject.”**

## **What do you think is important about the safe sports issues?**

**“Help to cross the disciplinary boundaries. To get to know each other in different equestrian areas and to exchange knowledge, as well as to silent prejudices.”**

**“Reduce the importance of having the right brands and equipment among young people and provide more education about social norms.”**

**“To dare to support my students more on difficult issues without being misunderstood. Everyone should be educated on these issues. What to do and how to act in the best way.”**

**“Work more with how adults behave in the stable and online, because young people look up to them.”**

**“Everyone should greet each other more, not just their friends (at competitions). Everyone should set an example for their horse and the people around the horse. This is so important!”**

on youths' views on social norms, as well as challenges and opportunities with social media. During 2020 and 2021 the project implemented new adapted training material into the Riders Development Program from level 1–5.

### **12 World Anti-Bullying Forum, November 1–3, 2021**

The World Anti-Bullying Forum is a meeting place for researchers and practitioners in the work against bullying, to end violence against and between children in accordance with the United Nation's sustainable development goals. Friends initiated the World Anti-Bullying Forum in 2017. "Trygga Ledare" was presented during one of the online seminars during the forum in 2021. There were over 700 on site and online participants at the conference, and everyone had access to the online forum, including the project presentation, for three months after the forum.

### **13 Presentation for other Sport Federations, November 26, 2021**

In November 2021, Friends organized a workshop for representatives from 14 other Swedish sport federations during the Sweden International Horse Show at Friends Arena. "Trygga Ledare" was presented as a "best case" to show and inspire other federations to do similar projects in the future.

#### **The response from some of the participants:**

*"It's interesting that you are going to translate the material and methods from Trygga Ledare so that other sports can use*

*it. I'm looking forward to taking part of that material in the future."*

*"It is so incredible that Friends are going to spread the concept of Trygga Ledare to other sports!"*

*"The presentation about the work that the Swedish Equestrian Federation did with Friends was amazing! We would probably like to copy that concept. We need to start somewhere."*

*"We need to learn how to make short films as great as you have done through the project"*

### **14 Hästnäringens Unga Ledare (HUL), November 27, 2021**

The "Young Leaders of the Horse Industry" (HUL) is a network and leadership program organized by the National Foundation of the Horse Industry (HNS). Annually, thematic meetings are held for the network and representatives from the various organizations. In 2021, the theme was "norms, culture and behaviors in the horse industry" and the project "Trygga Ledare" was invited to talk about the project and the proactive work being done within the Swedish Equestrian Federation.

### **15 Meetings with the equestrian districts**

During the Covid-2019 pandemic, nine equestrian districts requested digital network meetings for young and adult leaders. The meetings for young equestrians and leaders were organized together with the board for the district youth sections. Some of the meetings got postponed to 2022 due to the pandemic, but in total two network meetings were conducted togeth-





er with the districts during 2019 and eight digital network meetings during 2021. The meetings focused on the new material and the project online courses. The overall purpose of these meetings was to educate young people and adults in the new material and to listen to young people and leaders' perspectives, in order to develop even more tailored education material. Arrangements were made for upcoming meetings in 2022.

#### **16 Meetings with employees and elected representatives at the Swedish Equestrian Federation 2019 – 2021**

The project arranged several meetings and workshops with the Central Youth Section (CUS), the Riding School and Education Section (RUS), the Federal Board of the Swedish Equestrian Federation (FS),

the Education Department (Ridklubb/Ridskola), and with all employees at the central office for the Swedish Equestrian Federation. The overall aim of these meetings has been to present the project and the results from the benchmark analysis. Also, to collect input from the different stakeholders and as an opportunity to highlight the identified needs, challenges, and possibilities.

All decisions related to the project were made in close co-operation with leaders and decision makers throughout the organization, to be able to make as much impact as possible. The implementation of the project into the organization's structure and activities, has been dependent on the decisions made by the organization's sections and various decision groups.

## **VOICES OF LEADERS**

**“Sensitivity and openness from across the organization.”**

**“Prioritize and invest in something specific and have the courage to push through.”**

**“Clarity and open climate for all.”**

**“Communication internally and externally. Cooperation across borders. Sensitivity.”**

**“Dare to spend time and investment on the core issues for children’s rights. Analyze structures and dare to challenge what already exists.”**

## **What factors do you think are important for the project to succeed?**

**“Time and commitment”**

**“Dare to raise questions at different courses, on social media, at meetings and in everyday life.”**

**“Keep good communication and responsiveness between us leaders.”**

**“Communication and mapping needs/ understanding what is demanded or needed. Continuity and thinking, using both new and old channels and forums to expand collaborations.”**

**“Good cooperation between all leaders, where everyone strives towards the same goal. Think again and listen to children and young people.”**





## The new Sustainability Strategy

The Swedish Equestrian Federation developed a new Sustainability Strategy in 2021 to promote the efforts of equestrian priority over the next few years in order to reach the overall goal: By 2025, everyone in equestrian sport will work actively with sustainability!

In Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations states that bullying is a serious form of violence against children and that children have the right to a life completely without violence. Equestrian sport has a major influence in society and the possibility to make an impact in line with the ambition of the United Nations sustainable development goals.

Through targeted education strategies, activities, and communication efforts, "Trygga Ledare" aims to contribute to five sustainability goals in Agenda 2030. For example, the conditions for everyone to be able to develop in a safe, equal, and healthy environment, free from abuse and all forms of violence against children in accordance with target 16.2 in Agenda 2030.

**Goal 3:** Good Health and Well-being

**Goal 10:** Reduced Inequalities

**Goal 4:** Quality Education

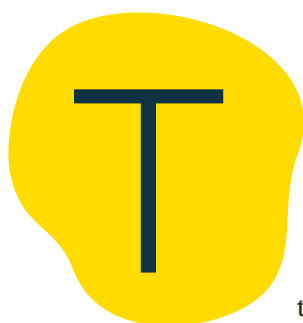
**Goal 16:** Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

**Goal 5:** Gender Equality

→ [hallbarhetsstrategi\\_svr.pdf \(ridsport.se\)](#)



# Implementation of the mentorship model



The pre-study showed that many leaders are acting to the best of their abilities to create a safe environment for youth, but that they need more knowledge, training, and support on how to act. We also learned that youth leaders take a big responsibility in both preventive roles and as key actors when children are abused or violated.

During 2018 the Swedish Equestrian Federation initiated an overall review of the education programs that involve the development, quality assurance, and accessibility of the various courses. The systematic quality assurance is based on the Equestrian Education Policy, which focuses on values, horse welfare, current research, proven experience, as well as a clear child rights perspective. The project plays an important role in strengthening the ongoing structural changes that have started as part of the long-term develop-

The project created consensus between youth and adult leaders by giving them the same basic knowledge about systematic prevention work; what it means and why it is an important issue. At the same time, we saw a need to define and clarify how the responsibility and obligations differ depending on the leader's age and function.

## Systematic work for a safe sport

### Young leaders



Promote



Prevent



Detect



Take action

### Adult leaders (over 18 years)

## Four perspectives in new films about the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

→ Children's own views and experiences.

→ "Idrotten Vill"- The sports movement's idea program.

→ The core-pillars about the Convention on the Rights of the Child for leaders in the equestrian sports.

→ Adults and riding instructors' perspectives on the child rights perspective in practice.

ment plan for the organization. The project group at the Swedish Equestrian Federation also took part in the review of the Equestrian Education Policy in 2021.

Some of the main materials that have been implemented as part of the mentorship model, are based on two online courses that have been developed during the second year of the project. The new material about bullying prevention, creating and promoting a caring social climate, and how to support and mentor youth leaders, has been tested and evaluated through in-depth and continuous education. All films and photographed material have been produced with a diversity perspective in mind, to contribute to a more

inclusive approach in educational material, as well as in social media channels and other communication efforts.

## The two online courses

**1.** Systematic prevention work for youth leaders (with an empowering approach).

**2.** Systematic prevention work for adult leaders (with tools and guidelines connected to their responsibility as adult leaders).



The courses contain similar topics, and the aim is to give the learner tools on how to create a safe environment for youth in equestrian sports, as well as knowledge and understanding of why it is important.

#### Some of the course's topics:

- What do we mean by systematic prevention work (and why is it important)?
- What is bullying, violation, and discrimination?
- Convention on the Rights of the Child – what does it mean for me as a leader?
- Responsibility and obligations for youth vs. adult leaders.
- Norms and how they affect social life (especially for those who deviate from the norm).

#### The online courses contain:

- Texts and pictures
- Cases built on quotes from leaders
- Filmed material with leaders and youth
- Podcasts, and printable support material such as reflection documents
- Support for dialogue with children who are exposed or have exposed others
- Tips on how to contribute to a safe social climate online

The online courses and other complementary material contain topics about the grounds for discrimination, and according to this, how some young people may be at certain risk of exposure. The material also addresses different norms, what these norms mean to the equestrian sport, and how they could affect young people.

#### The Seven Grounds of Discrimination Covered by the Law Prohibiting Discrimination\*

- 1 Sex
- 2 Transgender identity or expression
- 3 Ethnicity
- 4 Religion or other belief
- 5 Disability
- 6 Sexual orientation
- 7 Age

\*Government bill  
2007/08:95



#### Article 2 No discrimination



#### Article 3 Best interests of the child



#### Article 6 Life, survival and development

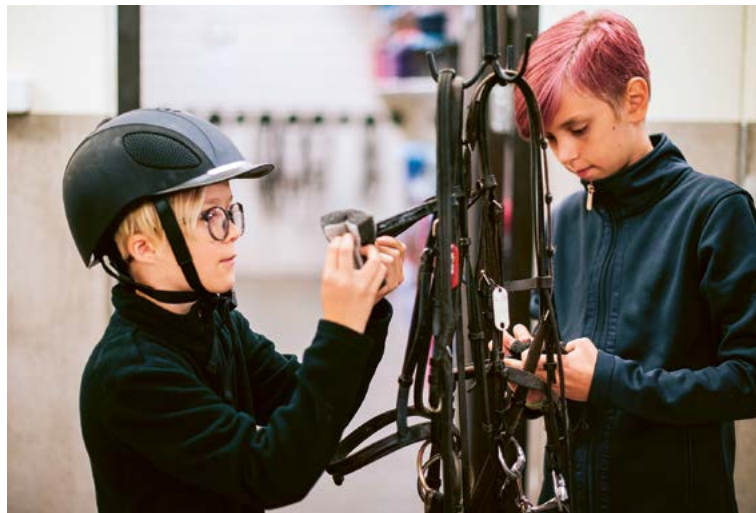


#### Article 12 Respect for children's views



New education material for young and adult leaders about the Convention on the Rights of the Child.





### **A norm-critical perspective**

If you belong to the norm, it can be difficult to see how others are limited by it, because you yourself do not experience this. Therefore, it is important to try to remind yourself and others to make their own privileges visible and to leave space to others.



New filmed and photographed material with a diversity perspective, to contribute to a more inclusive approach in social media channels, commercial and educational material.

# The educational structure

The project plays an important role in supporting the comprehensive revision of the existing educational structure of the Swedish Equestrian Federation. During 2020 and 2021 the project complemented and strengthened the existing structure, which means that the method material will reach leaders and future leaders in the equestrian sport on a national level. By creating consensus among all leaders and giving them the same basic knowledge and tools, the project aims to contribute to an inclusive environment for all young people within the equestrian sport.

The Swedish Equestrian Federation has mainly three basic education programs that form the foundation for other education programs within the organization:

- The License to Compete
- The Basic Education for all Officials
- The Youth Leadership Courses (FULK & ULK)

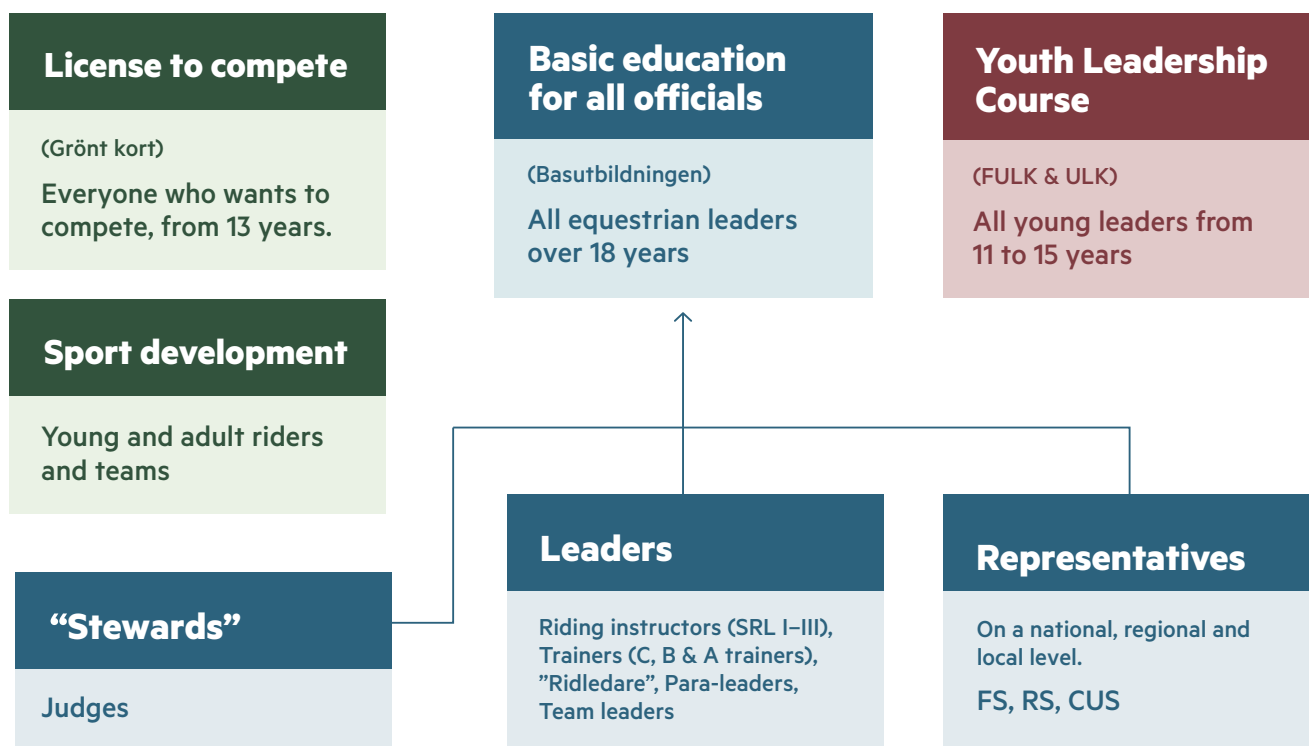
Different democratic decision processes led to the implementation of the new adapted training modules within these three programs, as well as specific adapted tools in other education programs that are connected to the basic education. All education programs are conducted both by specific tasks on the Swedish Equestrian Federation online web-platform, as well as during training and workshops together with youth and leaders that are undergoing the specific training program.

Some education programs where the new material has been implemented (on the following pages):

Every year around 4 000 (mainly youth) complete the license to compete course, around 1000 leaders complete the basic education for all officials and about 500 young leaders complete the youth leadership course. These three education programs form the foundation for other education programs in The Swedish Equestrian Federation. These three programs are being conducted in 19 Swedish equestrian districts by educators that are trained internally every year.



## Swedish Equestrian Federation Education Programs



### Youth Leadership Training Course (ULK I-III)

This is the core of the Swedish Equestrian Federation's education for youth leadership and educates about 500 young leaders each year. The course is conducted in the districts in Sweden by educators that are trained internally every other year. The course is conducted over three weekends, and it has been updated with a greater focus on treatment, social norms, and safety in the stable. Participants must be at least 15 years of age, but there is no upper age limit.

### Basic education for all officials

An introductory training for all leaders and officials in equestrian sport. The education program is mandatory and an eligibility requirement to be able to attend other leadership programs and official leader-

ship roles within the Swedish Equestrian Federation. The training focuses on the shared values and guiding principles in equestrian sport, leadership, teamwork, and how to get to know yourself to become better at leading others. Every year around 1 000 leaders complete the basic education program. The trainings are led by educators appointed by the Swedish Equestrian Federation and are arranged by the 19 equestrian districts.

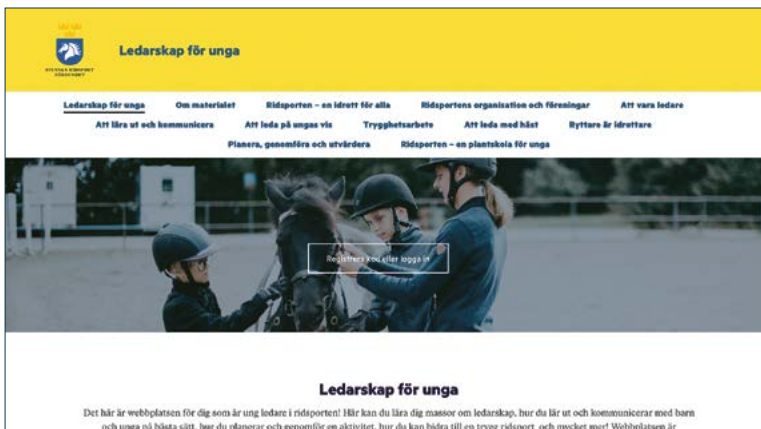
### Trainers (C, B and A-trainers)

Coaches who have completed a branch-specific training where A-trainers are the highest level. Licenses are obtained at each level. To remain on the Swedish Equestrian Federation's current list for riding instructors and trainers, participation in continuing education is required each year. Every second year about 50 new trainers get their licenses. The new material from "Trygga Ledare" has been implemented into the program for C-trainers and includes safe sports material and cases connected to the challenges mentioned by trainers in the benchmark analysis from 2019.

### License to compete

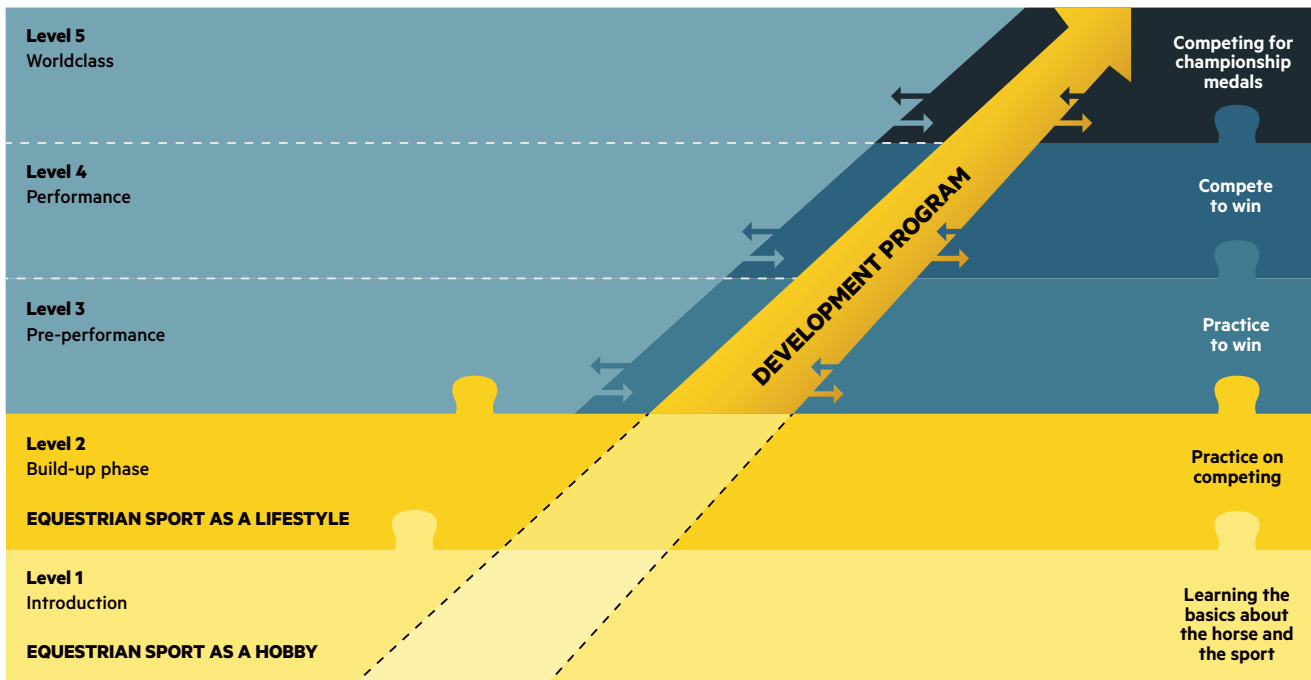
Everyone who competes in equestrian sport must have taken the license to compete, whether you are a horse or pony rider, driver, or vaulter. The license to compete is proof that you have the broad basic knowledge needed before a competition. Every year around 4 000 (mainly youth) complete the license to compete course. The "Trygga Ledare" project has developed and implemented new supporting materials connected to the safe sports material for the course educators.

**New adapted training modules and tasks for a safe and inclusive social environment on the Swedish Equestrian Federation online web-platform.**





## Equestrian sport throughout life



### Riders development

For many equestrians, the desire to develop is a great driving force. Through the Riders Development Model, the Swedish Equestrian Federation educates and mentors about 2 700 people (mainly children and youth), every year.

### The basic course for para-leaders

The aim of the course is to provide participants with basic knowledge so that they can assist in and/or conduct activities in the association for riders and drivers with disabilities. The course gives ideas on how to create the conditions for people with disabilities to be included in the association's activities and thus be able to share joy and community in the stable.

Trygga Ledare contributed to a whole new chapter called "A safe free-time" on the online education platform including adapted training modules and tasks for a safe and inclusive social environment.

All material is based on the specific

needs and experiences of the youths and leaders. In the film "En meningsfull fritid" Yasin, Linnea and Sara describe what they find extra important to be able to feel safe in the stable.

🎬 [En meningsfull fritid](#)


### Reference material "To lead children and youth in equestrian sport"

"To lead children and youth in equestrian sport" is a website on the equestrian education platform. This material is aimed for all equestrian coaches and leaders who lead children and young people. The website contains basic factual knowledge based on research on children and young people in sports. In addition, the site contains inspirational videos that are directly linked to the equestrian sport. The project contributed to the material with information on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and photos and videos about meaningful leisure time.

→ [Att leda barn och unga i ridsporten](#)

Adapted training modules from "Trygga Ledare" have been implemented in all levels of the Riders Development program (Level 1–5).





“I try to always be open-minded,  
and I usually think about the  
fact that I do not have any  
functioning eyes to offer to  
the horses, but what I do  
have is a functioning heart.”

**Yasin Haj Abdo**, para-rider at Tingsryds Riding Club



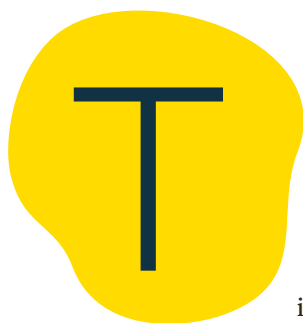
A close-up portrait of Peder Fredricson, a middle-aged man with light brown hair and blue eyes, smiling slightly. He is wearing a dark blue quilted jacket. The background is a soft, out-of-focus outdoor scene.

“Adults are  
responsible  
for keeping  
children safe.”

**Peder Fredricson**, Olympic Gold, Ranked number one in  
the world 2021, Ambassador for Trygga Ledare



# Communication efforts #tryggaledare



he project has had an extensive presence on social media. Through text, images and films, the project created engagement, increased knowledge, and inspired action to

prevent harassment and bullying along with promoting an inclusive environment. The communication efforts have built visibility and trust with local organizations, youth groups and in the equestrian sport in general. It has also further established the project in both the national and local equestrian organizations and functions. It has made the project visible as a possible changemaker for value-based leadership and social sustainability.

→ The project highlighted by the local riding club in Ystad

## Social media campaigns

The project started several social media campaigns with a focus on how to promote a caring environment and to prevent bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment. The campaigns were highlighted in the Swedish Equestrian Federation and Friends social media channels and in several articles published on the website [ridsport.se](http://ridsport.se).

→ Trygg i ridsporten

The primary platforms, @svenska\_ridsportforbundet, @stiftelsenfriends and @ungiridsporten, reached out to the different target groups. The concepts and ideas were highlighted together with the Swedish Equestrian Federations Central Youth Section. Several campaigns were also addressed in the most popular horse magazine in Sweden “**Häst & Ryttare**”.

The campaigns also include material from the toolkit “Trygg i stallet”, Friends material, and other safe sports material from different sport and children’s rights organizations.

## Some of the main topics raised in social media

- How can you work to create a safe environment in the stables and online?
- Where can you turn and what do you do if something happens?
- Definitions of words and concepts.
- Highlighting the youths’ perspectives and experiences.
- Adult responsibility to always act in the best interest of the child.



The project logo, theme colors and the hashtag #tryggaledare creates visibility and recognition in the core issues of the project on a broad scale, for a safe equestrian sport.



# STALLKÄNSLAN

EN KORT FILM OM MOBBNING OCH UTANFÖRSKAP

# ”HÄR FÅR ALLA VARA MED”



## Tillsammans för en trygg ridsport

Att vara i stallet är underbart, men inte alltid och inte för alla. Tillsammans med Friends och satsningen Trygga ledare arbetar vi för att förebygga mobbning och trakasserier, bland annat genom att stärka unga och vuxna ledare genom utbildningar och mentorskap. Vuxna bär alltid ansvaret för ungas trygghet, men alla kan göra skillnad. Hjälp oss sprida vår vision om nolltolerans mot mobbning i stallet. Vi behöver öppna ögonen, reagera och agera för en trygg ridsport.

Mer information om ridsportens trygghetsarbete  
och vart du kan vända dig för stöd och råd hittar du på vår hemsida.

Se filmen och läs mer på [ridsport.se/tryggiridsporten](https://ridsport.se/tryggiridsporten)

#tryggaledare #stallkänslan



Se filmen



## #stallkänslan – a new film against bullying

Children's exposure to abuse, bullying and harassment is a societal problem that affects public health. The short film "Stallkänslan" addresses the responsibility of adults to set the limits on what is okay and not online, in the stable, and in society. The purpose of the film is to inspire and accelerate the conversation about what equestrian sport should do for children and youth to promote an environment that is free from bullying and abuse. The examples in the film are cases that are based on real youth experiences of bullying. A film-poster was sent to leaders in all the riding schools in Sweden with a QR-code to information, tools, and support for safe stables.

→ [För en trygg ridsport –](#)

[Vårt trygghetsarbete behövs](#)

→ [Svenska Ridsportförbundet och Friends](#)

→ [Friends och The Amazing Society:](#)

["Filmen ska kännas i magen"](#)

▶ [Stallkänslan – en ny film mot mobbning](#)

→ [The Amazing Society lanserar ny film mot mobbning](#)

The film raises engagement about the safe sport issues, not least through social media.

The picture below is an example from Instagram, where the Swedish Olympic Team Rider in Dressage, Patrik Kittel shares his views on the topic.





“When someone is new in the stables it is important to take good care of them, ask questions and show that you are interested in their work with the horses.”

**Stephanie Holmén**, international show-jumper,  
Ambassador for Trygga Ledare

Throughout the years the project also engaged Swedish equestrians and influencers such as Malin Baryard Johnson, Patrik Kittel, Carl Hedin, Nina Rademaekers, Felicia Grimmenhag, Johanna Lassnack, Erik Grönberg (#inteensamaldrigglömd), and Friends ambassador Mårten Nylén.

The use of ambassadors and role-models in the sport both inspire engagement in the core themes of the project, as well as promoting visibility on a broader scale. Using role-models to highlight good examples is also a method to promote a caring social climate for children and youth in the sport.

### Ambassadors and role models

The project has established partnerships with ambassadors. By using known role models, the hope was to both inspire engagement in the core themes of the project as well as to promote visibility on a broader scale. The ambassadors for “Trygga Ledare” were Peder Fredricson, Stephanie Holmén and Vanessa Falk. The ambassadors launched on November 19, 2019.


- [Ridsportambassadörer tar krafttag mot mobbning](#)
- [Ryttare blir ambassadörer i arbete mot mobbning](#)
- [Ridsportens nya ambassadörer mot mobbning](#)

- [Barnkonventionen för barns bästa](#)
- [Trygghet på nätet: Råd till vuxna ledare](#)
- [Ungas trygghet är vuxnas ansvar!](#)
- [Trygga ledare](#)
- [Krafttag för en tryggare ridsport](#)
- [Forskare tittar på idrottens trygghetsarbete](#)
- [Våga prata viktigt för tryggheten](#)
- [Ridsporten, ordbild 2019](#)
- [Ridsporten, ordbild 2020](#)

### Media articles:

- [Ridsportledaren: “Man måste prata om sexuella övergrepp”](#)
- [Trygga ledare i idrotten](#)
- [Friends och The Amazing Society går samman mot mobbning](#)
- [Amanda Lind vill göra idrotten tryggare](#)
- [SvRF gör egen utredning av elitryttaren](#)



A young woman wearing a black riding helmet and a black puffer jacket is looking up at a dark horse. The horse's head is in the foreground on the left, and the woman is on the right. The background is blurred, showing some trees and a fence.

“Adults should  
help young people  
understand that it is  
okey to be different.”

**Vanessa Falk**, equestrian influencer, singer-songwriter, Ambassador for Trygga Ledare

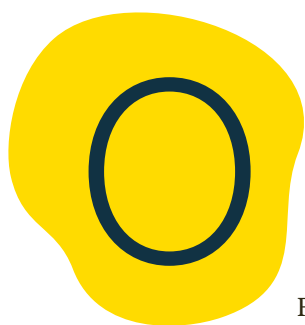




**“We are trying to raise awareness among both young people and parents about how to behave online. The club has guidelines on how to behave on social media and we have also had great lectures on the theme.”**

**Elin Fernqvist**, winner of the Safe Sports Award “Ridsportens Trygghetspris” 2019

# New annual safe sports award



On the initiative of Sophie Stenbeck, the Swedish Equestrian Federation created a new Safe Sports Award together with the Friends Foundation - "Ridsportens Trygghetspris."

The new annual award celebrates one significant youth initiative for social engagement that promotes equal rights, non-discrimination and an inclusive culture among children and youth within the equestrian sport. The purpose is to recognize youth for their efforts to create social change and make an impact on the caring social environment in stables and riding schools. It is also a way of promoting the collaboration between children and adults, where the children are a resource in how local activities and organizations can develop their preventive work. The winning youth or youth group are under 26 years old, and the award is administrated in close cooperation with the Swedish Equestrian Federations Central Youth Section.

Every year the award ceremony takes place in conjunction with Sweden International Horse Show at the Friends Arena in Stockholm, Sweden. In addition to the title, trophy, and grand experience at Sweden International Horse Show, the winner receives a specially designed education program from the Friends Foundation, to

be used to expand the existing work and inspire others within the sport to work proactively for safer stables. The award has received local and national media attention.

→ [Ridsportens Trygghetspris](#)

## Winner 2019

The first winner, Elin Fernqvist, received the award at the Sweden International Horse Show on December 1, 2019.

### *The motivation:*

*Elin started the initiative #tryggmedhäst-påhamre, which today is reflected in all activities conducted at the riding club, where young people and adults support and strengthen each other in their daily activities. Elin's commitment is truly living proof of how to contribute to a safe environment for children and young people, both in the stable and online.*

→ [Elin tar kampen mot mobbning](#)

The award is named in the popular documentary series "Idrottens himmel och helvete" which has been broadcasted on Swedish national television (SVT) in the autumn, 2020.

► [Idrottens himmel och helvete](#)

**"The fact that one of Sweden's largest sports is taking concrete actions to create a safe and inclusive environment for children is very powerful and important. The Award "Ridsportens Trygghetspris" is celebrating initiatives which are an essential part of working towards strengthening children's wellbeing, mental health and safety within the sport."**

**Sophie Stenbeck**, Chairman of the Board for the Stenbeck Foundation



**“We help each other and share our experiences with each other. Even those who are new to the stable have experiences that are important to learn from.”**

**Evelina Carlsson,**  
Chairman of the association's youth section



### **Winner 2020**

The winners of Ridsportens Trygghetspris 2020 are the youth at Skellefteå Riding Club. The youth group initiated what has resulted in a leadership education program in the local riding club, which focuses on how to strengthen the positive social climate for children and youth in the stable. The young and adult leaders work together through a systematic approach to empower the children and youth through mentorship and value-based leadership.

- [\*\*Ridsportens Trygghetspris till Skellefteå Ridklubbs ungdomar\*\*](#)
- [\*\*”Varför rinner en komplimang bara av?”\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Trygghetspriset till Skellefteå\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Skellefteå-ungdomar får Ridsportens Trygghetspris\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Skellefteå Ridklubb prisas: ”Är ett stolt exempel”\*\*](#)

**“No one should be exposed to bullying no matter who you are or how you are. Everyone can do something to prevent bullying and exclusion.”**

**Felicia Sjö**, chairman for the winning initiative 2021



## Winner 2021

The winners of 2021 are the young people in Laholms Ridsportförening who take the fight against bullying and work for everyone's equal worth. When one of the members in the youth section, Felicia Sjö met a guy at a horse show who told her that he was being bullied because of his horse interest, the youth section put their foot down and decided to make a change.

Through the initiative “Ride for everyone's equal value”, the youth section ar-

anged, among other things, a competition in the sign of the Pride flag.

Nowadays the riding club has its own rainbow fence at competitions, and through education activities, the young people have increased their own and others' knowledge of safety issues and have shown how it is possible to prevent bullying altogether.

→ **Laholms RF vinner Ridsportens Trygghetspris 2021**

# Panel discussions

The project has conducted and recorded three different panel discussions on safe sports. The target group are leaders in all sports. Sports leaders have a great responsibility for the safety of children and young people, and for many young people they are often among the most important adults in their lives. Stakeholders from the equestrian sport participated in all the discussions, which set a good example. The goal is that the panel discussions can be used by everyone in sports to raise safe sport issues to the surface and serve as a basis for discussion and workshops in sports associations.

→ [Viktiga samtal om ungas trygghet inom ridsporten](#)

## Safe structures

How can you create structures for a safe sport at the federal level? The panel emphasizes the importance of systematic work, seeing and admitting the problems, daring to act, and having sharp tools to know when something happens.

Guests: **Amanda Lind**, Swedish Minister of Sports; **Catrine Andersson**, Project Manager “Trygga Ledare” of the Swedish Equestrian Federation; **Anders Jonsson**, Development Manager of the Swedish Floorball Federation and **Malin Träff**, Children and Youth Manager of the Swedish Sports Confederation.

Moderator: **Maria Persson**, sports expert, Friends.

## Leadership to promote a safe sport

Sports leaders have a large and important responsibility for the safety of children and young people. How can a leader work to create safe environments? Are there concrete tips? And what does the Convention on the Rights of the Child say?

Guests: **Cecilia Åhl**, responsible volunteers and sports, Unicef; **Jonas Hyttring**, leader of Västerås Hockey; **Gabriella Torell Palmquist**, teacher pedagogy, Ridskolan Strömsholm and **Calle Gustafsson**, head of education, Friends.

Moderator: **Maria Persson**, sports expert Friends

## Youth involvement for a safe sport

A conversation about young people’s right to participation, adults’ responsibility for a safe sport, and good structures that give young people influence - for real. And how young people are experts in their time, and how participation is a prerequisite for success.

Guests: **Maja Frankel**, Secretary General, Friends; **Sara Grelle**, chair of the Central Youth Section, Swedish Equestrian Federation, and **Ida Fredman**, basketball player, Alvik’s council.

Moderator: **Maria Persson**, sports expert, Friends

## ♥ Nordic Changemaker Map

Trygga Ledare is one of the Changemaker initiatives in the Nordic Changemaker Map, by Reach for Change and Ashoka Nordic.

→ [Nordic Changemaker Map](#)

## ♥ Stenbecks Impact

Trygga Ledare in Stenbeck’s magazine *Impact* – with insights from a decade of Stenbeck’s investments in social change.

→ [Impact Magazine 2020](#)

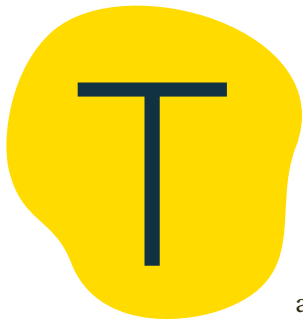








# Evaluation



The project has been evaluated in relation to the aims and goals, using both quantitative and qualitative measures (surveys, focus groups and interviews). The benchmark surveys collected information on the situation in 2019. The results have been used as a measurement for development, changes in the climate in and around the stables, and as a prerequisite for development among the youth leaders and adults. All trainings have been evaluated immediately, and follow-up measures have been made to ensure the usefulness of the content and to see how different stakeholders use the available resources. The project has also measured the specific changes in the participants attitudes, behaviors, knowledge, and competence. This includes both long- and short-term changes as well as the intended and/or unintended changes that the activities have resulted in within the organizations (Friends and the Swedish Equestrian Federation) and for the different stakeholders who participate in the activities.

The change-work opportunities, challenges, and long-term goals have been presented regularly for various stakeholders and decision-makers within the Swedish Equestrian Federation. The close cooperation throughout the whole

project period contributed to important co-creative processes and long-term decisions that enable the work to proceed and extend its interventions, both during and after the project period.

## Some important co-creators within the Swedish Equestrian Federation:

- Central Youth Section (CUS), The Swedish Equestrian Federation
- Youth members in stables and local riding schools
- The nineteen Equestrian District Federations
- Central Riding School and Education Section (RUS), The Swedish Equestrian Federation
- Educators and leaders in all age groups
- The Federal Board of the Swedish Equestrian Federation (FS)
- All employees and other elected representatives at the Swedish Equestrian Federation

All these forums were important to support the project overall but also to incorporate learnings from the project into the organizations' other activities.

The project has raised awareness of what to improve and how, based on the young and adult leaders needs and experiences. For Friends, the project has been an important step back into sports, where Friends has developed new methods to be able to meet various sport organizations, especially equestrian organizations.

For the Swedish Equestrian Federation, the project has contributed to a whole



**“Bullying and abuse are a collective challenge for the whole society and this means that it also exists in the sports movement. For Friends, ‘Trygga Ledare’ has been a huge step forward towards a safer environment for all children and young people in sports.”**

**Li Åsebring, method developer, Friends**



education approach and has strengthened the systematic work for a safe sport on a broad scale, especially connected to the proactive and preventive work. The project has been integrated as a natural part of the organization's long-term development plan, which enables the project outcome to continue and expand further in the future. The Swedish Equestrian Federation's Operational Plan for 2022


includes continuing and expanding the development and implementation of the systematic work for the safety of everyone in equestrian sports. Thanks to the Stenbeck Foundation both Friends and the Swedish Equestrian Federation can continue to scale up their work for a safe sport in different projects during 2022.

→ [Verksamhetsberättelse 2022](#)

**"Bullying and abuse creates far-reaching health consequences for every child who is exposed. It is us adults who have the full responsibility to ensure that the vision zero – a world where no children are exposed to bullying – is fulfilled."**

**Maja Frankel**, Secretary General, Friends



A photograph of a woman with blonde hair, smiling, standing next to a brown horse in a stable. The woman is wearing a dark blue jacket with a logo on the left chest that reads "SVENSKA RIDSPORT FÖRBUNDET". The horse is wearing a black halter. The background shows the interior of a stable with wooden stalls and overhead lights.

**"We have a zero-vision against bullying, harassments and abuse. Safe sport issues must permeate everything we do. We will never stop. The work towards a safe equestrian sport for everyone, must continue."**

**Annika Tjernström**, Secretary General,  
Swedish Equestrian Federation







# The follow-up study



E

ven though it is not possible to measure the long-term impact of the project just yet, a follow-up study was conducted at the end of

2021 to see if leaders had any knowledge about the project and the parts of the material that were already spread, as well as to get their thoughts on how the safety work within the equestrian sports has changed and been developed since 2019.

The survey was sent out to the same 1 700 persons in various leadership roles (including elected officials on a local, regional and national level of the organization) as in 2019, and 315 replies (18,5 percent) were received. Since there is a significant difference in the number of respondents, it was not possible to compare the study with the pre-study straight off, but some trends and tendencies were analyzed.

## **Respondents age range:**

- 15 – 18 years: 10 (107 in 2019)
- 18 – 25 years: 36 (92 in 2019)
- 25 years and older: 245 (404 in 2019)

## **Some of the overall key findings from the survey 2021:**

- There is still a comprehensive commitment at a local level for value-based leadership and social sustainability.
- It is not possible to compare the studies directly and the long-term impact of the project can be measured fully in a few years.
- There is an indication of increased awareness of violations, bullying and harassments.
- Most of the respondents say that they have great support in their work with safety issues, but there is a need for more prioritized time, organizational support/ guidelines, dialogue with other leaders, and further knowledge.
- There is a great commitment among the leaders for issues related to sexual harassment within the equestrian sports. This is an important issue to keep working with and raise awareness on.
- The social media units that have been spread by the project are very well known by almost all the respondents.
- The project has already made a difference and has been well established within the organization.

**What do you think about when you hear “Trygga Ledare”?**

**“Reliable project, important work, makes a difference!”**

**“Social safety work, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, safe leadership.”**

**“Inclusion, equal value for all, safe in the stable.”**

**“More knowledge among adults than before.”**

**“I think that these issues have received much more attention and we within the riding club work more with these issues now.”**

**“It’s a natural part of our work now, perhaps in a different way than before”**

**“Great commitment throughout the organization.”**

## **How do you think the safety work in equestrian sports has changed since 2019?**

**“The “Me-too-movement” is important, and these are questions we must not back down from.”**

**“Safety work has an obvious place on the equestrian agenda.”**

**“Much greater awareness among both associations, leaders and the young people themselves. A more open climate to discuss and raise these issues.”**

**“When it comes to situations of sexual abuse, you cannot stress enough how difficult these cases are to handle. These are extremely complex contexts that have a direct and significant impact on the lives of those affected. I think that not least the association boards need support and training in dealing with crises of this kind.”**



**“Before, the issue of a safe environment was a youth issue. The project Trygga Ledare has highlighted that it is adults who are responsible.”**

**Sara Grelle**, Chairman for the Swedish Equestrian Federations Central Youth Section

## Key learnings

**1**

### **Early implementation of the project**

Some of the most important learnings are the value of communicating and establishing the project internally at an early stage and making sure that everyone in the organization feels an ownership and responsibility for the activities during the whole project.

**2**

### **Dare to change structures**

One of our ambitions with the project from the very beginning has been to make sure that the developed methods and ma-

terial will be implemented in the existing education structure. This will ensure that all current and future leaders will have the same basic knowledge and tools to create a safe environment for youths in the equestrian sports. This is a key factor for a long-term impact on all children's well-being and safety for many years to come.

**3**

### **Talk about the difference between youth influence and responsibility**

One of the key findings from the pre-study survey (2019) was that the youth leaders take a major responsibility in





**“Trust among local and national organizations is necessary to ensure that the systematic change promoted by the project is both achievable and possible to build on in the future – for the rights of every child.”**

**Catrine Andersson,**  
project manager for  
Trygga Ledare

both preventive roles and as key actors when children are abused or violated. The analysis also showed a lack of consensus between the youth and adult leaders in several issues linked to both challenges and responsibilities. The project has addressed the issue of adults’ responsibility to strengthen young leaders, not transfer the responsibility to them. The project has created prerequisites for consensus, through dialogues and material that are based on the same topics and knowledge whether you are an adult or youth leader. At the same time, it has been clear that there is a difference between youth influence and youth responsibility for a safe environment in the stables. Children’s safety is always the adults’ responsibility.

#### **4**

##### **Involve the youths – for real**

One way of involving the youths and making sure that they have influence in issues related to themselves is to make them active in reference groups and involve them in decision making processes. During the project, the cooperation with local and regional youth groups as well as CUS (Central Youth Section of the Equestrian Federation) has been essential in all steps. The youth groups like CUS have been active in developing the methods and materials from the beginning of the project.

#### **5**

##### **Create recognition**

Another learning is the importance of creating recognition in the produced material, such as pictures and learning material with real cases and various association-related examples. To be able to achieve that, the project group cooperated very closely with the target group to make sure that the material felt current and created commitment. Creating recognition, meeting people where they are and listening to their experiences and needs, has contributed to greater impact.

#### **6**

##### **Dare to speak openly about the challenges**

Even though the main communication strategy throughout the project was to inspire leaders and members with good practices, such as the youths’ own voices, inspiring short movies, and pictures with an empowering message, it was also important for the project to show and talk about the challenges. For example, the short film “Stallkänslan” addresses the fact that the stables are not always a safe place for all children and youth. It shows that, even though most young people have their best time when in the stables, that is not the case for everyone. The film has received a great response and been shared more than most of the other communication units.



Thank you to the Stenbeck  
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collaboration project possible

