

All The King's Horses CHILDREN'S RANCH

All The King's Horses, His women & men
with The King
put broken children together again

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO

The Children's Ranch provides refuge in a traditional family setting with Christian values for dependent children who need 24/7 care. Each home on the Ranch receives no more than six children; and indeed, at times it has proven most successful to have five or less so each child receives the personal time and attention they are starving for.

Arizona State Child Protective Services has licensed the Ranch to receive young people from the ages of newborn through 17. That allows us to accept one child at a time or sibling groups or pregnant teens that can remain here after their baby is born. Children are warmly welcomed into a home where every basic necessity is met immediately – hugs (for those who don't mind), food, clothing, and a clean, decorated room. The other children in the home are readied to receive the newcomer eliminating the fear of peer pressure. "We are so glad you are here!" is the cordial introduction. "What do you like to eat?" is an appreciative ice-breaker and attention getter.

"Let's help you get settled." The incoming youth participates in an inventory of their goods as the house parent unpacks and mentally notes what the child needs for an adequate wardrobe. (Later the bonding experience of shopping with a house parent gives a sense of personal worth.) If there are any contraband items, they are 'held for safe keeping'. For example, any tech device that would permit connection with 'no-contact' people listed by the parents or guardian. Medications are locked up and a med sheet is initiated that will have a separate entry for each administration of meds.

An inspection of the child's well-being takes place with a house parent and another staff member standing by at a discreet distance. Most children are well and injury free. But, sadly, there are the others. Bruises, marks, burns or other questionable evidence of physical harm is recorded. Serious injuries or sickness means a trip to the emergency room. As I write this out, it sounds like a coldly, clinical type inspection. Please know that the staff is routinely trained by licensed medical professionals on what to look for and how to complete these necessary steps in a slow and cautious manner while engaging the child in the process. The tenderness of the parent models are sensed by children of every age. They come to realize that this awkward inspection is for their good, for their protection, and for an understanding that we are here for them, even in their awkward moments.

A warm bath, good food, and clean clothes begin the process of being lovingly provided for and loved by the house parents. With all this mothering, a sense of "I'm going to be okay here" takes over. As soon as possible, a tour of the facilities is given to orient the youngster with where the playground is, what families are in what homes, where the office is, where the boundaries are, and some of the rules. It is not unusual for a resident child to offer to give a tour as the house parent casually walks along to oversee the interaction and interject when appropriate. General rules are explained along the way.

"Don't go anywhere without asking the house parents first."

"We must know your whereabouts at all times."

"You want to go to the swing set (or play basketball or take a jog)? Sure!"

"Stay within our line of sight." The open acreage allows the children plenty of opportunity to be 'alone' while staying within our range of vision.

Daily chores are handled with some flexibility; some rewards for jobs well done; some natural consequences for complete disregard of chores. Examples of rewards are: open recognition of jobs well done, selecting a favorite treat, or getting to pick an appropriate movie for movie time. Some natural consequences are: staying back from an outing or a time out during a Ranch event. A reduction in their allowance can be an option. The State sets a minimum allowance which cannot be depleted for any reason. However, the Ranch increases the amount and that overage is useful for training in the discipline of money management.

If the child's admission info is incomplete, the first week we set about gathering medical records, dental records, academic records and — if any — court records. In lapses of dental/medical care, appropriate appointments are scheduled. Within days the child is enrolled in school. In the case of adolescent students, their academic routine is massaged during a "team meeting". Teachers, parent-models and the student make a plan to ensure a successful welcome into a new classroom setting. The Ranch is on-line with the school's daily posts of the youth's progress or regress. As a result of this up-to-date report, adjustments are quickly initiated into the students' routine as needed. Elementary students' academic progress is monitored by regular communication with the teachers. Our tutors (screened volunteers) work with the academically delayed. With this wrap-around oversight, students regularly see a miraculous improvement in their grades. And it is simply remarkable how amazed they are at their own success! "I'm pretty smart!" is a typical self-realization. "For sure!" is our supportive feedback.

For those 17-year olds who are facing their independence, The Ranch provides transitional options. The first thing is to assure them that they do NOT have to leave the Ranch on their 18th birthday! As emerging adults, this period of their lives is often the most precarious for them. Furthering their education or seeking a job in town or attending a Job Corps orientation or considering the military — these avenues of independence are researched with Ranch staff and the young adult brainstorming together.

So in a nutshell ... this is what we do. But why do we do what we do?

The foremost reason is because it is our conviction that the Lord loves children. And for those of us who serve him, we are convinced that Jesus has called us here for this purpose. Our sure calling is not only a benefit to us (as the Lord keeps us encouraged and 'downloads' wisdom as needed), but is a great benefit to the young people who get to witness how Christians respond to the day-to-day challenges of life. It is miraculous, indeed, when they see how we are able to remain constant during times of their emotional outbursts. These diminish over time as they learn to trust us with their feelings before resorting to tantrums.

Do you know of families who have troubled children? We would like to talk with them.

Do you know of children who would blossom under positive feedback and reliable routines that include mature interaction that is available to them 24/7? We would like to talk with them.

Do you know of couples who feel called of God to this kind of work — to be parent models? We would like to talk with them.

Do you know folks who live to pray for others? We would like to talk with them.

When humpty-dumpty fell off the wall, his whole life was shattered. All the king's horses and all the king's men could NOT put humpty back together again. BUT with The King of kings all things are possible. And He loves to heal broken families, broken hearts and broken hopes.

Would you like to know more about why we do what we do? Please Contact us.
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