



Children find HOPE through Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch's focus on FAITH

Spiritual nurturing is a key part of the Ranch's work to help kids overcome their troubles.

God is the hero at Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch!

We allow Him to work through us to surround our children in Christ's unconditional love. Our Spiritual Life Program addresses the ministry needs of children, youth and staff. All children are encouraged to participate in Chapel, Christian education, and Spiritual Life groups, as well as to meet individually with an on-campus Chaplain or Deaconess.

While the Ranch's Spiritual Life program is rooted in Lutheranism, we promote principles of respect, acceptance, and character building that are common to all faiths. The Ranch collaborates closely with hundreds of churches across the nation in various ways, including service projects and congregational awareness and engagement activities. Each year, Servant Teams from across the U.S. volunteer their time and skills to help us advance our mission.

Our Spiritual Life Program has always been at the heart of our services to children. The Christian values children learn at the Ranch aid in their healing, provide a foundation of hope, and help them to be successful in their treatment. Those lessons often stay with them through their entire lives, helping to positively shape and influence their future.

Cost to provide Spiritual Life Program: \$377,038/year

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch's Spiritual Life Program is funded completely through the generous support of individuals, churches, Thrivent Choice, and foundations. The annual cost includes:

- A Spiritual assessment upon each child's arrival at the Ranch.
- A Bible and other Christian resources to introduce children to Jesus and help them grow in their faith.
- Regular chapel services for children and employees, with worship and teaching from God's Word.
- Weekly Spiritual Life groups.
- A Christian environment—with therapists, counselors, teachers, and youth care workers able to bring faith into the discussion.
- Vacation Bible School.
- Ongoing Spiritual mentoring by our Chaplain, Vicars, and Deaconesses.
- A daily devotion for Ranch employees, written by our Chaplain.
- Spiritual mentoring and guidance for employees interested in exploring their faith.

The Spiritual Life Program at the Ranch is voluntary, meaning children are not required to attend, but nearly 100 percent choose to participate in our ministry of hope and healing.

Chaplain Rick Jones shows Christ's love to the children at the Ranch through his compassion, gentleness, and listening.

"I was inspired by you guys to go to college for a pastoral degree, [and someday return to the Ranch]. God called me to be a pastor so I can help kids and adults in need. I want to help them learn who God is, so their faith can grow stronger."

—Former resident

"At the Ranch, I learned patience, respect, integrity, perseverance, religion, love, and kindness. I can tell you that my life would not be the same if I had never set foot at the Ranch. I am not, and will never again be, a victim!"

—Former resident



Living by Hope

Spiritual nurturing is a key part of the Ranch's work to help kids overcome their troubles.



Joy Ryan, President/CEO
Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch

Someone once said, “We live by hope.” For kids at the Ranch, no truer words were ever spoken. Because sometimes, hope is all they have. And they’re able to hang onto that hope because they are surrounded by an atmosphere of faith you and other friends and partners make possible.

So many of our children come to us exhausted from just fighting to survive. Often, they’ve lost all hope. They need to rest, learn to trust again, and work hard to make what they have only dared to hope for into a reality—with God’s help.

That’s why the Ranch’s Spiritual Life programs are so critical. They allow our children to find an anchor in the storm. By understanding Christ’s message, they adopt a new set of values and ways to interact with the world that will help them succeed.

In the chaos that was their lives, so much was up for grabs. But with the anchoring wisdom of the Gospel, they can find rest, safety, and the promise of His abiding love. That’s what enables them to find stability in the storm, and then chart their true course.

Without the prayers and partnership of generous donors, the Spiritual Life programs at the Ranch would not be possible.

Thank you, and God bless you.

Joy



“At first, I resisted the spiritual emphasis of the Ranch. I didn’t have an open mind, because so many bad things had happened to me. Thankfully, a special youth director helped me see that God allowed me to experience pain to help me learn to depend on Him.”

It has been a journey. But I’ve grown in my faith and now realize the Ranch saved me from a very scary situation. I will be forever grateful.”

-Leslie Aune, former resident

Leslie Aune with her husband and children. Her life was forever changed by the generous partnership of many Ranch donors.