

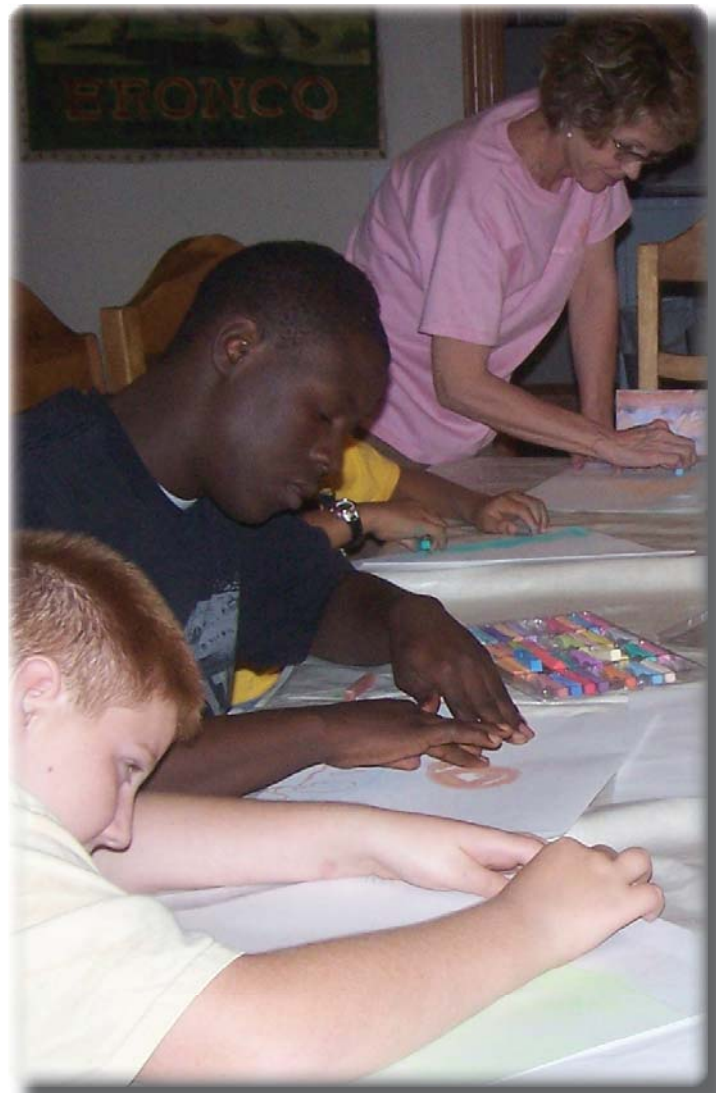
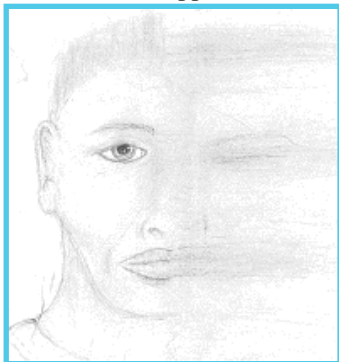


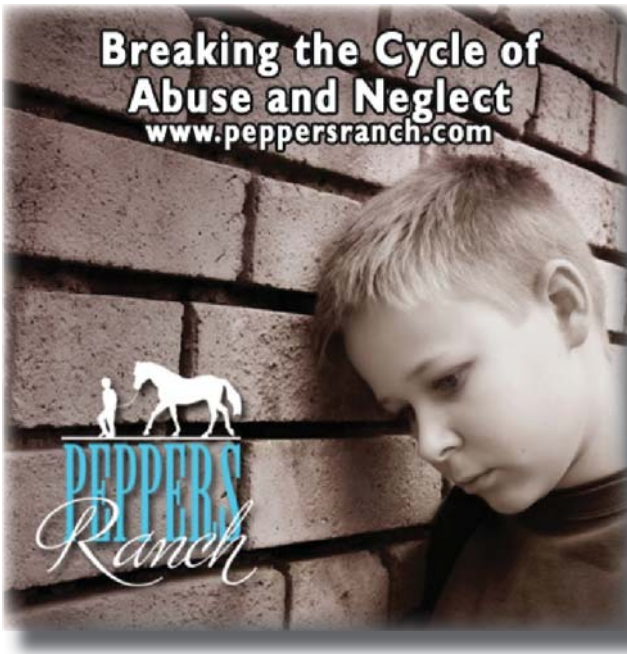
Drawing to Heal

With the ongoing support of the Fine Arts Institute of Edmond, we currently provide a crucial component of the healing process...artistic self-expression or...expressive therapy. When words are not enough...the opportunity to express thoughts and feelings through the creative process is expertly facilitated by Mary Lou Moad. Mary Lou has been giving the Peppers Ranch boys an opportunity to express themselves for almost three years now. She says, "my number one goal is to help the boys develop a love of art, through any form". Mary Lou knows that she cannot fix everything...but believes that "it is a privilege and honor to be a part of these children's lives".

The underlying goal is to help our boys improve their ability to resolve conflicts and problems, develop positive interpersonal skills, successfully manage behavior, reduce stress levels, increase self-esteem and self-awareness and achieve insight. Mary Lou believes, "the best thing about working with the boys is getting to look into their eyes and spend time with them...allowing them to talk about their art instead of themselves and/or their problems".

The drawing on this page represents a young man's view of himself, changing from the troubled kid who arrived at Peppers Ranch, to a new emerging self who is less defiant and more positive. Many of the boys in our care are more comfortable expressing themselves nonverbally. At each of our homes we create safe environments and outlets where youth can express their fear, pain, anxieties, and things that have happened to them in their past. This is a very important first step on their road to healing.





In the middle of all that goes on here at the Ranch, it is difficult at times, to stop and create articles for the newsletter. It takes time to pause and reflect about what has and is happening. The dynamics of Ranch life are sometimes beyond our ability to put into words. Furthermore, each child we have is an individual and should be treated with respect and honor. The same is true for staff members, so we are careful what we write. With all that is going on at any given time, and especially during this time of year, how can we take the time to listen (and hear) each heartache and respond to each success? How do we then stop and remember as we try to keep you informed? We don't always get everything done, but we try. It is certainly God's grace that helps us through every day.

As we think about what to write, we are reminded of going to court with one of the boys. This happens from time to time. We think of what the deputies, the lawyers, the social workers, the judges and the families have told us. We think about what directors of other residential programs have been telling us. We hear frustration in the voices of volunteers, mentors and supporters. Times have changed. Stress levels, resulting from life situations, are growing to a point that those who don't trust God can hardly cope.

It is difficult to listen to the stories of abandonment and abuse as we review applications for placement. It is a very special group of people who can hear these stories and continue to stay on track helping children recover from the aftermath. We pray every day for stamina and wisdom for the Ranch staff. The scared and lonely boys who come our way need our strength to carry on. We may become the first adults they have ever trusted. What an awesome responsibility we have to stay strong, trust, and most of all, adapt to the daily challenges before us. Please continue to pray...and thanks for helping us rescue children.

“Hope is faith holding out its hand in the dark.”

Teachable Moments “Jeffrey” sat there, looking down at his plate. As he laughed and joked with his roommate at the dinner table, he reached across another boy's plate for the salt. His house mother quietly got his attention and pointed out his infraction. Jeffrey had not been at the Ranch very long, and he was still learning some of the rules. “Sorry, Michael,” he said. “No problem,” was the response from the older boy sitting beside him.

Teachable moments...we all have them. We all can learn from them...provided there is someone who cares enough about us to teach. More than anything else, that is what a parent does...teaches! And more than anything else, that is what we do at Peppers Ranch.

As you watch the simple exchange between Jeffrey and his house mom, you wonder how many youngsters were making mistakes that night with no one there to teach them the right way. By taking the time to recognize a teachable moment and address it, we are shaping the character of youngsters every day.

There is no question it would be easier to just ignore the behavior or shrug off the mistake, but no one ever said parenting was supposed to be easy. We believe it is the toughest job there is...and the longest lasting. Teachable moments are the building blocks of growth and maturity. At Peppers Ranch, we embrace them and use them to help mold the men our boys are going to become.

From the Director “We cannot direct the wind, but we can adjust the sails.” When I read this quote the other day I immediately thought of Peppers Ranch. The Ranch is constantly adjusting the sails of our young “ships” so they can catch as much wind as possible. The wind of learning...the wind of growth...the wind of self-confidence... whatever is necessary to give a boy a chance for a brighter future.

Any of us who are parents will admit that there is no single approach to child rearing. What works great for one will not work at all for another. Like adults, children are individual personalities and each one is unique. Changing the sails...or in this case changing our parenting style...to better reach a child in need is what good parenting is all about. And that is precisely what Peppers Ranch is all about.

Thanks to you and other loving, caring donors, the Ranch has the luxury to address a youth's needs from a variety of directions. We can look at his educational strengths, his social fears, his self-confidence level...the Ranch can try a different approach, if necessary, to give a child a chance to grow. At Peppers Ranch, persistence is not unique...it is a way of life.

When I see a new boy...head down, eyes on his feet, hands stuffed in his pockets...I always take heart in knowing he will get the best possible chance to grow and succeed here at Peppers Ranch. He will have to work at it...we expect our kids to give their best. But in the end, he will have every possible opportunity to succeed!

I want to thank you for making the Ranch's persistence with youth possible. Because you care we are truly changing lives for the better.

-Jim Williston

Your IRA and Charitable Contributions

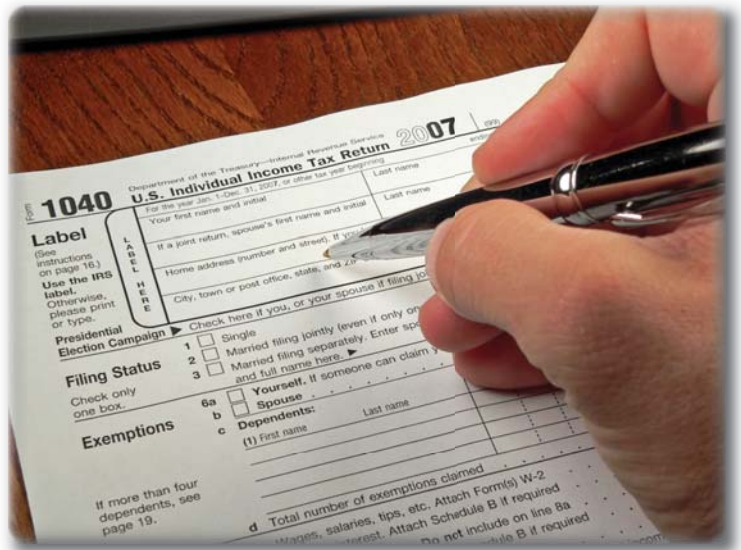
If you are at least 70½ and are planning to contribute to your favorite charity this year, you may want to consider using funds from your IRA. Under the Pension Protection Act of 2006, the 2007 tax year is your last chance to make tax-free charitable contributions from an IRA.

If you don't need the cash from your IRA required minimum distribution (RMD), this provision is particularly beneficial. You can apply the charitable donation toward your RMD, but it won't count as income...thus potentially lowering your income tax bill (although you can't deduct the donation as a charitable contribution on your tax return).

Charitable contributions from an IRA:

- Can total up to \$100,000 annually and can be divided among charities.
- Must go to qualified public charities. Donor advised funds and private foundations are ineligible.
- Must be made directly to the charity.

The deadline for favorable tax treatment of charitable contributions from your IRA is December 31, 2007.



Looking At You, Looking At Me!

A poem with a unique perspective of a boy who might be any of those at Peppers Ranch

What do you see, people, what do I see,
What are you thinking when you're looking at me?
An angry young man, not very wise.
Uncertain of the future with faraway eyes?

Who screams when angry or mad,
Then becomes disrespectful when he's feeling sad?
Who seems not to notice when silence
Has come, but continues
To be frustrated and attempts to run

Unhappy at best, and resistive as well
At all the heartaches in my personal well
I'll tell you who I am, as I sit in despair
A young boy of sixteen with my heart on my sleeve
Wishing and dreaming of a life of reprieve

I want what you want or what you once had
A healthy life and maybe a dad
A future with hope and a good time
Where chaos is absent and this family is mine
-M. Cronin

Attitude
"Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference."

Financial Impact

In 2001, Prevent Child Abuse America released a report that the United States spends \$292 million each day (adjusted for inflation) as a direct or indirect result of the abuse and neglect of our nation's children. The estimate includes the direct costs associated with intervening to help, and treating the medical and emotional problems suffered by abused and neglected children, as well as the indirect costs associated with the long-term consequences of abuse and neglect to both the individual and society at large. The annual costs are equivalent to \$1655 per U.S. family. The data used to obtain the total cost to society was based on research from a variety of sources, which was then compared with data relating to child abuse and neglect. Since conservative estimates were used, the actual annual cost of child maltreatment in the United States could be much higher than the \$107 billion per year estimate.

Why is this important to you and Peppers Ranch? Based on this report, the average annual cost per child is approximately \$120,000. Each and every day, it is about changing lives...and if we are unsuccessful...the lifetime cost is staggering. Assuming they leave us unchanged and happen to live to a normal male life expectancy of 78...collectively, we are burdened with 60 years of this annual expense...or over \$7 million per boy (unadjusted for inflation I might add). As a reminder...there are typically 13,000 children in the custody of the State on any given day. We simply can't afford not to invest in these young lives...we hope you agree!

Thanksgiving

Here we are in the midst of fall. The Thanksgiving holiday approaches. It is easy to get caught up in how busy things get this time of year. Stopping to reflect, however, we certainly have a great deal to be thankful for here at the Ranch. May you have a happy, blessed and bountiful Thanksgiving!





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“Kindness is the language
which the deaf can hear and
the blind can see”

Big Wishes and Little Needs

- Saddles, bridles, reins, snaffle bits, blankets
- Athletic socks, underwear, undershirts (S, M, L, XL)
- Hand and bath towels, twin sheets, washable bath mats and comforters
- Kitchen cookware, pots and pans, silverware, dishes and glasses (plastic), storage containers, etc.
- U.S. Flags (6' X 10' and 12" X 20")
- Camping supplies: 12 person tent/s, sleeping bags, lanterns, cook stoves, tarps, camp chairs, compasses, folding tables, canopies/ screen rooms, etc.
- Fishing Equipment: rods, reels, hooks, weights, line, lure, tackle boxes, etc.
- Power washer, lawn mowers, weed eaters, leaf blowers
- Vehicles in good working condition

If you receive a duplicate copy of Ranch News, please share it with someone who cares about disadvantaged youth. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or, if you would prefer to receive our newsletter by email please call (405) 348-8333 or email director@peppersranch.com.

Yes, I want to make a difference in the life of a child.

Please accept my tax deductible gift of

_____ \$1,000

_____ \$500

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We also accept credit card donations online at www.peppersranch.com and invite gifts in honor or memory of a loved one or friend. Acknowledgements will be mailed promptly.

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