

# News from the Office of Admissions

Holiday 2004

## Reflections on a Year of Achievement

With the holiday season fast approaching, I once again find myself reflecting upon the past year and all that transpired here at Colorado Boys Ranch. Working with children and families who have experienced severe mental health difficulties can be a very difficult job. Combine this with the increasingly stringent regulatory and managed care requirements, and it can at times even seem overwhelming. And yet, in retrospect, it has been a great year for CBR. During 2004, 93 percent of families were actively involved in therapy for their youth. As a result, 85 percent of those youth were successfully reunited with their families. Another 10 percent of youth were successfully discharged to alternative settings.

CBR has continued its second year of advancement into the neurosciences with astounding results. Our study and research is helping us understand and assess learning, memory, emotions and behavior as they relate to the brain. The more we learn about the brain, the better we'll be able to advance, specialize and successfully implement our psychotherapeutic interventions.

This past year has also brought some moments of sadness. One of our young men presented an especially significant challenge early on for our clinical team with his violent behavior. But instead of simply giving up on him, our psychiatric and medical staff extensively studied this young man and invested what seemed at times Herculean efforts to curb his violent episodes. Through their medical research he was finally diagnosed with a degenerative disorder—tragically, one that will eventually take his life. In a matter of weeks his medical condition worsened, requiring inpatient hospitalization. After exhausting all our best efforts, we realized that his medical needs had increased beyond the medical capability of our facility. He was discharged "successfully" to a hospital in his home state.



On a brighter note, I am reminded of a shining moment I shared with a member of our professional staff.

Towards the end of one particularly difficult day, she entered my office appearing stressed and frustrated. After reflecting upon the day, she stated very emphatically: "And another thing—I hate to lose." Inquiring further, I realized she was referring to her personal passion and belief in the success of every young man that enters our doors. She told me how some nights are more difficult than others, especially when she is mulling over a difficult case. As she was leaving my office, she turned with teary eyes and said: "Martin, if I ever stop caring and believing, would you please remind me it is time to leave?"

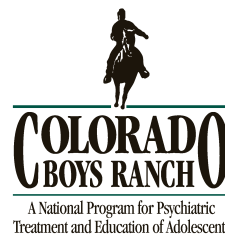
In spite of the many ups and downs, I am proud to say this past year has been a success. We have shared in the exciting moments when our young men are reunited with their families and we have struggled with sadness when we cannot productively and successfully help others. We have joyously watched our young men successfully earn their high school diploma or GED—all with their own sense of accomplishment. We have been given an awesome privilege and responsibility to care for and believe in our children. Indeed, it has been a wonderful year.

— *Martin Masar, Director, CBR Office of Admissions and Clinical Affairs*

### *Welcome to the Holiday Edition*

On behalf of the staff and youth of Colorado Boys Ranch, we wish you a meaningful holiday season and a new year filled with accomplishments. We appreciate your continued support of Colorado Boys Ranch and look forward to hearing from you in 2005. Send your opinions, thoughts and comments to CBR Director of the Office of Admissions and Clinical Affairs Martin Masar. He can be reached at [cbrclinical@ria.net](mailto:cbrclinical@ria.net) or 1-800-790-4993.

# About Colorado Boys Ranch



**C**olorado Boys Ranch (CBR) has been helping troubled teenage boys for more than 40 years. Located on a 320-acre campus in southeastern Colorado, CBR is a fully accredited, nationally recognized psychiatric residential treatment and education facility that provides 24-hour care. Each year, more than 120 boys, ages 10-21, from all ethnic, cultural, geographic and socio-economic backgrounds are admitted to Colorado Boys Ranch. Many come from caring families where the boy is troubled by a medical disorder, childhood trauma and/or negative peer group influences. Others are referred to CBR following years of abuse or neglect. What they have in common are behavioral, psychiatric, school and community problems that other, less intensive, settings were unable to treat.

A professional intake team reviews all referrals to determine appropriateness of placement at CBR. This thorough evaluation process helps referral agencies, parents and physicians identify those boys who will most benefit from CBR's intensive treatment and educational services.

CBR staff members include doctors, nurses, therapists, teachers, residential counselors, recreational counselors and support staff who are experienced, educated and well trained.

## *CBR's Treatment Approaches*

Our approach to treatment includes:

**Family Therapy.** At CBR, family involvement in all aspects of a boy's treatment is extremely important. We encourage family members to accompany their child at the time of admission and, as clinically appropriate, welcome them to visit as often as possible. Our goal is to help the boy and his family achieve a healthy and successful reunion. At the time of discharge, we support families by assisting with the development of aftercare and "wrap-around" services, such as counseling, special education services, vocational training and medication management.

**Intensive Psychotherapies.** Individual and group therapies are a major treatment component. Psychotherapies are designed to match each boy's unique circumstance. Rather than using a standardized—one size fits all—treatment model, CBR therapists make sure treatment fits the specific needs of each boy. CBR also offers a wide range of animal-assisted therapy programs.

**Education – Applied Learning.** At CBR, academic learning occurs inside and outside the classroom, and in a variety of traditional and non-traditional ways. CBR concentrates on the principal that exposure to real-life experiences is essential for effective learning.

**Relationship-Building.** Our goal is to help boys and their families develop the trust, open rapport and compassion necessary for meaningful, healthy relationships. Programs are designed to promote caring relationships, which in turn promote successful treatment.

**Leading-Edge Care.** CBR treatment programs and activities continually are assessed to ensure that they reflect the latest in mental health research and findings.

## *CBR—Where Boys Grow and Lives Change.*

In 1996, CBR completed its first *Performance Report*. Success for the youth was defined as completing the CBR treatment program and—for approximately two years following discharge—living at home in a stable relationship with his family, in foster care or independently while attending school or working. Based on those criteria, the report showed an 85 percent success rate.

In 2001, CBR completed its second *Performance Report* based upon a follow-up study of 202 boys discharged between 1996 and 2000. Once again, 85 percent met the criteria for a successful outcome at the time of follow-up, an average of two years and eight months following discharge.

Colorado Boys Ranch, Office of Admissions, P.O. Box 681, 28071 Hwy. 109, La Junta, CO 81050  
(719) 384-5981; 1-800-790-4993; fax (719) 384-0470; [www.coloradoboysranch.org](http://www.coloradoboysranch.org);  
[cbradmission@ria.net](mailto:cbradmission@ria.net)