



A National Program for Psychiatric Treatment and Education of Adolescents

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News from the Office of Admissions

Helping Youth Weather Life's Storms

Imagine being in the middle of the ocean floating on a small, handcrafted wooden raft composed of a few flat boards and some woven rope. As you float on this poorly constructed raft, an immense storm swirls around you. Understandably, you feel extremely anxious as the clouds become darker and the intense wind more violent. How will you make it through the torrential downpour and the buffeting winds on such a small and poorly crafted vessel? What will sustain your spirit with so few resources at your disposal? Will you have the strength and courage to withstand the storm?

In many ways, this raft represents what a young man admitted to Colorado Boys Ranch has encountered in his tumultuous life and the fragile coping mechanisms he has in place to deal with adversity. He comes to CBR during very turbulent times—as a raft battered by raging seas. He struggles with insecurities, conflicting emotions, poor anger control and harmful behaviors. He has been hurt on many levels. Yet, there is a hidden strength buried in the core of his being.

At CBR, this young man finds the guidance, support, specialized educational and therapeutic interventions that will enable his hidden strength to grow. As he progresses through his individually designed treatment program, he becomes less



like the weather-beaten raft and more like a viable, floating vessel. As his progress continues, his floating vessel transforms into a fine sailing ship and, finally, into a sturdy and formidable yacht.

A very special transformation has taken place. In the future, this young man may encounter many more terrible storms—perhaps even life-altering disasters. However, his new vessel, his sturdy yacht, will provide him with the means to handle those events with confidence. Although some of us may have a smoother life than others, none of us makes the journey without some

CBR Now Admits Younger Boys

Recognizing a growing demand for residential psychiatric treatment for younger youth, Colorado Department of Health and Human Services officially approved and licensed CBR to accept boys ages 10-11, along with youth to age 21. The approval took effect November 2002. CBR's individualized programming is ideally suited to treating this population. We all look forward to the challenges and rewards that come with working with this age group.

Comments Welcome

As always, we'd love to hear from you! Your opinions, thoughts and comments are welcome. Contact Martin Masar, director of the CBR Office of Admissions and Clinical Affairs, at cbrclinical@ria.net, or CBR Office of Admissions at cbradmission@ria.net, or 1-800-790-4993.

turmoil. The ability to ride out the turbulence is a special gift that each of us develops differently. At CBR, our goal is to help each boy build within himself a safe and wonderfully embracing vessel with which to weather life's storms.

—Vaughn Zimmerman,
CBR Regional Services Coordinator

A Message from Martin Masar

CBR Regional Services Coordinator Vaughn Zimmerman, a long-time friend and colleague, agreed to be the guest columnist for this edition of the *CBR Office of Admissions Newsletter*. Vaughn shares his passion for working with troubled adolescents—helping them build the emotional and behavioral confidence they need to sail through life's challenging times. We will feature other CBR guest columnists in upcoming issues of the newsletter.

About Colorado Boys Ranch

Colorado 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 after care 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 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.

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