

Spring 2026

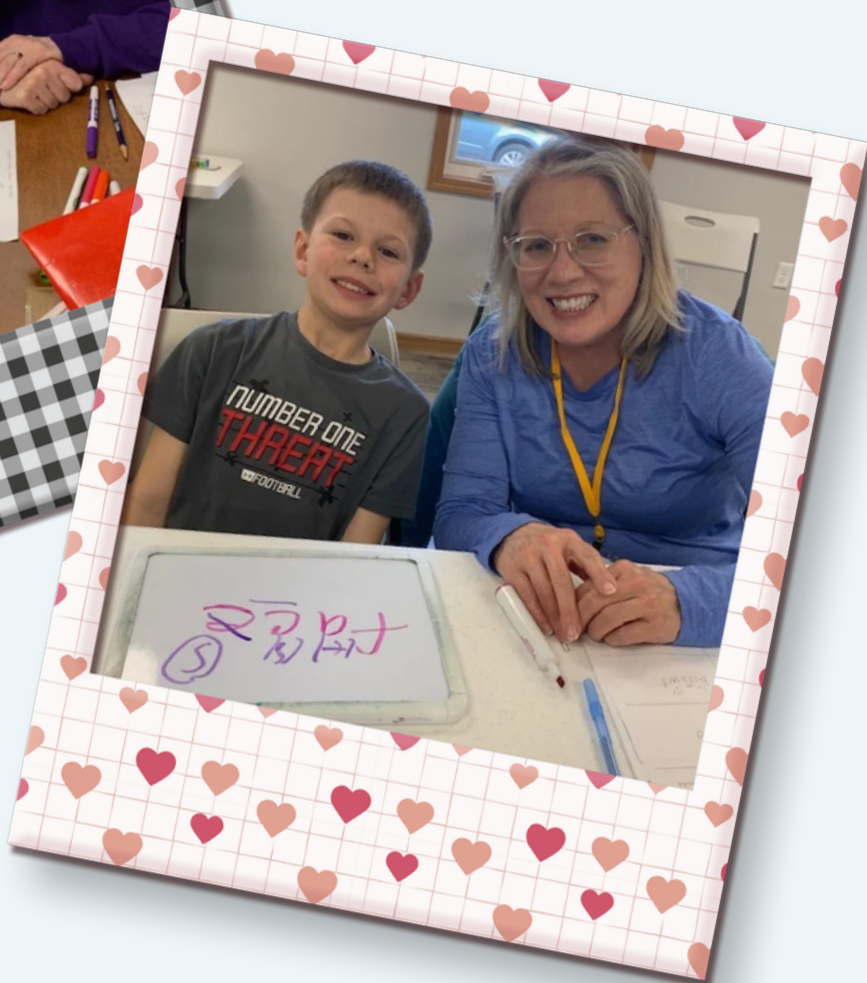


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We love
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**Testing is in and the results are
great!! Way to go kids and tutors!!**





In just seven months, most of the kids have improved their reading by one whole year, and some have even jumped ahead two or three years!

All of the kids have worked really hard and we couldn't be more proud of all of them!!



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KIDS RANCH CLEAN UP DAY

YOUR HELP MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE!



SUMMER IS COMING!

Dress in your work clothes and come help get the ranch ready for camp. If you have them, bring gloves and garden tools labeled with your name.



Water and
snacks provided.



**SATURDAY,
MAY 2ND, 9:00AM**
Rain or Shine



**HELPING HANDS
NEEDED!**

S4800 County Road D
Rock Springs, WI



QUESTIONS?



Email or Call Kristie | Kristie@thekidsranch.org | 608-393-1037



Youth under 18 without a parent/guardian present
will need a signed waiver. Contact us for a copy.



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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

CAMP NEEDS YOUR HELP!

ADULT AND KIDS 13 AND UP ARE NEEDED!

Your choice:

- **Help with crafts**
- **Help with snack**
- **Help with hikes**
- **Help with cleanup**

We need people who can help the kids put **bird house kits** together, make **fairy gardens**, **paint pictures** with nature and more!

Contact Kristie at 608-393-1037

or sign up online at

www.TheKidsRanch.org-Volunteer

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THIS SUMMER, GIVE YOUR CHILD A FRESH START



Kids Ranch Summer Day Camp is now enrolling children ages 7–12.

If your child struggles with reading, confidence, or big emotions, **you are not alone.**

Our two week camp is designed to help children build reading skills, self esteem, and lasting connections in a safe, supportive environment.

- ✔ One-on-one reading support
- ✔ Self-esteem building activities with a retired family therapist
- ✔ Therapeutic horseback riding with BREATHE
- ✔ Outdoor adventures, hiking, gardening & creative projects
- ✔ Small group size. Big impact.



A place where your child is known, supported, and encouraged.



Let's talk about what your child needs—and how we can help.



Call or text Corbin:
608-963-9174



Email:
corbin@thekidsranch.org

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SUCCESS FOR A CHILD WHO OVERCAME GREAT ODDS

By Teresa Parker, Mental Health Coordinator for Kids Ranch

Last year, a family reached out to Kids Ranch, asking for help for their son; **he was in the fourth grade, and unable to read.** We were cautioned by his parents that their son would be difficult to teach because of his **many learning barriers.** They told us that Alex has several diagnoses and barriers that interfere with his learning. The Mayo Clinic had diagnosed Alex with the following disorders: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Verbal Apraxia, Delayed expressive language development, Tic Disorder and ADHD.

Alex has an IEP and receives speech therapy three times a week. In the past seven months, he has participated in the Kids Ranch Literacy Program. Kids Ranch teaches a highly successful, brain-based multi-sensory phonics technique called "Synthesizing Phonics." With the help of our specially trained tutors, this approach to reading has helped many non-readers quickly advance, gain confidence, and become strong readers.

Before tutoring could begin, our Education Coordinator tested Alex for his level of literacy. His scores in both reading and spelling were virtually non-existent. And so, we began.

When I first met Alex as my new student, I was deeply moved by hearing him speak. I could not understand many of his words. His parents gently translated his words to me. I felt unsure and wondered how much I would be able to help Alex.

The first thing I did was to read the research on Verbal Apraxia so that I understood the disorder; I thought it might help me to be more effective as Alex's tutor.

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I learned that Verbal Apraxia is a neurological disorder caused by underdeveloped parts of the brain that regulate motor planning. Verbal apraxia involves difficulty coordinating mouth movements to produce speech. When communication between the brain and body is disrupted, it can interfere with the ability to imitate sounds and coordinate and sequence movements.

When Alex and I started working together, there were many times when I could not understand what he was saying; I hesitated to ask him to repeat words and phrases. I asked Alex to teach me the best way to manage this. He said I should try my best to decipher the words he was saying, and then I could ask him for help when needed.

When we started our twice-weekly sessions, each lesson was a very laborious process for both Alex and me. Alex had to learn to sound out every single word using the dictionary markings (clues). **He worked so hard** during every single twice-a-week lesson! You could almost see the wheels turning in his brain. As we worked together, I discovered that Alex is a very bright and creative child, obsessed with doodling and drawing characters related to his new words. As his confidence grew, he began to interact with the other children, and shared his comical, mischievous sense of humor.

Synthesizing Phonics proved to be the perfect method for Alex! By doing the weekly lessons, and his parents structuring time for practicing each week's lesson, we watched in awe as Alex began to read. The Synthesizing Phonics method we use at Kids Ranch provides visual support and a repeated structure with verbal stimulation, touch, and hearing. It is the perfect solution for children who are right-brain learners and need a different approach.

One day Alex told me he was ready to read to his parents for the first time, and he could not wait for them to come that day to pick him up from tutoring. It was a special moment when Alex said to his parents, "I am ready to read this book to you now!"

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As Alex began to read his first book, “Fly Guy,” he was absolutely beaming with pride. And all of us were in near **tears at hearing this young boy read to his parents for the first time**. When Alex finished the book he said triumphantly, **“There! I can read! I bet you thought I would never read! But I can now!”**

You may wonder how progress in Alex’s literacy ability has helped him in school. His most recent iReady assessments from his Special Ed Teacher show significant improvement:

Math: 454 (9-point gain from the fall)

Literature- 432 (23-point gain) This shows amazing progress!

We retested Alex after seven months of tutoring. On the Slosson Test of Oral Reading, Alex gained one year in word fluency. To see **Alex beaming with pride** now as he approaches each new lesson, and reads new books is priceless!

Tutoring a child with Autism and Verbal Apraxia to read is a deeply rewarding experience. It requires immense patience, creativity, consistency, lots of positive reinforcement and sincere praise.

If you know of a child that has learning barriers and needs support, please contact Kristie Gander at Kids Ranch, (608) 393-1037.

Teresa Parker

Mental Health Coordinator for Kids Ranch

Kids Ranch: building caring, capable, and competent kids!

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What is the best part of being a Kids Ranch tutor?



**Let a couple of our
tutors tell you their
thoughts:**

Judy (tutor for 2 years): “I
love working with these
kids and I love seeing
their potential. And some
of these kids don’t know
how smart they really
are.”

Wood (tutor for 3 years) : “Their relationship. I like it when
the kids open up and are expressive about their personal
thoughts. This changes the literacy work, and brings
more personal energy to it. It becomes more engaging for
both the tutor and the student.”

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Mental Health news

KIDS RANCH! Lifting Up Kids Together!

Three Ways to Improve Self-Esteem in Children:

- 1. Be Positive-** Each day encourage children by telling them what they do that pleases you. Be specific! Avoid consistent saying "No" and especially avoid "put downs". Belittling and disapproving of a child will cause self doubt and low self esteem.
- 2. Give Children Choices-** and also allow them to think of responsibilities they can complete.
- 3. Praise Children** when you see their improvement and effort by letting them know they are working hard. Avoid saying they are a "good boy or a good girl", but comment positively on the specific job they have done well.

KIDS RANCH- "Building capable, confident, and caring children"!

Kids Ranch has a wealth of resources for children and parents and this is all thanks to you and your caring support!

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VOLUNTEER CORNER



Volunteers , you are amazing!

Your work with the kids is making such big changes in their lives. They couldn't progress without you and Kids Ranch couldn't do this without you!



Lifesavers needed!

Do you want to bring a child the gift of reading?

Do you like to spend time outdoors or making crafts with children?

Do you want to change a life?

You can become someone's lifesaver!

[Click here to volunteer!](#)



Just a short note to say how much we love our volunteers and donors! Kids Ranch needs you and you always come through! **You keep changing lives and we thank you for it!!**



Love,

Kristie Gander-Executive Director