



You Gave Eli What No One Else Did

Your big heart is giving Eli space to heal.

Eli didn't say a word in his first session. He just stood in the arena, watching the horse. The horse watched him back.

It wasn't trust. Not yet.

But it was the first time in a long time that someone—something—waited for him to go first.

Eli was just 16. But already he had been through more foster homes and crisis placements than most people move homes in a lifetime. Places that handed out rules but never offered connection. Places where Eli's voice was just background noise.

One home gave him a chore chart but didn't learn his name. Eli had learned to keep his things in one bag—just in case.

He wasn't defiant. He wasn't angry. He was just . . . done.

By the time he arrived at the Residential Center for Healing and Resilience, nobody expected much from Eli. Not even Eli himself.

But the Ranch was different.

As part of his care, Eli began Equine Therapy—something that didn't come with lectures or labels.

And a question:

What do you want to carry?

That question came in the form of a box of ping-pong balls. Some were blue, some green. Each had a phrase. Blue for the hard things. Green for the good.



Two buckets sat in front of him.

One for what to keep. One for what to leave behind.

Eli nodded.

And got to work.

Until he reached the final blue ball . . .

Thanks to You, Mia Didn't Give Up on Her Dad

Your kindness is helping her take the first steps back to connection.



Mia didn't talk much about her dad.

The truth was, there wasn't a lot of trust there. Not anymore.

But something changed. And her dad noticed it, too.

Before coming to Idaho Youth Ranch, Mia and her father barely spoke. They had tried therapy in the past—but it always ended in frustration. Silence. Shouting. Misunderstanding.

Mia was just 15. Smart. Guarded. Tired of trying. She didn't yell or rebel. She simply retreated.

When things at home reached a breaking point, her counselor referred her to Equine Therapy at the Hands of Promise Campus.

Mia didn't argue. She just said:

“*I'll go. Whatever.*”

That's where you came in.

Because of you, Mia didn't have to figure things out alone. She connected with one horse right away—one she affectionately named Pickles.

Pickles didn't expect anything from her. No small talk. No pressure to explain.

So she showed up. Again and again.

She brushed him. Took quiet photos of him. Taped them up on her wall at home.

Then one day, her father joined her for a session.

It was quiet. A little tense. There were long silences, unsure glances.

But no one left the room.

And that meant something.

A few days later, while helping Mia sort through her room, he noticed something unexpected.

“Everything was gone . . . posters, photos, all of it,” he said. “Except the horses. Those were still on the wall.”

That was the moment he realized: She still cared.

She just didn't know how to say it yet.

Today, Mia continues to meet with her therapist. She's working—steadily, bravely—on rebuilding her relationship with her dad. Later, Mia told her therapist,

“It was so much fun out there.”

Not in a big, dramatic way—just quiet and certain. Like it mattered more than she expected it to.

It's not always easy. But she's not giving up.

And your generosity is what made that possible.

Thank you for giving Mia the space to trust again—in herself, in her voice, and in the people she loves. 🌈



You Gave Nick a Reason to Try Again

Your compassion reminds Nick that he's worth showing up for.



Nick came to Hays House tired, quiet, and out of options. No bag. Just a threadbare hoodie and sneakers with the soles peeling off.

He looked at the floor. Shrugged when staff asked what brought him in.

“Didn’t have anywhere else.”

That was all he said.

Nick was just weeks from turning 18. He’d been sleeping on couches, in stairwells—sometimes outside when there was no one left to call.

He didn’t resist being there. He just . . . existed. Quiet. Watchful. Present, but distant.

He did his chores. Sat through meals. Kept to himself.

Then—slowly—he started showing signs of life.

He helped another teen fix a broken zipper.

He kept his space clean.

He asked about jobs.

Because of you, Hays House staff were able to connect Nick with our Idaho Youth Ranch Distribution team. He got hired. And for a while, you could see a spark.

He showed up early. Asked questions. Paid close attention.

“He listened like he didn’t want to miss anything,” one staff member said.

But survival mode has a way of lingering.

A few weeks in, Nick started missing shifts. First one. Then another.

No calls. No answers.

He didn’t quit—he disappeared.

And honestly? That could’ve been the end of the story.

But because of you, it wasn’t.

A few weeks later, Nick came back.

He stood at the door. Still quiet. Still guarded.

And because of your support, the answer was yes.

. . . always yes!

Nick is working again now. Still soft-spoken. Still learning how to stay.

But he’s beginning to trust—one small moment at a time.

He listens when someone offers advice. He doesn’t bolt when things get uncomfortable.

“He doesn’t smile often,” a staff member said, “but when he does—it changes his whole face. You can see the kid underneath all that survival.”

There are still hard days. Days when disappearing feels easier than asking for help.

But thanks to you, those days don’t define him.

Because of you, Nick is learning that a setback doesn’t mean it’s over.

It just means you start again.

And you gave him a place where he could. 🌈

He rolled it in his palm, staring at the words.

“It’s the one that says I ruin everything,” he said. “That I make people leave.”

Then, almost like an exhale, he dropped it into the “leave behind” bucket.

It was just a moment. But it meant everything.

It meant Eli was ready to imagine a future not shaped by shame.

Thanks to your support, Eli is slowly, bravely, learning to believe a different story about himself.

Today, he speaks up in therapy. He mentors younger kids at the Ranch. He lines his windowsill with green ping-pong balls that say things like:

“Still here . . . trying again.”

You didn’t just give Eli therapy. You gave him hope. You gave him the chance to see himself not as broken . . . but becoming.

Because of you, he’s still showing up—one green ping-pong ball at a time. 🌈



You’ve helped kids like Eli, Mia, and Nick take their next steps forward. When you join Team Appaloosa, you make sure they never have to take those steps alone.

Team Appaloosa is our very special group of monthly givers. It’s a quiet kind of generosity. The kind that builds trust over time.

The Appaloosa is more than just a horse. It’s a symbol of resilience, independence, and the courage to trust again. Just like the youth you’re standing up for.

By joining Team Appaloosa, you’ll tell our youth every month that their lives matter.

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