



## *The Impact Ranch*

### **Description:**

The Impact Ranch is one of the many programs of The Journey, it is designed to serve youth currently on probation who will continue to be managed by probation staff but are ordered by the juvenile court to DHS/DYC for a brief out-of-home placement. The program is not intended to serve youth who are sex offenders, seriously emotionally disturbed, or violent unless DHS/DYC and The Journey, determine they wont pose a risk to other youth in the program. The program will provide short-term residential services with an emphasis on education and skills development, which will prepare the youth to successfully return to the community.

The program is a farm/outdoor work experience program, with a wilderness flavor. Elements of a work an experience camp and outdoor program combine to provide a unique and powerful experience for state supervision youth. The setting is somewhat primitive with many of the activities taking place outdoors. A six-day backpacking/handcart trip is part of the program. It is located in Mona, Utah with treks taking place in the near by mountains and on occasion further south. The Ranch has 12 acres of land and the work experience includes the following: Taking care of the ranch, working with a variety of animals including horses, goats, pigs, llamas, cats, dogs, cattle, and dairy cows. The ranch provides other opportunities for learning such as indoor house chores and maintenance, working with wood and basic tools, and some basic automotive care. During the growing season the ranch students will work in the garden. There are also off campus service related work projects in the community and with the Forest Service, for residents on the top level.

**Referral and transport:** Probation officers and/or the court will refer clients to the program. Screening will be a brief staffing with the probation officer and Impact Ranch intake and clinical staff to determine appropriateness of the client for the program. The probation officer will need to submit a traveling file and other information necessary to begin service to the client. A physical exam will be required of all youth prior to entering the program as this is a fairly physically demanding program and any limitations of physical activity of the youth will need to be known prior to acceptance. Also The Impact Ranch will request that the parents or probation officers provide transportation to the program so that they can see the program and better understand what the youth will be experiencing. If there is no other option, The Impact Ranch will arrange for transportation. In order to simplify the admittance process, The Impact Ranch will accepts clients on Tuesdays. Exceptions may be made for emergency situations

**Trek:** There are multiple levels within the program. On the first level, the youth are oriented to the program and begin working and attending school. During this time, the students live in a Yurt (a type of permanent tent); sleep in sleeping bags and backpack mats on the floor. After approximately two weeks, these new students will participate in a six-day backpacking/handcart trip (The Trek). They will be taught survival skills and low impact backpacking, and will be challenged both physically and emotionally. During this period, they will be asked to evaluate their lives and identify personal strengths

and areas they need to work on and will establish goals in five areas: social, intellectual, physical, ethical, and spiritual. This first level should last about 15 days.

**Work Experience:** When they return to The Impact Ranch, residents will return to the yurt until they can be evaluated according to their performance on trek and overall behavior. In order to advance through the different levels of the program, students will be required to fill out applications and pass interviews. They will then receive work assignments and will continue to participate in the educational program, social development skills groups, ranch work and recreational activities. If the student continues to advance in the program, the youth will move into the bunkhouse and have normal sleeping and showering facilities (bed and linen) and he will enjoy additional benefits of the higher level. During this phase, the youth will have various on and off-site work assignments such as: service projects for the Forest Service or BLM, off-site farm work, and community service projects. This second level should last another two weeks provided the student is doing what he needs to. The students will then complete two more weeks on the highest level, if the student successfully completes all requirements, of all three levels he will be released according to his probation officer and will be given a termination report indicating his successful completion including, school credits and service hours. If students do not advance in the program they will run the risk of additional time at the ranch or an unsuccessful termination, and may be referred to an alternative more intensive placement with a greater time commitment.

**Graduation:** When a youth has successfully completed the program, the parents will be invited to a graduation ceremony. Parents will then provide transportation home. Prior to release, probation officers or DYC personnel will be involved in the discharge planning for each youth, and all records as well as a termination report will be forwarded to the probation officer.

**Education:** Impact Ranch will work with the Cornerstone Program of Nebo School District through Youth In Custody to provide education for the youth while here. Since the program length of 45 to 60 days it is equivalent to one quarter of school, 1.75 credits will be earned. Through Nebo School District, 1.00 credit will be awarded for work study, .25 for English, .25 for Math, and .25 for P.E. Nebo School District will employ 3 teachers to teach from 3 pm to 6 pm on-site at The Impact Ranch. The credit will be transferred to the youth's local schools when they return home.

**Daily Schedule:**

6:30 am to 8:00 am: Get up, morning hygiene, breakfast, morning chores, transport or walk to work site.

8:00 am to 12:00 pm: Work

12:00 am to 1:00: Lunch

2:00 pm to 3:00 pm: Showers and quiet time

3:00 pm to 6:00 pm: School (English, Math, P.E.)

6:00 pm to 7:00 pm: Dinner and Chores

7:00 pm to 8:30 pm: Social Skills Development Group

8:30 pm to 10:00 pm: Quiet Time, homework, earned privileges, etc.

10:00 pm: Sleep

Saturday would include recreational activities if the individual youth has earned them. If not, he will have work hours. Saturdays may also include service projects; ropes course activities, equine-assisted learning activities, and off-site field trips. Sundays will be less active and allow time for homework, reading, parent visits, and worship.

**Social Development Skills Groups:** Youth will participate in SDS groups daily. These will be psycho-educational groups which deal with various topics to aid the youth with various social and personal skills, such as: communication skills training, problem-solving, self-evaluation, empathy, substance abuse prevention, anger-management life planning, vocational choices, and independent living skills. Youth will receive feedback and deal with team issues during these groups. Modeling by the staff will also help teach the skills necessary for the youth to be successful when they return home.

**Discipline and Performance:** The Journey, has outlined appropriate and inappropriate behavior management techniques in the Policy and Procedure Manual. Specifically for this program, youth will be rated daily by their supervisory staff i.e., mentors, advocates, and teachers. They will be rated on a scale of 1 to 4, with 4 being the highest. If students receive a 1 or 2 rating, additional work hours will be assigned and carried out on Saturday and possibly Sunday. Similarly, good work will be rewarded. SDS group will be held each day with staff and youth completing the ratings for the day and assigning rewards or consequences. Youth will be evaluated in all aspects of the program: work, school, group, housekeeping, and overall attitude. If a youth is consistently under-performing, every effort will be made to help him/her to become more motivated. If a youth is violent, or presents a danger to himself or others, consultation will be made with the probation officer and termination may result.

**Communication:** Impact Ranch will actively involve both parents and probation officers in the program to increase communication and understanding. Both will be heavily involved in discharge planning to insure a smooth transition for the youth back into the community.

**Contact:** Please refer to the contact page.