



Program Philosophy

Maximizing Personal Growth

The philosophy of Discovery Ranch is based on four foundations of growth:

- Perception of self
- Relationships
- Life skills
- Accountability

Foundations of Growth

Young men at Discovery Ranch learn to use and internalize the phrase “Whatever life throws at me; I can handle it.”

Healthy Perception of Self and Thinking

While at Discovery Ranch, your son will have the opportunity to discover his identity and how to tap into his individual potential. Through examining his internal personal thinking errors, he will be better able to work on and control his external behavior errors. As he learns to choose his cognitive process, beliefs and attitudes about himself and others, his feelings about himself and quality of life will improve. Opportunities to practice and develop positive self-worth are provided through various activities, challenges and experiences at Discovery Ranch.

Loving and Validating Relationships

Many families come to Discovery Ranch feeling frustrated and lost. Instead of accepting love and validation from their families, their sons have engaged in destructive behaviors, giving them a false and temporary substitute for love. True health and happiness requires validation, love, and positive relationships. At Discovery Ranch, your son will be given support, skills, and the validation necessary to learn how to love himself. As he learns to love himself, he can then internalize the skills necessary for developing and maintaining healthy relationships. Your family will have the necessary support and therapy to assist in the development of family growth and change.

Skills for Life

The experiential environment at Discovery Ranch provides the perfect platform for your son to learn, practice, and internalize a variety of coping skills. These skills are important for coping with the challenges he has and will experience in the future and for developing an effective happy life.

In Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) group, your son will learn skill sets that will help him with awareness, emotional regulation, stress and anxiety relief, and people skills. He will have ongoing opportunities throughout his program to practice and solidly internalize these important skills.

Personal Accountability (Personal Integrity)

Critical to adolescent growth is the development of following through or doing that which you have committed to do. Accountability produces responsible adolescents who are free to make healthy choices. Through mindfulness and the structure provided at Discovery Ranch, your son’s ability to see “the big picture” will help him to make insightful choices and create lasting change.

Clinical Services

Experiential Therapy & Learning

While individual and group therapy sessions are a regular part of each student's care, therapy isn't reserved specifically for those time slots. By harnessing the power of the present, therapists and staff assist young men like your son recognize parallels in his own life. This is a process that takes time, insight, and highly trained staff who help students turn experiences into understanding. This is the core of the Discovery Ranch philosophy. We call it REAL TIME THERAPY.

Experiential Learning

At Discovery Ranch, boys develop confidence and life skills through experiential learning. Experiential learning takes place all day, every day through programs such as:

- Animal husbandry program
- Rescue Calf Program
- Ranch Work
- Intensive physical education program in our gymnasium and weight room
- Horticulture program in our on-campus garden
- Project based learning in our Academic Center
- Community service program
- Sports programs
- Peer leadership program
- Music and technology program in our technology lab

What to Expect from My Therapist

Your son will be assigned a primary therapist that will work with him and your family throughout his stay at Discovery Ranch. His therapist will provide the following services.

- Weekly Individual Therapy sessions
- Weekly Family Therapy video or phone call sessions with your son
- Weekly Group Therapy sessions and classes as assigned
- Monthly Treatment Team Reviews with Academic, Residential, Medical, and Clinical Directors

Group Therapy and Classes

A wide variety of Group Therapy and classes are available for your son at Discovery Ranch. Some of these sessions and classes are for all boys at Discovery Ranch. Additional sessions or classes will be provided for your son according to his individual needs.

- **SOCIAL SKILLS GROUP:** This group is designed to help your son develop social and interpersonal skills and to discuss core values.
- **PROCESS GROUP:** This group is an opportunity for young men on the same caseload to build group cohesiveness and discuss issues and concerns in a supportive environment.
- **RECREATIONAL THERAPY:** Recreation Therapists facilitate experiential activities designed to build communication skills, instill personal growth, teamwork, and unity. Your son will also participate in an off-campus activity every 6 weeks.
- **EQUINE GROUPS:** A therapist and horse professional lead this experiential group together. They combine ground therapy tasks, horsemanship therapy, *advanced horsemanship therapy, and *colt starting therapy to provide your son with a variety of opportunities for emotional growth.
- ***DRUG AND ALCOHOL GROUP:** This educational and process group focuses on prevention and recovery from substance abuse.

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- **TRAUMA GROUP:** All students who have experienced a significant amount of trauma participate in this group. This group combines the education and the acquisition of coping skills. It also functions as a support group.
- ***GRIEF GROUP:** Young men who have experienced a significant loss are provided with support and education tailored to their unique needs in this group.
- ***ADOPTION GROUP:** This support group is for students who have been adopted.
- **DBT (Dialectical Behavior Therapy) GROUP:** This group is designed to teach practical skills in 1) core mindfulness, 2) emotional regulation, 3) distress tolerance, and 4) interpersonal effectiveness.
- ***HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL CLASS:** This group focuses on challenges facing youth today with distorted views of relationships and sex. Students are educated on a variety of relationship skills.
- ***SUBSTANCE ABUSE PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL CLASS:** A personal 12-step support class that discusses sobriety, recovery, and support systems.

* Non-mandatory groups

Equine Therapy:

Equine ground therapy, horsemanship therapy, and colt therapy provide opportunities for students to reveal their strengths and therapeutic concerns. A therapist and horse professional work together during these groups. As students behave “in the moment”, the therapist and horse professional evaluate, discuss and teach students about themselves. Through this process, young men learn to develop assertiveness and understand and manage their emotions and behavior. During these therapeutic activities with the horses, young men like your son participate in discussions about trust, authority, control, respect, and other principles that impact their lives. These experiences are powerful and real, fostering a sense of insight, and creating new ways to look at relationships and themselves.

Rescue Calf Program:

The calf program is experiential learning at its finest. Your son will be provided with a newborn dairy calf to raise. These calves are dependent on the boys and they are extremely fragile the first month of their life. His calf must be bottle fed three times a day, needs to be sheltered and has medical needs that your son must attend to. At the age of two months, his calf will be moved to a different area on campus and he will be assigned a new calf. Through this process, your son will learn valuable life lessons, experience transitional relationships and practice the ability to attach and then say goodbye in a healthy way.

Ropes Therapy & Experiential Activities

Recreation Therapy and Activities

Through participating in a series of obstacles on our on-site high and low ropes course, your son will learn important skills such as self-efficacy, teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills. Additionally, part of living a healthy well-balanced life includes participation in a variety of wholesome recreation activities. Your son will have a wide variety of opportunities to participate in activities that can turn in to life-long habits and hobbies. These healthy new hobbies and activities fill the void students often feel when letting go of old habits or addictions.

Recreation Therapy

All students may participate in and of the following Recreation Therapy activities and interventions with a few exceptions depending on health or other restrictions.

- High and low ropes course elements
- Cross country skiing
- Downhill skiing
- Snowboarding
- Wallyball
- Wheelchair rugby or basketball
- Tandem biking
- Canoeing or paddle boarding
- Snow sculpting and dutch-oven
- Rappelling a waterfall
- Blind hike
- The Bean Museum

Fun Friday

All students participate in the following activities with a few exceptions depending on specific protocols.

- Water sports and games
- Carnival
- Football games with peers and staff
- Holiday celebrations and parties
- Ice skating and broom hockey
- Movies at the theater
- Bowling
- Service projects with a local senior living community

Adventure Camping

Students who have achieved upper level status have the opportunity to participate in the following adventure camping trips. As part of these camping trips your son will have the opportunity to not only rock climb, rappel, canyoneer and backpack but also learn how to cook meals, take care of others and build awareness towards risk.

- Moab
- Unitas
- Escalante and Bryce Canyon

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Sports and Team Sports

Students who have earned their level 2 or above (and do not have any special protocols) have the opportunity to participate in the following sports, races, and tournaments.

- 5K Running Team (which includes the following)
 - Team jerseys
 - Practices every week
 - 5K races
- City Basketball Team
- City Flag Football Team
- City Soccer Team
- Discovery Ranch Wrestling Tournament
- Volunteer at City VIP Special Needs Softball League
- Super Bowl, March Madness NCAA, World Series

Physical Education

All students participate in physical education which includes the following activities.

- Weight lifting (2 or more days per week)
- Cardio (2 or more days per week)
- Different sport opportunities are provided each month

Music & Technology

Appropriate music can be a powerful source of healing. In the music room at Discovery Ranch, your son will have the opportunity to not only learn how to play an instrument, but also learn the skills necessary to produce music.

Many young men come to Discovery Ranch with an addictive or unhealthy relationship with technology. Your son will learn to use technology as a tool, not a toy, and how to balance the use of technology with the rest of his responsibilities.

Education Overview

Education at Discovery Ranch

The Academic Department supplements the overall program objectives by supporting the academic achievement of each student. All components of the Discovery Academy Educational Program at Discovery Ranch are driven by a clear educational purpose. The Academic Department's goal is to support your son's individual needs, help him develop necessary life skills, responsibility, executive functioning and confidence.

School Format

The academic program at Discovery Ranch is open entry and open exit. Because of this unique structure, your son will be provided with an individualized, student-paced and teacher driven education. Teachers direct students to move at a pace that is challenging but not frustrating nor too easy.

Your academic team consists of the Academic Director, teachers, tutors, a Special Education Coordinator, a School Counselor, and residential mentors who will help your son work toward meeting his individualized academic goals. Class size at Discovery Ranch is 12 students or fewer.

Because instruction is one-on-one, your son can move on or spend extra time on a concept as needed, without impacting the learning or needs of other students. Flexibility in pacing allows gifted students to challenge themselves and students with IEP or 504 plans to receive accommodations without compromising their educational experience.

School Schedule

The school at Discovery Ranch is run on an A/B block schedule for core classes, Monday through Thursday. Students meet with their Math/Science and English/Social Studies teachers on alternating nights, 2 nights a week. An example of a student's schedule could be Math/Science

on Monday/Wednesday and English/Social Studies on Tuesday/Thursday. The days of the week that a student meets with his teachers depends on the classroom he is assigned to and teacher's schedule in that room. On Friday, all students are enrolled in one elective course.

Monday through Thursday, school is held from 3:30 to 8:30 with a half hour dinner break.

- 3:30 to 4:00: study hall for all students
- 4:00 to 8:00: core class time with teachers
- 8:00 to 8:30: Direct Teaching time.

Elective classes are taught on Fridays from 2:00 to 6:00 with a half hour dinner break.

New Students

Students begin school on their first day of enrollment at Discovery Ranch. All classrooms are run by licensed teachers.

Your student's first two classes will be an Orientation Classroom as well as a Study Skills Course. Before enrollment at Discovery Ranch, parents complete an intake form indicating if their student has an IEP or 504 and provide transcripts. This information assists the School Counselor in working with parents to create a schedule that will best meet their son's individual academic needs.

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Orientation Classroom

The Orientation Classroom is designed and structured to help new students “learn the ropes.” The Orientation Classroom is designed to help your student successfully transition to the Discovery Ranch academic process.

The objectives of this the teacher in this classroom are as follows:

- Getting to know your student
- Introducing your student to the academic staff
- Providing your son with a tour of the school
- Orienting your student to the rules, policies, and procedures of the school at Discovery Ranch
- Administering the KTEA-3 to better understand your son’s abilities and needs as a student in reading, writing, and math.
- Meeting with the School Counselor to create a class schedule including math, science, English, and social studies. Electives will be added after a student completes the assigned Orientation Classroom tasks.

Study Skills Course

The Study Skills course provides useful information, is counted toward elective credit, and is a low stress class used to help students better understand the unique “concept” system at Discovery Ranch. Once your student has completed the Study Skills course (this usually takes just over a week), he will move into his core classes.

Academic Action Plans

Every student at Discovery Ranch has an Academic Action Plan (AAP) which outlines his long- term academic goal. AAP’s are shared with parents, therapists and students monthly.

Your student’s initial AAP will be determined by the following information:

- Information provided by parents on the intake form completed prior to enrollment
- Current courses and progress
- Monthly pacing and pacing projections
- General and individualized accommodations
- Completed courses
- Recommended next courses

Please note that pacing projections will only be accurate after your student has been enrolled at Discovery Ranch for three months. Future pacing projections are based on the previous three months pacing.

Progress Reports

Monthly academic, residential, and clinical progress reports are available 24/7 via the online Parent Portal.

Classrooms

The classroom is the center of your son’s academic experience at Discovery Ranch. It consists of 6 tables (2 students to a table) with a teacher desk and residential staff chair at the front of the room. The student to teacher ratio is

12 (or fewer) to one. Teachers call students to their desk to check progress, provide instruction, answer questions, and to ensure that students are doing the work they need. Students, when not meeting with their teachers, are doing independent work at their desk, taking a test in the testing center, utilizing resources in the computer lab, or meeting with a tutor (if arrangements have been made for them to receive tutoring). Each night, students work both independently and with their teacher to make progress in their assigned courses.

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Special Education

Discovery Ranch serves many students with special education needs. Upon the enrollment of a student with special education needs and the receipt of the student's records, the Special Education Coordinator will create a snapshot IEP. The snapshot IEP is a guideline for working with and accommodating these students through their enrollment at Discovery Ranch. The snapshot IEP will include the student's grade level, specific special education classifications, any study and testing needs, and approved accommodations and implementation strategies that will be used by the teaching staff. The snapshot IEP is used in place of the student's normal IEP or 504 Plan. This is due to Discovery Ranch's classification as a private educational institution which negates the generation or use of IEP's and 504's on the basis that federal funds will not be provided to Discovery Ranch for their use.

Accommodations

Accommodations for all students (special education, 504, or other students) are provided based on a documented learning disability or a physical or emotional state which inhibits learning to take place in a regular educational setting. The subsequent use of accommodations for educational purposes is monitored carefully in order to provide students with support in the least restrictive environment. Teachers have the prerogative to allow accommodations though they should not deviate dramatically from the recommendations prescribed in the snapshot IEP. Accommodations include, but are not limited to the following:

- One-on-one tutoring
- Testing with the teacher/tutor
- Calculators
- Having directions read out loud
- Rephrasing of questions when testing to ensure understanding
- Computer aided writing
- Extended time
- Minimized distractions

Additional Services

All students receive one-on-one time with their teachers. If your student needs additional help however, he can receive regularly scheduled, subject/skill specific, one-on-one tutoring for \$30/hour.

Reading specialists are also available for students who struggle with reading fluency, reading comprehension, retention, text organization, etc. This service is available at \$80/hour.

Accreditation

The Discovery Ranch faculty is comprised of licensed educators endorsed by the Utah State Office of Education. Discovery Ranch follows a full course curriculum as outlined by the Discovery Academy Educational Program, and meets all Utah State Office of Education requirements. The Discovery Academy Educational Program is accredited by the Northwest Accredited Commission.

Residential Services

Daily Life at Discovery Ranch

Every boy is unique. Your son's individual needs ranging from the most basic physical needs to the emotional needs of love, acceptance, trust, and self- fulfillment are recognized at Discovery Ranch. With a high staff to student ratio, and an experiential setting, your son will experience a highly structured program which teaches responsibility and accountability with natural consequences.

Chores

Your son will have the opportunity to learn responsibility and self-efficacy as he performs chores and duties that accompany living on a ranch. One of these responsibilities is caring for a rescued newborn calf. As your son cares for his calf, he will have countless opportunities to build life skills. At just a few days old, your son's calf will be completely dependent on him for its survival. The opportunities to learn unconditional love and responsibility come naturally as your son bottle-feeds his calf morning, noon, and night, regardless of his level in the program.

Mentors

Leading and teaching by example is the cornerstone of mentorship at Discovery Ranch. Highly trained residential staff, or "Mentors", work side-by-side with the students. Through service and sacrifice, young men learn self-confidence and self-esteem. Your son will receive and learn to use a monthly planner. He will have the opportunity to learn responsibility as he organizes his life including daily schedules, groups, assignments, and activities. Mentors will guide him through this process and as he learns how to set and track goals.

Structure

Structure and routine provide a framework of safety and security for your son. From the moment he wakes up until bedtime every night, his days will be filled with groups, activities, classes, and experiences that will help guide your son towards a more positive and productive future. Even weekends are filled with a variety of activities such as community service projects and various leisure activities.

Physical Activities

Daily physical exercise draws out the natural spirit and provides opportunities for your son to grow and internalize skills for life. Beyond the natural exercise that comes from living on a ranch, your son will participate in a variety of gym sports such as basketball, volleyball, aerobics, and more. Additionally, he will have access to exercise and weight equipment. Boys also have the option to participate in the cross-country team and compete in 5k races.

Nutrition

All meals at Discovery Ranch are reviewed and approved by a dietitian. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner, as well as regular snacks, are served daily. Hot dishes are served for lunch and dinner, including a protein, vegetable, and carbohydrate, with fresh fruit always available. In addition, lunch and dinner include a full salad bar, including fresh greens, vegetables, and protein options daily.

Drug & Alcohol Program

The Drug & Alcohol program includes:

- 12-step program
- Reduction of harm
- Weekly Drug & Alcohol Process Group

Drug & Alcohol Process Group

The Drug and Alcohol Process Group at Discovery Ranch includes education as well as recovery skills.

Education

- The process of change
- Defenses and denial
- Contributing factors that lead to addiction
- Misuse, Abuse and Dependence
- How substance effect the mind and body
- The principle of control, manageability and balance
- Discovering a Higher power
- Rediscovering the person that was given up for drugs
- Self-defeating thoughts feelings and behaviors
- Values, how substance use impacts them
- Managing stress and anger
- Refusal skills

Recovery Skills

- The process of recovery
- Relationships that put our recovery at risk
- People, places and things
- The process of relapse
- Relapse prevention
- Personality traits that put us at risk for relapse
- Pride packet
- Managing triggers
- Hobbies, passions and connections to positive peers
- Support groups and Sponsors
- Using family and support systems
- Daily moral inventories (step 10)
- DBT skills of Please Master in recovery

Social Skills

Learning Effective Social Skills

Young men at Discovery Ranch have the opportunity to learn and practice positive and effective social skills. These skills are important to leading a happy, healthy, and productive life.

Social Skills List

The following is a list of specific social skills your son will have the opportunity to learn, practice, and internalize while at Discovery Ranch.

- Meal Etiquette - Manners
- Active Listening - Reflecting, I statements, Conversation Skills
- Developing Social Radar/Tuning
- Social Cues/Body Language/Self-Assessment
- Appropriate Feedback - Prompting
- Receiving Feedback
- Empathizing with Others - Appreciating Diversity, Standing in Another Person's Shoes
- Refuting Labels and Stereotypes
- Bullying - Addressing and Preventing
- Influence of Media
- Social Media
- Making Friends - Conversation Skills, Developing and Maintaining Friendships, Relationship Repair, Phone Conversations
- Video - "Sex Has a Price Tag"
- Meeting Girls - Dating, Respect Towards Women
- Conflict Resolution - Responding to, Developing a Problem Statement, Brainstorming and Evaluating a Solution (Win-Win)
- Implementing and Monitoring a Solution, Developing a Problem- Solving Approach, Negotiating an Agreement, Making Personal Decisions
- Peer Pressure/Refusal-Persuasion Skills
- Apologizing/Forgiving