

Chaotic, Unstable Early Life Leaves Young Boy Angry & Defiant



United Way
Central and Northern
Vancouver Island

Riding Program Funded by United Way Donors Helps Boy to Manage His Emotions

The first six years of Josh's life were lived in constant chaos; life with a mother addicted to drugs meant constantly moving, living in a car and being left with strangers.

Formative years without security or attachment had left Josh angry, hyper-vigilant and explosive.

When he was seven, Josh went to live in the loving, stable home of his grandmother. However, spending his formative years without security or attachment had left Josh angry, hyper-vigilant and explosive.

Josh suffered from anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, ADHD and oppositional defiant disorder. He was constantly in conflict with his grandmother, his teachers and his peers. He lashed out in anger at the smallest disappointment or change in routine. Although remorseful afterwards, he was unable to manage his emotions in the moment.

His grandmother enrolled Josh in a United Way-funded therapeutic riding program. After a few sessions, Josh really enjoyed it. He learned skills to manage his emotions and to interact with horses, adults and other kids.

After almost one year in the therapeutic riding program, this wonderful young man only requires a half-time, instead of a full-time, aid at school.



Josh has learned to walk away and take a break when he needs it.

Josh has been able to maintain friendships and has learned to walk away and take a break when he needs it. And, Josh is very proud to have had his first ever sleep over with a friend.

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