



Haven Horse Ranch, Inc.

Miracles Really Do Happen

You may ask, “Just what is a miracle?” Some say it is an event that appears to be contrary to the laws of nature and is regarded as “an act of God”. Some say it is just an “event or action that is amazing, extraordinary or unexpected”. And some say it is something admired as a “marvelous creation or example of a particular type of science or skill”. Whatever you might think a miracle is, I believe we have had another one happen here at Haven Horse Ranch!



A little over 2 1/2 years ago, a little girl was born to adoring parents that wanted only the best for their newborn child. But from the beginning they knew there would be hurdles to overcome because their beautiful little girl was born with a partial chromosome deletion, low muscle tone, and also a seizure disorder. Even one of these issues might have a parent shy away from their child, but this couple decided that their little girl was going to become a wonderful, contributing member of her community and with that they started on this long and rewarding journey.

Little Allison was started in physical therapy at six months of age to help her combat the issues that her life would bring to her. Motor control was the main issue at this point as she could not sit up or even roll around. The therapist manipulated her limbs to add muscle tone which would give her stability so her limbs could support her body and by age two she was finally able to sit with support and roll slightly from side to side. As with most individuals with disabilities, this is a very slow process with many setbacks along the way. Allison was also in speech therapy to help her learn to talk or at least make her needs understood.



In June 2013, Allison’s therapist, Vicky Carregal of Next Step Therapy graduated from the Equine Therapy class offered through Haven Horse Ranch and The University of St Augustine. Vicky felt that this would be another type therapy to help her patients reach their full potential. She had a few patients that she felt might benefit from Equine Therapy and wanted to see if it would improve Allison’s motor skills.

In August 2013, Allison was brought to the ranch to see if Equine Therapy would be beneficial for her. She started weekly sessions on Fancy. This first picture shows she could not sit up nor could she even hold her head up. She literally had no trunk or upper body control and was held in place for the



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entire ride. Now you must remember, this was after she had been in physical therapy twice a week for two years.

As they walked around the area, you could feel her body become in tune with the horse and she would try to match its movement. This is the start of her little body wanting to stabilize and work on its own. Each session, Allison would gain a little more and then a little more and now, after only six weeks at Equine Therapy, this adorable little girl is able to sit up in the saddle with her arms placed at her side. She also has started supporting herself on a toy scooter keeping both hands on the steering wheel and pushing herself backwards. She is even beginning to play physically with and manipulate her toys. Allison is becoming more vocal with sounds, which is the start of talking. Next thing you know, she will be yakking your ear off!



It's only been 6 weeks and already such amazing progress. Look out world, miracles do happen and they happen daily here at Haven Horse Ranch!



UPDATE---November 21st, 2013 Allison took her first steps!

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Haven Horse Ranch is a 501c3 non-profit organization.
For more information contact Haven Horse Ranch at 904-813-5710
or Next Step Therapy at 904-315-8525