

## Warner.

My son Warner was diagnosed with autism when he was 3 years old. At the time, he had almost no words, and communication was challenging and frustrating for both of us. At his very first lesson at Crossing Bridges, he cried the whole time and didn't want to be near or touch the horse at all.

Warner is now 6 years old and has been riding weekly at Crossing Bridges for almost 2 years. He has come so far from where we started. Warner says "walk" and "woah," he names colors, counts dice, and tosses a ball back and forth. He is using the choice board and picking the games he wants to play and has even helped brush the horse after his lessons. Warner is working hard and learning but it happens in a fun way with horses and games.

He loves riding and is always so happy to go. Warner has ridden Faith most of his time at Crossing Bridges and has connected with her in the most amazing way. She meets him where he's at, even on bad days, and provides a calm confidence and the most unwavering love. Seeing him hug and kiss her after his lesson brings me so much joy.

Jennifer and all the staff and volunteers at Crossing Bridges have a physically and emotionally taxing job, but they do it so gracefully with incredible patience and love for all their students and families. We are so grateful for them all and I don't know where we'd be without Crossing Bridges!

- Christine Frye



## Kendra.

Crossing Bridges has welcomed my granddaughter Kendra with open arms. Jennifer and her team are understanding, compassionate, and kind. Kendra has Fanconi Anemia, which mainly affects her bone marrow; however, she also has skeletal anomalies, skin pigmentation, and intellectual disabilities. She spends time up at OHSU getting bone marrow testing and has many medical appointments. When Kendra started, she lacked confidence and struggled with communication and daily living skills.

Since starting lessons at Crossing Bridges, Kendra now looks forward to every Monday! She has gained so much love for the horses, her confidence and independence have skyrocketed, her personality and vocabulary have blossomed, and she has made new friends. Kendra feels confident around the horses and shows so much respect for them. Jennifer spends quality time with her working on academics, as well, which she has progressed in. The patience and kindness Jennifer and her staff have for their students is amazing. I enjoy sitting and watching Kendra on the horses and how proud she is to be part of Crossing Bridges.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for making a difference in Kendra's life, she wouldn't be where she is today without Crossing Bridges and every one of you.

- Cindy Silva



## Kaden.

Our family started riding at Crossing Bridges several years ago. We currently have four kids enrolled weekly in their program, but the one who benefits the most is Kaden. Kaden was very timid when he started but has grown in every way while being there.

Kaden has Apraxia of Speech, a neurological speech disorder. His language is incredibly scrambled, no matter how hard he tries, and try he does. He had never said his name, not once, until one day while riding he answered Jennifer by saying his name for the first time in his life. He has since said his name several times while at horses, but only once or twice away from there.

Along with the Apraxia of Speech, Kaden struggles with Global Apraxia, which affects his fine motor skills and muscles. The games and therapy at CB have helped immensely with this. Kaden also has several food allergies and two autoimmune diseases, in addition to being diagnosed with ADHD and anxiety. He battles constant stomach aches, debilitating cramps, headaches, nausea/vomiting and other stomach issues.

Even on his "worst" days, being with the horses brings out the best in him. Their gentle spirits, knowing eyes and intuitive nudges bring not just calmness and a grounded sense to Kaden, but they bring him pure joy. His entire body lights up being around Jennifer, the volunteers, and the incredible horses. It is his favorite day of the week!



Being at CB has changed Kaden's life. His future will look different because of the impact CB has had and will continue to have as he makes progress through his struggles and as he grows in life. Kaden is hands down a different kid than when he first started riding, and he wouldn't be where he is today without everyone at CB. We are forever grateful to the horses, to Jennifer and her incredible team. They have changed all of our lives.

- Kristie McCaw-Faust

## Avarie.

Avarie has been fortunate to be a part of Crossing Bridges since 2019. She first came to CB with some delays in speech and a love for horses in her heart. She has since learned responsibility and respect for both her teachers and the horses in such a special way. It has been a joy to see her confidence grow.



This program is such a special place; something we would not be a part of if it wasn't for the generous donations and financial support of the program. Avarie is almost to the point we no longer need speech therapy. We currently are researching ways to use the horses to assist with Avarie's needed eye-therapy for depth perception.

Please take the time to learn about the ways this program could use your help! It has been the highlight of my daughter's life each week and we are so thankful for it!

- Jaime Travalini

