

DALE'S RANCH LIFE

Hello my name is Dale Ball. I have lived at the Boys' Ranch for over two years. I first came into the custody of the state when my parents were no longer able to provide a home to me and my siblings. My father was frequently without a job, resulting in the family moving from place to place. My mother became tired of the unstable lifestyle, and took us to live with her and another man. Eventually, my parents got back together, but we were soon taken into the custody of the state because of my parent's financial instability and their arrest. After a year in state's custody, my father got us back. Around Christmas in 2009, our house burnt down, my Dad was arrested and we ended up back in state's custody. After about 2 years, my parents' rights were terminated due to their lack of commitment to get us back. My family was torn apart. Before I came to the Ranch, I had been in over seven placements in the past seven years. When I first came to the Ranch on March 27, 2015, I believed no one truly cared for my well being. The people I lived with cared more about the money and less about me. I felt alone in the world. I never had anyone to talk to in my other placements. I had started to give up on life. I asked myself, "What is the point of living if I had no drive in my life?" I started to let my anger get the best of me. I would cause trouble for no reason at all. I would disrespect my teachers in school and get into fights with random people. The only thing that kept me from running away from my placements was the monthly visit with my five brothers and two sisters. I thought they were my only reason to live, but that all changed when I came to the Ranch.

When I first arrived at the Ranch, the only thing I was thinking about how long it would take for me to get removed from here, but after a

month at the Ranch, I started to believe that the staff at the Ranch really cared about me! They didn't treat me like an easy paycheck, but they loved me as a member of their family. I started to attend church services at the Pentecostals of Lee Rd and the Pentecostals of Loranger Community. I found that I no longer needed my anger, I only needed Jesus. On August 9, 2015, I was baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. I have received the Holy Ghost and a desire to live the life Jesus has planned for me.

Since I came to the Ranch, I have been able to reconnect with some of my family members, and heal. I have assisted the staff at the ranch with maintenance projects and overseeing the laundry. I have been very busy working on graduating from high school. I am also in the process of getting my driver license and preparing for life outside the ranch. I plan to attend college and major in computer graphic. I plan to remain active at POLC in Loranger, LA, under the direction of Pastor Denny Jenkins. Most importantly, I plan to remain connected with my Ranch family. Of all the gifts I have received while at the ranch, the most precious to me was to find out that God has a plan for me. I can only hope to repay the Ranch for all it has done for me. Please continue to pray for me as I take these next steps into the future and partner with the ranch as they continue their work in helping change the lives of troubled boys.