

Music Ministry for At-Risk Children — Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch, Minot

The mission of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch is to help at-risk children and their families succeed in the name of Christ. We help the most troubled, complex, and amazing kids by providing best-in-class psychiatric therapy and trauma-informed care, where we look kids in the eye, walk with them, and help them become their best selves.

Having come from unstable, even harmful home environments, kids at the Ranch often lack appropriate coping skills for overcoming everyday challenges, triggering damaging behaviors and emotions. While at the Ranch, we work with kids to help them discover and develop healthy coping skills that they can utilize while in our care and when they return to their home communities.

Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch was blessed to receive \$2,072 from the California-Nevada-Hawaii District of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League to support the music ministry on our Minot campus, an important therapeutic healing tool that gives kids at the Ranch a creative outlet. Funds were used to purchase new guitars, music stands, portable electronic keyboards, and other equipment needed to enhance and expand the music ministry.

Deaconess Kelly Bristow, who heads up the music ministry, said, "Being able to share my passion of creating music with our kids has been a huge blessing to me, and hopefully to some of the kids at the Ranch! It is especially neat when I am able to share music with residents who have never had the opportunity to learn musical instruments."

For kids at the Ranch, music can serve as a healthy hobby and coping skill when they feel dysregulated. It can also boost their self-esteem and pushes them to persevere, and learn something new, fun, and at times, challenging. For some of our kids, music becomes an ongoing outlet for expressing themselves and their emotions in a healthy and creative setting.

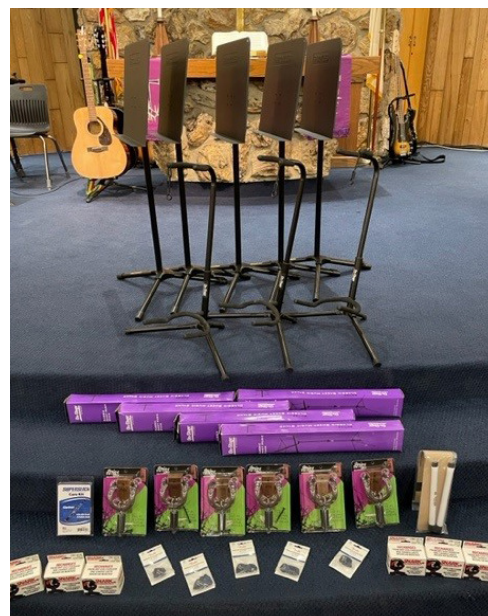
Kids learn, grow, heal, and gain confidence as they engage in individual music lessons, participate in campus-wide music events, and take part in worship teams at weekly chapel services.

"We have talent shows about once a quarter, which provides kids an outlet



Having more practice instruments allows kids to practice between lessons in their cottages.

to share their newly learned skills and passions," Deaconess Kelly said. "And if they want to keep exploring music and music lessons after they leave the Ranch, I advocate for them to be able to get access to what they need to continue to learn and succeed."



One of the items purchased was new music stands, replacing the 40-year-old stands we had.

We're grateful to the women of the California-Nevada-Hawaii District LWML for finding meaning in supporting the vital ministry of Dakota Boys and Girls Ranch. Your support helps each child we serve find and become their best self in the world and in Christ.