

Alaina's Journey at High Ridge Harmony Farm

When Alaina first arrived at High Ridge Harmony Farm, she was quiet and reserved—a soft-spoken girl who communicated mostly with gentle nods and the occasional shy smile. Her medical journey had put much of her childhood on pause, leaving her with a maturity beyond her years. Yet even in those early moments, it was clear she was deeply curious. She listened intently, soaking up every bit of information we offered.

During that first visit, Alaina learned how to groom a horse and identify its different body parts. Though she was timid at first, her confidence grew with each new skill. One memorable milestone was when she learned how to properly hold a lead rope—an accomplishment that ended with her proudly walking her horse around the paddock for the very first time.

Soon after she began regular sessions, another participant her age joined the program. Working together became a turning point for Alaina. Through teamwork and shared activities, she developed important social skills like patience, trust, and kindness. Slowly, she began to open up. She started sharing stories about her life—school, her siblings, soccer games, and the everyday moments that make up a kid's world. Her laughter became more frequent, her spirit brighter. It was hard to believe this outgoing, vibrant child was the same quiet girl who had first stepped onto the farm.

One particularly powerful moment came during a session with Emmy, a horse known for her occasional stubborn streak. Emmy was pulling against the lead, rushing ahead, and refusing to weave through the cones. We introduced Alaina to a new technique, teaching her how to set boundaries firmly and calmly. Without hesitation, Alaina faced the horse, stood tall, and said, "Emmy, stand!" Something shifted. Emmy recognized the authority in her voice—and listened. From that moment on, Emmy's behavior improved dramatically. It was incredible to witness Alaina step into her confidence and earn the respect of such a strong animal.

Alaina is a truly special child, radiating warmth and positivity in every session. Her joyful energy is contagious, and she approaches every new challenge with resilience and a smile. Watching her rediscover the simple joys of being a kid—and watching her grow into a confident, capable young person—has been nothing short of inspiring.