

An **aftercare service** to help **youth** and **families transitioning** from residential care **succeed** at home and in school.

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ABOUT BOYS TOWN

Boys Town has been a national leader in the care and treatment of children and families since its founding more than 100 years ago by Father Edward Flanagan.

As one of the largest child and family service organizations in the United States, Boys Town offers a broad spectrum of services through its Continuum of Care. Boys Town youth, family, community and health care programs touch the lives of more than 2 million people across the country every year.

BOYS TOWN

ON THE WAY HOME AFTERCARE SERVICES

What is On The Way Home?

On the Way Home® is an aftercare service for youth and families that are transitioning from residential care.

Many youth make behavioral and academic progress while in residential care, but face challenges maintaining these skills after they depart.

The overall goals are to help youth sustain the gains they make, keep them at home and in school, and prevent a return to residential care.

What are the program components?

PARENTING SUPPORT

Parenting support provides parents with skills that are taught in Boys Town Common Sense Parenting® classes and are similar to the techniques used by Boys Town residential care staff. Consistency between the residential program and a youth's home helps the youth make a smoother transition. Parents learn how to help their youth continue using the positive skills they learned in residential care and also how to prevent and correct problem behaviors. Parents receive six individualized training sessions in their own home followed by 24-hour assistance from an On the Way Home® Consultant on how to use their parenting strategies.

SCHOOL SUPPORT

Support is provided to the youth's school to help students continue their academic success and stay in school. On the Way Home® Consultants work with school staff to advocate for the student's academic needs and monitor his or her educational progress. This includes tracking attendance, grades and school behavior, helping the student address and resolve school challenges, and working with the school to design school-based interventions as needed. The focus is on encouraging student engagement at school and promoting a partnership between the youth's family and school so everyone works together.

Saving Children, Healing Families®

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ABOUT THE BOYS TOWN CHILD AND FAMILY TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER

The Center conducts and disseminates applied, translational research and provides clinical data support to promote Boys Town's Mission and advance knowledge and practice in child and family science.

Translational research draws from and informs practice. It involves multiple research activities that are designed to benefit children and families.

The Center's goals include guiding the development, evaluation, implementation and dissemination of evidence-based interventions for preventing and reducing social and behavioral problems in children and families.

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HOMEWORK SUPPORT

Homework support is provided to help create a learning environment in the home that is similar to what the youth experienced while in Boys Town's residential care. Parents learn how to set up a positive learning environment, monitor their child's homework and get assistance with additional academic supports for their child when needed. This helps reduce tension and frustration with homework (for youth and parents), improves learning and promotes school success.

When do services start?

Services typically begin six to eight weeks prior to a youth's departure from residential care. This helps establish a parenting plan with the family that assists in the youth's transition home.

How long do services last?

Youth and families typically receive two hours of service a week for up to 12 months.

Where do services occur?

Services occur in the youth's home and school, and in the community.

What does the research say about On the Way Home?

On the Way Home[®] was developed, implemented and tested through a partnership between the **Boys Town Child and Family Translational Research Center[®]** and the Academy for Child and Family Well-Being at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It was made possible by two grant-funded research studies from the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (Grants # R324A12060, R324B070031).

The studies included youth in middle and high school who were departing residential care programs and returning to their families and schools in their community. Youth and families that received On the Way Home[®] services were compared to those that received traditional support. The first study showed youth who received On the Way Home[®] services were more likely to be at home and in school 12 months after services ended compared to youth who received traditional support. The results of the second study are under review.

On the Way Home[®] is rated as having Promising Research Evidence on the California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare.

For more information, go to: cebc4cw.org/program/on-the-way-home-otwh

REFERENCES

Trout, A.L., Lambert, M.C., Epstein, M.H., Tyler, P., Thompson, R.W., Stewart, M., & Daly, D.L. (2013). Comparison of On the Way Home aftercare supports to traditional care following discharge from a residential setting: A pilot randomized controlled trial. *Child Welfare*, 92(3), 27-45.

Trout, A.L., Tyler, P.M., Stewart, M.C., & Epstein, M.H. (2012). On the Way Home: Program description and preliminary findings. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 34, 1115-1120.



our mission

Changing the way America cares for children and families.