



OTWH HELPS CAREGIVERS by teaching them how to:

- Praise their children’s good behavior and reduce their problem behavior
- Prevent problem behaviors
- Keep their family calm
- Set up a good learning environment for their children
- Monitor their children’s homework

OTWH HELPS YOUTH IN SCHOOL by:

- Tracking attendance, grades and school behavior
- Teaching them how to solve problems
- Helping to design school-based interventions as needed

RESULTS FROM OTWH STUDIES have shown:

- Improved caregiver empowerment and self-efficacy
- Improved placement stability for youth in the home and school after they leave residential care

BOYS TOWN

ON THE WAY HOME: AFTERCARE SERVICES

On the Way Home® (OTWH) is an aftercare service for youth (and their families) who 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 maintain the gains they make, keep them at home and in school, and prevent their return to residential care.

OTWH services typically begin six to eight weeks prior to departure from residential care. This helps to establish a parenting plan with the family that assists in the transition home. Youth/families typically receive two hours of services a week for up to 12 months. Services occur in a youth’s home, school and community.

OTWH PROGRAM COMPONENTS

• PARENTING SUPPORT

Parenting support provides parents with Boys Town Common Sense Parenting® skills, which are similar to techniques used by Boys Town staff. Consistency between the residential program and a youth’s home helps youth transition better. Parents learn how to help youth continue using the positive skills they learned while in care and also how to prevent and correct problem behaviors. Parents receive six individualized training sessions in their home and then have 24-hour support from their OTWH Consultant on how to use the parenting strategies.

• SCHOOL SUPPORT

School support is provided in youths’ schools to help students continue their academic success and stay in school. On the Way Home® Consultants work with schools to advocate for students’ academic needs and monitor their educational progress. This includes tracking attendance, grades and school behavior; helping students problem-solve school challenges; and working with schools to design school-based interventions as needed. The focus is on encouraging student engagement in their schools and promoting a partnership between families and schools so everyone works together.

• HOMEWORK SUPPORT

Homework support is provided to help create a homework environment in the home that is similar to what youth had at their residential placement. Parents learn how to set up a good learning environment, monitor their child’s homework and get assistance with additional academic supports for their child when needed. Support is provided to help reduce tension and frustration with homework, improve learning and promote school success.



OUR MISSION

Changing the way America
cares for children and families.

ABOUT THE BOYS TOWN CHILD AND FAMILY TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH CENTER

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

Our goals include guiding the development, evaluation and implementation of evidence-based interventions for preventing and reducing social and behavioral problems in children and families, as well as promoting their positive development on a large scale to promote public health.

What is translational research? Embedded within partnerships between researchers and practitioners, translational research draws from and informs practice. It involves multiple research activities, including basic research and the development, evaluation and scale-up of evidence-based interventions, for the benefit of children and families.

Visit us online at boystown.org/trc

CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION

531-355-1255

OTWH EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE STATUS

On the Way Home® is rated as "Supported by Research Evidence" on the *California Evidence-Based Clearinghouse for Child Welfare* (www.cebc4cw.org) and rated as "Promising" on the *Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse* (preventionservices.acf.hhs.gov).

OTWH RESEARCH SUMMARY

At Boys Town, we continually measure the effectiveness of our child and family programs to ensure those we serve actually get better. The Boys Town Child and Family Translational Research Center conducts applied research to help understand the nature of problems children and their families face today and identify the most effective ways to help them.

OTWH 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. This was made possible by two grant-funded research studies from the Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (Grants # R324A12060, R324B070031).

- Two randomized controlled trials were completed with youth in middle and high school who were departing residential programs and returning to their families and schools in their community. Youth and families that received OTWH services were compared to those that received traditional support.
- The first study results showed youth who received OTWH services were more likely to be at home and in school 12 months after services ended.¹
- The second study showed caregivers who received OTWH had greater levels of empowerment and self-efficacy. Youth who received OTWH services also had significantly higher rates of being placed in their homes at 9-month follow-up after OTWH services ended (21 months after departing residential care).²

To learn more, go to <https://www.boystownhospital.org/research/translational-research/publications>, select the Bibliography, and click "Aftercare" in the table of contents.

REFERENCES

- ¹Trout, 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.
- ²Trout, A.L., Lambert, M.C., Thompson, R., Tyler, P.M., & Duppong Hurley, K. (2019). On the Way Home: Promoting caregiver empowerment, self-efficacy, and adolescent stability during family reunification following placements in residential care. *Residential Treatment for Children and Youth*. doi: 10.1080/0886571X.2019.1681047