



Life-Changing Care,  
Enduring Results

**SIXTEEN-YEAR FOLLOW-UP STUDY**

Boys Town Family Home Program<sup>SM</sup>



# At a Crossroads

Boys Town  
youth become  
good citizens.

“I would like to thank those at Boys Town who gave me a healthy, safe environment like no other. You people are truly the best.”

**At-risk children who come into residential care are at a crossroads in their lives.** They can cost society in terms of lost talent and productivity or they can contribute as productive citizens. If these children don't receive the help they need, the cost to society will be much greater than the cost of their care. If quality residential care and education can help these children become productive citizens, it is well worth the investment.

Boys Town has completed an extensive, unique follow-up study to measure the long-term outcomes of a number of its former youth who were served through its Family Home Program. The results of the study, highlighted in this booklet, produced two major findings:

- » As adults, most study participants who received quality residential care and education in our program are productive, law-abiding citizens. They are involved socially, have jobs, value education and contribute to society in positive ways.
- » The longer youth stayed in the program, the more positive their long-term outcomes were.

# The Long-Term Follow-Up Study

**The study involved 250 participants who were between 27 and 37 years old, and had left the Boys Town Family Home Program<sup>SM</sup>, on average, 16 years earlier.**

An important objective of the study was to compare the results from study participants with national data (information from the U.S. population at large). The national data mirrored the age, sex and racial proportions of the participants in the Follow-Up Study.

In the graphs that follow, the former Boys Town youth who participated in the study are divided into two length-of-stay groups: those who stayed in the program for six months or less, and those who stayed for 18 months or more. Each graph compares study results from these two groups as well as the national norms. In all but one area covered in the graphs, the group that received care for 18 months or more did better than the group that received care for six months or less. Members of the 18-months-or-more group also were similar to the general population (national norm) in most of those areas.

The longer youth receive care, the more positive their long-term outcomes were.

“Boys Town helped to save my life. You kept me safe and gave me a chance to build some personal self-esteem... Thanks.”

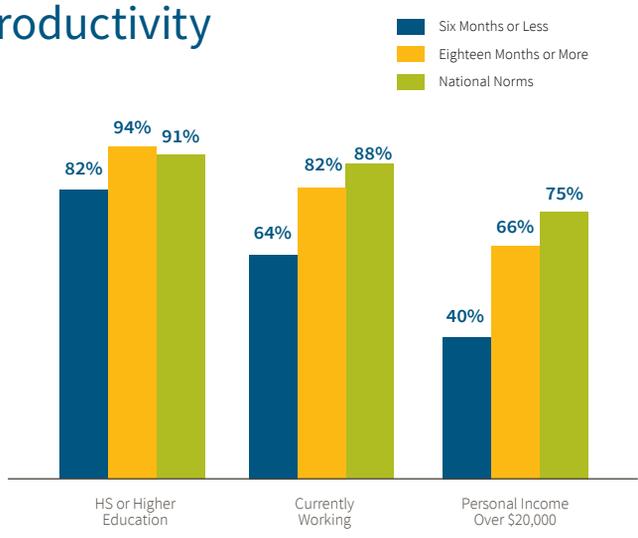




# Our Youth Find Success as Productive Adults

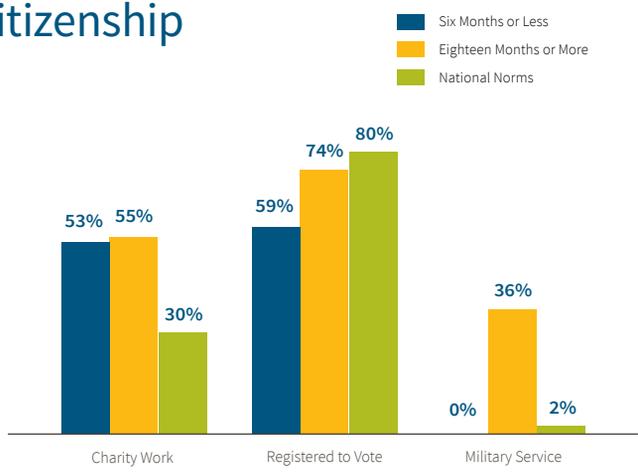
“I pray Boys Town will always be here to help kids like I was. Thanks for taking me in when I had nowhere left to turn so long ago.”

## Productivity



**The group that received care for 18 months or more** was similar to the national norms in the area of completing high school or higher education. That group was just slightly lower than the national norms in the areas of current employment and personal income of more than \$20,000.

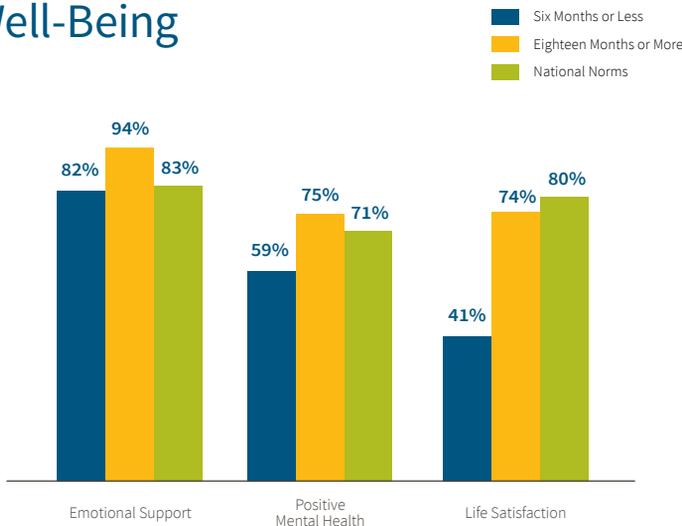
## Citizenship



**Both groups that received care exceeded the national norms** in the area of charity work. The 18-months-or-more group exceeded the national norms in the area of military service, and was similar to the national norms in the area of voter registration.

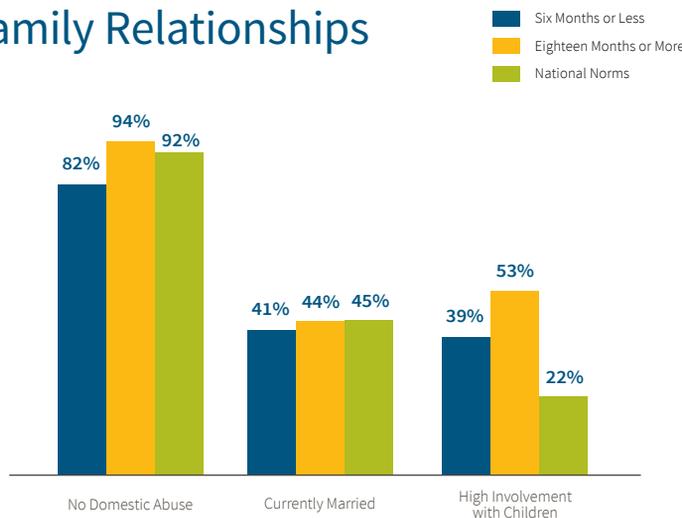
# Quality Residential Care and Education Lead to Positive, Long-Term Results

## Well-Being



In each of these three measures of well-being, the group that received care for 18 months or more slightly exceeded or was similar to the national norms.

## Family Relationships



The group that received care for 18 months or more was similar to the national norms in the areas of no domestic abuse and being currently married. That group reported a greater rate of high involvement with their children (helping with homework and playing with them) than the national norms. These results indicate that the program played a role in breaking the cycle of abuse that is common in this at-risk population.



“I feel that my proudest times would be the time I spent at Boys Town because it was there I received the tools to be the person I am and, more importantly, the person I am striving to be.”



# Who We Are

**In December 1917, with the unwavering belief that children need love and guidance if they are to become productive citizens, Father Edward Flanagan opened a home for wayward youth that was later to become Boys Town.**

Since then, Boys Town has marched to the forefront of child care in America with its Family Home Program, which helps children change their lives for the better by learning social skills and how to build healthy relationships. In 1979, Boys Town welcomed girls, and in the 1980s, new programs branched out from the Village of Boys Town, Nebraska, reaching out to those in need at affiliate sites across the country.

Young people come to the Boys Town Family Home Program<sup>SM</sup> battling combinations of serious emotional, social, academic and behavioral problems. They face difficulties far more troubling than those of the average American youngster. For example, prior to admission:

- » 51% of our youth have aggression problems
- » 27% of our youth have experienced depression or withdrawal
- » 42% of our youth have been physically and/or sexually abused, neglected or abandoned
- » 64% of our youth have experienced school problems
- » 47% of our youth have substance abuse problems
- » 36% of our youth are out of parental control
- » 51% percent of our youth have been arrested

But these youth do get better as a result of the quality, compassionate care Boys Town professionals are trained to provide. We teach kids how to meet their tough problems head-on, and help them find the inner strength to overcome these challenges. With continued support after they leave our program, our youth are able to find success as adults as they make their way in the world.

Troubled youth learn values and skills they live by as adults.

# Boys Town Family Home Program

**In our Family Home Program, children of various ages, typically 10 to 18, live with a married couple called Family-Teachers®. In dozens of Family Homes across the country (60 of which are located in the Village of Boys Town, Nebraska), these highly trained couples care for six to eight girls or boys and form a warm, caring family as they guide and instruct the youth and see to their physical, spiritual and emotional needs.**

Youth attend school, have daily chores, participate in a variety of extracurricular activities and work hard each day to meet the expectations of their service goals. They also develop strong (and therapeutic) relationships with their Family-Teachers and other staff members, and with their Boys Town “brothers” and “sisters.”

The goal of the Boys Town Family Home Program<sup>SM</sup> is to teach at-risk youth new and appropriate skills in a family setting, help them learn how to build healthy, positive relationships, empower them to maintain self-control and make good decisions in their lives, and encourage them to establish a strong spiritual foundation. These are true family-style homes where youth get better.

Besides the Village of Boys Town, Family Homes are located in Washington, D.C.; Portsmouth, R.I.; Tallahassee, FL. and Orlando, FL.; and New Orleans, LA.

## Summary

**The findings of the Long-Term Follow-Up Study suggest that a significant number of Boys Town youth who are served in out-of-home residential care have positive outcomes in adulthood.**

Current findings also show that a longer length of stay is associated with better long-term outcomes, where former residential youth are indistinguishable from the general population in several significant areas. These results suggest that a high-quality, comprehensive, family-style intervention with a focus on reunification can have lasting, positive effects for youth who may have otherwise continued to struggle with problems throughout their lives.

Boys Town’s quality residential care and education program can truly bring about long-lasting positive changes in at-risk young people. We hope you will consider us as we bring hope and healing to our nation’s hurting children, one child at a time.

For more information on Boys Town’s long-term residential program or for Admissions assistance and other services, contact us at 1-800-989-0000.

# Boys Town Child and Family Translational Research Center

**Located in the Village of Boys Town, Nebraska**, 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.

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.

This work is enhanced through research partnerships with university-based scientists who are doing similar and significant work in these areas. The Center's major partnership is with the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, and it also collaborates with a panel of prominent scientists who provide strategic advice about research methods and priorities.

## Child and Family Translational Research Center values:

- » Integrity
- » Generativity
- » Diversity
- » Quality
- » Novelty
- » Proactivity

In order to disseminate its research findings, the Center offers an Applied Research Bibliography that includes an annotated listing of published research papers and reports regarding the majority of research conducted at Boys Town since 1990.

For more information about the Boys Town Child and Family Translational Research Center®, please contact:

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## Today's Boys Town

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

As one of the largest child and family care organizations in the country, Boys Town offers a broad spectrum of services through our Continuum. We also provide health and medical care and conduct research through Boys Town National Research Hospital®.

In addition to the Village of Boys Town, Nebraska, our national headquarters, we have a network of affiliate sites nationwide that offer Continuum services.

Each year, Boys Town youth, family, community and health care programs touch the lives of more than 2 million people across the United States.