lasting results
FIVE-YEAR FOLLOW-UP STUDY
BOYS TOWN TREATMENT FAMILY HOMES™
Unmatched Care, Life-Changing Results

THROUGHOUT ITS LONG AND STORIED HISTORY, Boys Town has always recognized the importance of providing consistent, effective treatment and care for children while being open to innovative ideas and approaches for meeting the changing needs of at-risk youth and families.

At Boys Town, great focus is placed on teaching youth how to take personal responsibility for their actions, practice self-discipline, solve problems, and make decisions on their own. The goal is to better prepare youth to make positive choices after they leave Boys Town, and whenever possible, bring youngsters and their families back together, where they belong.

Young people come to Boys Town battling combinations of serious emotional, social, academic, and behavioral problems. Having failed in foster homes, schools, and other programs, they bring issues far more challenging than those of the average American youngster.

We understand that in order to help these young people overcome their problems and become productive citizens, we must provide them with a healthy, safe, family environment where they can learn and grow.

At Boys Town, family-style living in a safe community and a focus on education and physical and spiritual growth are essential elements. Many youngsters improve in their problem areas because they feel like they belong, and can participate in the kinds of positive activities that should be a part of every child’s life.

Our Youth

Admission Age, Race, and Gender of 5-Year Follow-Up Study Participants

Average age of youth completing the 5-Year Follow-Up Survey = 21.5

Who We Are

Boys Town has been a national leader in the care and treatment of children since its founding more than 90 years ago by Father Edward Flanagan.

As one of the largest publicly funded, nonsectarian child and family care organizations in the country, Boys Town offers a broad spectrum of services through our Integrated Continuum of Care™. We also provide health and medical care through Boys Town National Research Hospital and other resources.

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

In 2009, Boys Town touched the lives of nearly 900,000 people across the country through our youth, family, community and health care programs.
CONDUCTING RESEARCH is a major hallmark of Boys Town. Through research, we measure the effectiveness of the treatment we provide children, determine what’s working, and decide when changes are necessary.

The Boys Town National Research Institute has completed a Five-Year Follow-Up Study. The goal was to measure the effectiveness of our Treatment Family HomesSM program. The study drew on responses from nearly 200 former Boys Town youth who had departed the program. We especially wanted to know how these young adults were doing compared to other young people in the United States who were similar in age, gender, and ethnicity. The respondents included youth from Treatment Family HomesSM at Boys Town sites around the country.

Seven Key Content Areas
The average age of the respondents in the study was 21 years. We surveyed them about seven key content areas to measure their continuing progress:

- Living Environment
- Family, Relationships, and Social Supports
- Religion, Health, and Well-Being
- Crime and Legal System
- Substance Use
- Education, Employment, and Income
- Employment

The study’s results show that youth who completed the Treatment Family HomesSM program, are, as young adults, much like others in their age group across the country.

In several significant categories that define good citizenship and being a productive member of society, former Boys Town residents match or exceed the national norms. Most importantly, these findings indicate that our kids were empowered to maintain significant and lasting change in their lives long after they left Boys Town.
Despite facing seemingly overwhelming obstacles, youth show remarkable resiliency and progress in our programs; success carries over into life after Boys Town.

The significant progress our youth make during their time in our programs is the true measure of the effectiveness of our treatment. From admission to departure, the percentages of youth who suffer from school problems, aggression, being out of parental control, and depression or withdrawal decrease drastically.

Youth Problems Decrease

Former Boys Town Youth Who Completed Program

- 71% have been physically and/or sexually abused, neglected, or abandoned.
- 63% were diagnosed with a mental health concern.

Of these, 38% were diagnosed with disruptive behavior disorder, 16% were diagnosed with anxiety disorder, and 9% were diagnosed with depressive disorder.

Despite facing seemingly overwhelming obstacles, youth show remarkable resiliency and progress in our programs; success carries over into life after Boys Town.

The National Research Institute for Child and Family Studies

Located at the Village of Boys Town, Nebraska, the Boys Town National Research Institute conducts applied research that is focused on understanding the nature of problems children and their families face in today’s world and identifying the most effective ways to help them. This research has included conducting both short-term and long-term follow-up studies of youth and their families served by Boys Town programs, developing sound assessment instruments to identify strengths and treatment needs (e.g., child suicide risk assessments), and designing strategies to assess the implementation of interventions that have shown to be effective.

This important work ranges from evaluating specific intervention programs to discovering new knowledge and methods for helping children grow up to be happy, healthy, and productive adults. As the landscape of child care and family assistance is constantly altered, the Institute continues to seek the best possible ways to bring lasting, positive, and significant change to the lives of those who are most vulnerable and in need.

In order to disseminate its research findings, the Institute offers an Applied Research Bibliography, which includes an annotated listing of more than 200 published research papers and reports regarding the majority of research conducted at Boys Town since 1990.
Boys Town Youth Make Good Citizens

THE MOST IMPORTANT MEASURE OF OUR SUCCESS when youth leave Boys Town programs is how they fare as productive members of society.

Across a variety of dimensions, we find that our youth exemplify good citizenship by continuing their education or getting a job, developing strong family and marital relationships, maintaining good physical and mental health, and serving in the military, avoiding involvement in criminal activity, and practicing moral and spiritual values.

Part of the progress youth make is due to our ecological approach to treatment, where different sources of influence in a child’s environment play roles in the most effective treatment plan. These sources include the child, his or her family, peers, school, and the neighborhood or community. By identifying and working with a youth’s strengths, weaknesses, skill deficits and needs, caregivers help the child make real progress toward healing.

At Boys Town, we teach kids how to meet their tough problems — problems that can ruin lives — head-on, and help them find within themselves the strength to overcome these challenges.
Success Measured on Many Fronts

FOR THE YOUTH WHO complete our Treatment Family Homes℠ program, using what they’ve learned at Boys Town is the ongoing test of whether new skills and problem-solving strategies have become a permanent part of their lives.

The graphs from the Five-Year Follow-Up Study illustrate how former Boys Town youth compare with national norms in areas that reflect good citizenship, good character, and healthy relationships. These comparisons provide proof of the transformation youth experience in our program and of how they are empowered to make better decisions as young adults. The tremendous progress troubled youth make while in our Treatment Family Homes℠, and the strides they continue to make after they leave, are a credit to the effectiveness of the program.

At Boys Town, great focus is placed on teaching youth how to take personal responsibility for their actions.
FOR MANY YOUTH, treatment in a Boys Town program is just one step on the road to healing. The problems youth bring with them are complex and confusing, and there is no “cure-all” way to solve them. The antisocial behavior many of our youth relied upon in the past to get what they wanted or to simply shut out the world often seriously damaged relationships with family members and friends. How effective they have been in mending those relationships and in preparing themselves to take the next step usually determines where they go when they leave a program. Most youth return to their parents’ or a relative’s home, or live independently. Other youth remain in out-of-home placements, often at a lower level of care.

Where youth go after departure from our programs is a good indicator of how far they have come. No matter where they go – back home, to work or school, into the military – they don’t go alone. Boys Town continues to provide support and assistance through its aftercare services. This program’s staff members help youth with career and financial planning, scholarship assistance, finding jobs and housing, and in other areas related to making a smooth transition to living on their own.

Nearly 76% of former youth surveyed reported no physical arguments in their spouse/partner relationships.

Helping youth build a strong spiritual foundation in their lives is an essential part of treatment at Boys Town. Youth are encouraged to attend church services and contribute their time and money to charitable causes.

The goal is to better prepare youth to make positive choices after they leave Boys Town.
EVERY YEAR, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF CHILDREN are abused and neglected. Like numbers suffer emotional or behavioral disorders, leaving parents confused and frustrated. Every day, more of these fragile children and at-risk families slip over the edge and fall into crisis. And every day, Boys Town reaches out to them with compassionate care and research-proven treatment. We lift them up, heal their wounds, and put them on the path to a brighter future.

Boys Town has been saving children and healing families since 1917. Today we are one of the largest publicly funded, nonprofit child and family care agencies in the United States. We deliver our life-changing care through a network of sites stretching from coast to coast and through the training and support Boys Town provides to hundreds of organizations, including schools, and other youth care organizations.

The vision of our founder, Father Edward Flanagan, sparked a revolution in child and family care that lives on in the mission of today’s Boys Town. His simple dream to make the world a better place for children endures because people continue to believe that every child deserves to be valued and have the opportunity to reach their fullest potential.

The most important measure of our success when youth leave Boys Town programs is how they fare as productive members of society.