

Pressley Ridge has already noticed a difference: “While she may have felt unimportant before, she now realizes that there are people who care about her. She enjoys our weekly visits and her monthly wraparound team meetings.”

While receiving Safe at Home services at a children’s shelter, the young lady’s team was able to connect her with a foster-adopt family. Because of her involvement with Safe at Home, she is more likely to lead a safe, healthy and successful life in her home community.

“This program is changing everything for this extraordinary youth,” remarked her wraparound facilitator. “I am confident that the consistency, stability and support provided by her wraparound team will enable her to achieve great things.”

From a Children’s Shelter to a Foster Family: The Importance of Safe at Home

By Prester Center, Local Coordinating Agency

Life has not always been easy for one 14 year old youth who had been abused and neglected. While in a children’s shelter, the young man was referred to Safe at Home West Virginia. As staff diligently searched for a foster home during his shelter stay, his Safe at Home wraparound team helped him find ways to overcome obstacles.

The first step was to connect him with a mentor to improve his behavior. To assist with his educational needs, his Wraparound Facilitator advocated that he have a Student Assistant Team meeting, which resulted in tutoring at school and in the evenings. This helped motivate him, as did his participation in the band, and allowed him to achieve behavior rewards including a basketball and basketball shoes.

After three months of receiving Safe at Home services at the shelter, a friend of the youth’s family contacted DHHR and the young man began visits with the potential foster family. The Safe at Home team worked to assist the family with needed repairs for the home study, and the young man was able to spend Thanksgiving in a home setting.

“When he returned to the shelter, he talked about how great it was to have a real Thanksgiving,” said a member of his wraparound team. “It became the Safe at Home team’s mission to ensure that he was able to spend Christmas in his new foster home.”

With the judge’s permission, the teen was placed with his foster family on December 22, 2016. With an unexpected addition to their family, the family was not prepared for Christmas. His Safe at Home team ensured that the foster family was able to have gifts for the youth under the tree on Christmas morning, just like the other children in the home.

Safe at Home has made a significant impact in this young man’s life. The foster family reports today that he is doing well at his new home and school. He “feels like a normal kid again” and enjoys his tutoring sessions and school band activities.

