

## Safe at Home Update

*By Lisa McMullen, Project Director, Safe at Home West Virginia*

Safe at Home West Virginia remains a valuable program to many youth across the state. To date, more than 1,500 youth have been referred to the program, 930 of which have been prevented from entering residential placement. More than 200 have returned to their communities from in-state residential placement, 66 have returned to West Virginia from out-of-state residential placement and 23 have returned to their community from shelter placement.

With this great success, we are focusing on assuring fidelity to the wraparound model and sustainability planning to prepare for the transition out of the waiver in the fall of 2019. It is our goal to continue providing innovative services that promote the safety, health and success of youth in their home communities.

## Safe at Home Leads to Success for Youth

Safe at Home West Virginia continues to help youth find support in safe, stable homes. For one young man, program participation led him to his forever home with a family dedicated to ensuring his success.

After years of bouncing in and out of residential facilities and other placements this youth successfully completed Safe at Home in November 2017. Through Safe at Home West Virginia his foster parents gained valuable knowledge of trauma-based behaviors and learned ways to better communicate with him. They also support his relationship with his biological sister and encourage him to participate in school based activities while pursuing his own individual interests such as high school track.

“He is a very caring and optimistic young man,” said his Safe at Home Wraparound Facilitator. “Many agencies and community members had the opportunity to meet him and assist with his progress and they all comment on his bright outlook. When faced with hardship and barriers, he was able to use his support systems to overcome them.”

The young man’s foster family is pursuing Legal Guardianship and continues to support him as he completes high school and looks into colleges and career paths.

“Thanks to the team work of many different providers in this state, this youth was able to find and maintain a forever home that has led to his personal, academic and future career success,” said his Wraparound Facilitator.