



# **WellSpring Resources “Bridge of Hope” Designed for Children Experiencing Divorce**

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Local behavioral health center WellSpring Resources is introducing a new program for children who are experiencing difficulty adjusting to parental divorce or separation. The ten-week group, Bridge of Hope, will premiere at WellSpring Resources' Alton office the week of September 16, 2013. The program hopes to expand to Jerseyville in the new year.

Bridge of Hope serves children grades Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup>. Groups are divided by grade-level and age. Twelve WellSpring Resources clinicians were specially trained to facilitate the groups. The program is based on Children of Divorce, a national, evidence-based practice used to help children ages 5-14 handle the stress associated with parental divorce or separation. The goal is to minimize the emotional and behavioral problems that may result when children experience divorce in their families.

According to the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (2011), children are frightened and confused when they learn of divorce, and often believe they caused the conflict between their parents. They become vulnerable to both physical and emotional problems. With care and attention like “Bridge of Hope” a family's strengths can help children tackle their new reality.

Group sessions will provide a safe and confidential place for children to talk about their feelings related to the divorce or separation. Therapists will help children to reduce anxiety, build confidence, and increase understanding and acceptance of the divorce or separation.

Bridge of Hope will take place in the evenings to accommodate school schedules. Medicaid and most insurances are accepted. For more information regarding this program or to enroll your child, please contact Erin Bickle, WellSpring Resources' Director of Counseling Services, at (618) 462-2331.

*Founded in 1959, WellSpring Resources is a total mental wellness resource serving Madison, Greene, Jersey, and Calhoun counties. With offices in Alton and Jerseyville WellSpring's compassionate professionals work with children, adults and families to inspire hope and personal growth. Last year, over 6,000 people sought to change their lives for the better through WellSpring's mental health and substance abuse services. Visit [www.wellspringresources.co](http://www.wellspringresources.co) for more information.*

*The service's Mental Health Court Case Management, Senior Services, Outpatient, Adult Community Support and Child/Adolescent Community Support and provider WellSpring Resources is funded by the Madison County Mental Health Board.*