



Wellspring Living

860 Johnson Ferry Road
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wellspringliving.org

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To whom it may concern:

I am writing to express my full support of Ascent 121 and their efforts to provide an aftercare program for survivors of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC).

As the founder of Wellspring Living and author of three books, most recently, *Make It Zero*, I have worked to spread awareness of sexual exploitation and empower victims. Wellspring Living has been fighting against child sexual abuse and exploitation since 2001. We began serving women who were victims of exploitation, and we specialize in aftercare for survivors by providing them residential services and community-based services, including therapy, life skills, education, and career services.

After years of providing these services, Wellspring Living also attained the goal to provide mentorship to new organizations seeking an experienced model of care. We do this through teaching best and promising practices in survivor care, sharing our experiences in serving victimized teens and seeking to help them heal. We empower them with the tools to move forward and succeed in achieving their dreams.

Wellspring Living's model has proven effective in serving teen victims. These young girls have experienced complex and interpersonal trauma. 88% of girls who enter Wellspring Living are in the foster care system. Many are chronic runaways. Statistics demonstrate the risks associated with both of those populations. With our model, girls are able to come to a home suited for their needs when they are brought in beaten and battered from the streets. They find a warm welcome, their own room, and a place to grow and evaluate their futures. We served over 40 girls last year, and of those who commit to the program and are permitted to stay, over 85% graduate and are on track for a new and better future. They take part in a personalized education plan at school, explore career opportunities, and complete volunteer projects. They remain in touch with our staff members and they know that they are encouraged and loved unlike ever before.

Ascent 121's intent is to create a program similar to our model, which we have found to be effective in not only changing lives, but also as a positive influence in the communities that we serve. Ascent 121 is a competent and equipped organization,

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dedicated to best practices in care for survivors of CSEC. Their years of experience in the community and their valuable foundational work have prepared them for providing victims the tools to succeed and move forward with their lives through a residential program.

Ascent 121 is mission-centered organization, and their mission is to meet a great need in our country and around the world. Between 100,000 and 300,000 children are at risk in the United States. Ascent 121's mission is to provide therapeutic victims services, which is the only way that victims can heal from this type of complex trauma. Ascent 121's commitment to changing lives and providing these valuable resources to the most vulnerable merits the highest encouragement and support.

Warm regards,

Mary Frances Bowley
Founder and Executive Director
Wellspring Living

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