

**Resolution Counseling Center**  
**INFORMED CONSENT FOR GROUP THERAPY**

**Dear Teens and Parents of Teens,**

We are launching a (currently virtual) counseling group for teens girls between the ages of 14 and 17 to get social support during COVID-19 and to talk about common life challenges like friends, school, family dynamics, romantic relationships, and stress. The group will start Thursday, April 16th and will run from 5-6pm. We're offering an 8-week semester to start and will re-evaluate as summer approaches. Until COVID-19 passes, the group will meet on video chat using Hangouts Meet by Google.

Please read the information below and then you'll be directed to [click here](#) to sign our **Acknowledgement of Informed Consent for Group Counseling.**

Group counseling can be a powerful and valuable environment for healing, growth, and connection. We want our young clients to reap all the benefits that group counseling has to offer, but we also want each person to consider the risks and make an informed decision about whether group counseling is right for her at this time.

**Benefits:** Being part of a group can be a wonderful thing. You might make new friends, learn new coping skills, and gain perspective on difficulties you are facing right now. You can become part of a new community and have a safe place to turn when school, friends, or family feel difficult. We hope being a part of this group will lead to growth and personal insight and create positive habits that you will take forward in life.

**Risks:** Participating in a group can come with challenges too. You may not like some of the group members. You might feel hurt by another member's feedback or suggestions. You might feel you aren't fitting in, or might feel rejected by someone in the group. Your group counselor will need to divide her attention and that can feel different from an individual session where your counselor is focused solely on you and your needs. Finally, you could have an unpleasant experience for any number of other reasons not listed here. All of these experiences can be processed in the group environment, and often handling conflict is the first step to growing closer to others, but these risks are worth considering.

Group counseling works best with certain guidelines in place:

**Regular Attendance:** Groups grow best when each member can attend each week. We are starting with an 8-week group and are asking that each participant commit to attending 6 sessions or more. It's ok to miss one or two meetings each semester, but if a group member needs to cancel more often than that, the counselor may ask them to wait to attend until they can come every week.

**A Safe Environment:** A safe environment is one in which you feel respected and valued and where you can trust your group members. Everyone who participates in the group needs to agree to create a safe space for others and needs to agree to maintain confidentiality.

**Confidentiality:** Keeping things confidential means that no private information leaves the group counseling session. Each group member agrees not to talk about the details shared by others. This means that if a group member shares about a boy that she likes, for example, you would keep that to yourself and would never tell someone outside of the group. Your group therapist is bound by the law and by the mandates of her licensing board to maintain confidentiality as well, even from your parents (see exceptions below). Each group member is bound by honor to keep what is said in the group to themselves. We realize that you may want to share what you are learning in group with a family member. This is fine as long as you remember not to talk about something specific that another person has shared.

**Exceptions to Confidentiality:** Your group counselor is required to report any reasonable suspicion that you might harm yourself or might harm someone else. Your counselor must also report any allegations of child or elder abuse or neglect. Group information may also be shared in the event of a court order. Beyond those exceptions, your counselor will maintain your confidentiality. Your parents will not be informed of anything you say in group unless it falls into the exceptions above.

**For Parents:** Your teen is in group to learn about topics that are meaningful and at times confusing to them. Being able to express themselves freely in the group is part of the process of learning to become more honest with one's self and the choices one wants to make. Knowing that you trust the group process may be helpful in their group experience. If there is ever a time when your teen believes that they have been treated unfairly or disrespectfully, please talk with the group therapist or Melissa Schneider, LCSW (practice owner) at 201-632-5554. We want to address any issues that may get in the way of therapy as soon as possible.

**Cancellation Fee:** The group will meet weekly at the same day/time. Planned cancellations will be announced far in advance. If you are unable to attend a group session, please contact your

group leader to inform them of your absence as soon as possible. We have a \$50 fee for same-day cancellations and that fee will be charged to the card you have placed on file.

**Parents and Teens:**

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