



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hospice of Jefferson County Announces Wave Riders of Hope Adolescent Bereavement Program

Hospice of Jefferson County is delighted to announce a new adolescent bereavement program. Wave Riders of Hope, a six-week, in-school grief support program, is designed to walk alongside students as they navigate the complex and often isolating experience of loss. Created by Janetta Brown, BSW, Hospice Bereavement Counselor & Youth Educator, this program serves high school and middle school students impacted by a wide range of grief experiences, including the death of a loved one or pet, chronic illness, relocation, athletic injury, or other major life transitions. Through weekly peer-centered sessions that integrate guided discussion, expressive art activities, and healthy emotional communication, along with optional individual support, students are empowered to share their stories and develop coping skills at their own pace. Wave Riders of Hope also extends education and resources to families and school staff, fostering a unified circle of care. By blending evidence-based grief education with practical tools for self-care, stress management, mindfulness, and resilience, the program equips students with lifelong strategies to navigate both present and future waves of grief.

"It is a privilege to be able to offer this innovative adolescent bereavement program to our community. Our goal is to ensure that every student who needs grief support is able to access it, regardless of financial limitations. Grants and donations make it possible for us to provide these essential services equitably, ensuring no student is denied grief support," said Anna Patterson, CEO of Hospice of Jefferson County.

"Grief comes in waves, and while we can't control when a wave hits or how strong it is, we can choose which surfboards to use (coping skills). The program I created recognizes that every student experiences loss differently. With compassion and understanding, we give students a foundation of tools to navigate future waves of grief with confidence, hope and resilience. Wave Riders of Hope serves as a life raft for adolescents facing loss," said Janetta Brown, BSW, Hospice Bereavement Counselor & Youth Educator.

"The Watertown City School District is committed to fostering resilience, hope, and healing for every child," said Tina M. Lane, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel & Student Services, Watertown City School District. "We view Hospice of Jefferson County's Wave Riders of Hope program as a vital partner in this mission and are proud to support this program as part of a broader effort to ensure our students have the tools to thrive both academically and emotionally."

For more information on the **Wave Riders of Hope**, please contact Kathy Arendt, Director, Foundation Operations & Development, Hospice of Jefferson County at karendt@jeffersonhospice.org or (315)788-7323.

Hospice of Jefferson County is committed to our mission to provide expert, compassionate, comprehensive care and services to individuals and their loved ones experiencing life-limiting illness and loss.

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