

Boys & Girls Town, Edgewood to merge

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Boys & Girls Town of Missouri and **Edgewood Children's Center** are merging, the agencies said Friday.

The boards of both organizations voted Thursday to approve the merger, which will be effective Oct. 1.



Combined, the agencies will form one of the largest children's not-for-profits in Missouri.

The organization will employ 735 staff members with a projected budget of \$31.8 million. No layoffs will occur as a result of the merger, said Marie McGeehan, a spokeswoman for Boys & Girls Town.

The name of the new parent organization will be unveiled by late fall, she said, and most of the program staff will be based at the Edgewood campus in Webster Groves, while the administrative staff will report to the Boys & Girls Town office in the Central West End.

Vince Hillyer, president of Boys & Girls Town of Missouri, will serve as chief executive of the merged organization.

Officials said they think the merger will help them save money by streamlining business operations and also will better assist children and families with quicker referrals and transitions between the two programs.

The two organizations haven't determined yet the dollar amount they expect to save through the merger, McGeehan said.

The groups first **floated the idea of a merger** in January, although they didn't call it that at the time.

Boys & Girls Town of Missouri provides treatment and services for troubled youth and their families. It has four Missouri campuses in St. Louis, St. James, Springfield and Columbia.

Edgewood Children's Center in St. Louis provides treatment and support services to children, many of whom have been abused, neglected or abandoned, and their families.

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