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Q3 and Q4 2023 Newsletter

Your Newsletter Includes:

- Fall 2023 Programming Updates
- Save the Date for 2024 Events
- Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Event Wrap-Up
- Community Partner Thank-You's and Upcoming Third-Party Fundraisers
- Year-End Schedule
- Thank You to our Grant Funders
- Staff and Volunteer Highlights

Fall 2023 Programming Updates

Weekly Groups and School Groups Resume

This fall, Ele's Place – Ann Arbor resumed our weekly peer support groups for grieving children and teens ages 3-18 and their adults. Evening support programs help children and teens understand that they are not alone in their grief after a person dies, providing an opportunity to connect with others in an emotionally safe environment that supports the sharing of feelings, thoughts and experiences. As always, our peer support groups are 100% free of charge for as long as a family needs them.

Ele's Place – Ann Arbor staff also continue to support our school partners and their students through Ele's Group, our school-based peer grief support groups, as well as through consultations with school staff members.



Families Make Candles to Honor Their Person at Remembrance Family Night

This November, we invited enrolled families to participate in a Remembrance Family Night. During these evenings, families stay together and have the opportunity to participate in a planned activity as a unit. Participating families created a candle in remembrance of their person, with the intention of honoring the lives of those who died and providing a space for remembrance ♥.

In Their Own Words – Quotes from Children, Teens and Families

"We started going to Ele's Group after our Uncle Billy

died. In Ele's Group, it was easy to connect with others. You meet people who might have gone through similar things. Because of Ele's Group, we were able to express our feelings easier. It's a safe place where you're allowed to feel your emotions, but you don't have to share them with anyone if you don't want to. It was nice to know we were not alone and learn some new coping skills. Grieving isn't always an easy process. But with the right tools and the right people to help you, it WILL get better."

— Anna and Lily, Former Ele's Group Participants and speakers at our Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Event



You help make a difference!

Thank you for standing by Ele's Place as we stand by grieving children, teens and their families in Ann Arbor and the surrounding Southeast Michigan area. This season of gift-giving, consider adding Ele's Place – Ann Arbor to your list. Your gift ensures that our services remain FREE OF CHARGE, for as long as a family needs. ❤️

Give Now



Save the Dates for our 2024 Events!

- **Tuesday, January 16** – Derby Day Soirée tickets go on sale
- **Saturday, May 4** – Derby Day Soirée
- **TBD** – Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run
- **Tuesday, October 29** – Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Events

Interested in becoming an event sponsor or a volunteer for one of our 2024 events? Please contact **Andrea Gerber**, Events Coordinator at agerber@elesplace.org or [734.929.6640](tel:734.929.6640), Ext. 2211. ❤️

Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Events Raise \$70,000

We are so grateful to everyone in the Ann Arbor and Southeast Michigan area who joined us at our Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Events on November 2! Attendees toured our Home for Healing Hearts, heard stories from former families, and learned about our mission. Together, our generous sponsors and donors raised **more than \$70,000** to help support area children, teens and their families. ❤️



Community Partners and Friends Give Back

We are so grateful to have community partners who help make all of our work possible. Below are just a few of the individuals and businesses who contributed their time, treasure and talents this fall.

Saline High Students Step Up

Two groups of **Saline High School** volunteers devoted their time and hard work, weeding, trimming bushes and helping with fall clean-up in September and October. The October group also helped us prepare for our Fall Heartstrings Fundraising events. We appreciate all of you so much!



Huron Consulting Beautifies Building

Our Home for Healing Hearts was in need of beautification and our friends at **Huron Consulting** rose to the challenge, washing windows, weeding and trimming bushes in September! It looks amazing and we are very grateful!



AHB Tooling Donates, Volunteers

Sending hugs and gratitude to **AHB Tooling**, who made a generous donation in addition to helping us prepare for our Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Events in November!



Fowling for a Cause

New partners **Fowling Warehouse Ypsi Ann Arbor** made Ele's Place the beneficiary of a recent beer tasting and fowling Oktoberfest event. We are grateful for their help in sharing our mission and introducing us to new supporters.



Family Golf Outing Raises \$11,000 for Ele's Place

The **Parr family** and their friends rallied together, making Ele's Place – Ann Arbor the beneficiary of the James E. Parr Memorial Golf Outing held October 6. The Parrs, a former Ele's Place family, created this amazing event in honor of James Parr, raising over \$11,000 for our peer grief support programs. Thank you, Parr family, for your beautiful tribute to James, and for helping raise significant dollars to help fund our peer grief support groups.

Program Volunteers Treated to Suite Experience

Former **Michigan Ice Hockey Wolverine, Zach Werenski**, and current **Wolverine Captain, Jacob Truscott**, invited Ele's Place – Ann Arbor to participate in the Werenski Suite Experience. We raffled off the experience to our amazing program volunteer facilitators who were incredibly grateful. ❤️



Local Businesses Kick off the Holiday Season, Support Ele's Place

Community members and vendors

hosted the Hap-Hap-Happiest Holiday Cocktail Party in November, with a portion of all proceeds benefiting Ele's Place – Ann Arbor. Together, they raised more than \$2,700 for grieving children, teens and their families!



Upcoming Third-Party Events

Autumn-Hearted Cocktails Benefit Ele's Place

Back by popular demand – our collaboration with **Ann Arbor Distilling Company** (A2DC) is available through December! These limited-edition four-packs of Autumn-Hearted Cocktails are on sale at A2DC now, and are perfect for your holiday gatherings! A huge thank you to A2DC for continuing to give back to Ele's Place. Order online and schedule your pickup at their Felch Street location (220 Felch St., Ann Arbor, MI). [Order Ele's Place – Ann Arbor's Autumn-Hearted Cocktail here](#) while supplies last.



Join us for a shopping event at Kendra Scott

Get your holiday shopping done and give back to Ele's Place! On Saturday, December 16, shop in person at their Arbor Hills location from 2-4 p.m., or shop online anytime that day using the code "GIVEBACK-ELCGR" and 20% of your **Kendra Scott** purchase will go back to Ele's Place – Ann Arbor.



Host a Third-Party Fundraiser

Do you have a third-party fundraising event idea that would support Ele's Place – Ann Arbor? We LOVE our community partners and friends! Please reach out to **Andrea Gerber**, Events Coordinator at agerber@elesplace.org or [734.929.6640](tel:734.929.6640), Ext. 2211. ♥

Office Closures

Please note that the Ele's Place – Ann Arbor building will be CLOSED on the following dates:

- Thursday, December 21
- Friday, December 22
- Monday, December 25
- Thursday, December 28
- Friday, December 29
- Monday, January 1

For Donations or Gift-Related Questions

Our Development staff will be checking mail and voicemail. If you are interested in making a year-end gift in support of grieving children and teens, please [CLICK HERE](#) to visit our secure donation webpage. Or, please feel free to contact **Lindsay Clark**, Director of Development, at lclark@elesplace.org or [734.929.6640](tel:734.929.6640), Ext. 2220. Thank YOU for your generosity!

For Grief Support and Grief Resources

We know grief does not take time off during the holidays. If you need assistance or have questions about grief support for children and teens, please leave a message at [734.929.6640](tel:734.929.6640). Our clinical program staff will be working intermittently for the remainder of the year and will return your call as soon as possible. For additional information, we encourage you to visit the “Grief Resources” and “Grief Support” sections [on our website](#). ♥

Grant Funders Supporting Ele's Place – Ann Arbor

Thank you to the **Speckhard-Knight Foundation**, an **anonymous grantor** and **Ann Arbor Women for Good** for presenting us with impactful grant awards to support our ongoing general operating needs. These unrestricted grants are so important for our day-to-day needs!

Thank you to the **Ann Arbor Kiwanis Foundation** for presenting us with an impactful grant award to help fund our program supplies! And to an **anonymous foundation** for supplying us with much-needed technology updates!

We are grateful for our grant funders. Their investment in Ele's Place – Ann Arbor helps us accomplish our goals and serve the children, teens and their families who are grieving in Southeast Michigan.

Are you a grantmaking organization wanting to learn more about the Ele's Place – Ann Arbor mission? Please reach out to **Lindsay Clark**, Director of Development at lclark@elesplace.org or [734.929.6640](tel:734.929.6640), Ext. 2220. ♥

Ele's Place – Ann Arbor Staff and Volunteer Spotlight

Support. Connection. Healing. These three words are simple, yet they mean so much. We're filled with immense gratitude when we reflect back on 2023. Our donors, sponsors, partners, volunteers, staff and community board members came together to ensure our community is able to provide a safe and welcoming space where children and teens do not have to grieve alone.

Welcome to our New Staff

In September we welcomed two new staff members: **Andrea Gerber**, Ann Arbor Events Coordinator, and **Samantha West**, Director of Communications, Ele's Place – Michigan.

Andrea brings 18 years of professional experience in higher education and auxiliary service roles at both the University of Michigan and Wayne State University. In addition, she spent the later end of her corporate career working for the Westin Southfield where she was the Director of Events. Andrea is excited to begin her career in the nonprofit space where her passion and skillset align.

Sam has spent nearly 20 years in nonprofit and for-profit marketing and communications, most recently working at the Alzheimer's Association in brand management and strategic messaging at the state and national levels. In addition to writing and graphic design, Sam has a long history in marketing, PR and building relationships with media outlets. Sam is based in Ann Arbor, but in her role with Ele's Place, she will lead the marketing and communications efforts across all branch locations.

Welcome to our New Community Board Member

In October we welcomed new **Community Board Member, Julie Muthig**. Julie has been an incredible addition to the Ann Arbor Community Board. Thank you, Julie, for the commitment you have displayed in your first few months, rolling up your sleeves and lending many helping hands for our Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Events. We are fortunate to have you "on board" and look forward to working with you. Julie shares:



"As a former clinical social worker, I strongly believe in the transformative healing power of resources like Ele's Place. Ele's Place resonates with my family because my husband experienced the loss of his father when he was only 11 years old. We wish that Ele's Place had been around during that time of his life. We believe that families and children should be supported in their darkest moments of grief."

Board Chair Honored

Shout out to **Ann Hollenbeck**, Ele's Place – Ann Arbor Community Board Chair and **Jones Day** Partner-in-Charge, Detroit Office, for being named among the Crain's Detroit Business Notable Leaders in DEI for 2023!

Congratulations, Ann! [Click here to read the full article. Notable Leaders in DEI](#) . ♥

Farewell and Thank-You's

In November, we bid a bittersweet farewell to **Hannah Brown** after 10 years of service and commitment to the Ann Arbor branch. We are incredibly grateful to Hannah for the commitment, compassion and support she has provided to our children, teens and families during her time with Ele's Place, as well as the leadership she has shown to her team over the years.

Community Board members who recently concluded their two terms of service, (each having served for six years) include **Rosalie Tocco Bradley** and **Jackie Silhanek**. Both will be greatly missed. We know Ro and Jackie will not be far from the action and will always be forever friends of Ele's Place – Ann Arbor. Ro and Jackie, thank you for your personal and professional service to Ele's Place and your dedication to help further our vision. You both are dedicated advocates for the grieving children and teens we serve. Thank you!

Ele's Place is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization.

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Ele's Place is committed to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
TOGETHER WE ARE BETTER



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