

No Child or Teen Should Have to Grieve Alone



We're here for YOU.
Support ♥ Connection ♥ Healing
Call us at 734.929.6640



2nd Quarter 2023 Newsletter

YOUR Newsletter Includes:

- Peer Grief Support – Program Updates
- April is Volunteer Appreciation Month
- In Their Own Words – Quotes from Children, Teens and Families
- "HEARTS of EPA2" Stories
- NEW! Heartstrings Fall Fundraising Events – Save the Date – November 2, 2023!
- 2023 Derby Day Soirée Wrap-Up
- 2023 Healing Hearts Society Family 5K Walk/Run Wrap-Up
- Tours of the Heart – Schedule a Tour & Visit Our Peer Grief Support Center
- Grant Funders Supporting Ele's Place Ann Arbor
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Peer Grief Support – Program Updates



Spring 2023 Programming

As the school year wrapped up, so did Ele's Place Ann Arbor's **weekly** peer support groups, offered Monday through Thursday evenings 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 and provide an opportunity to connect with others who have experienced the death of a person in an **emotionally safe environment** that supports the sharing of feelings, thoughts and experiences. Please note, Ele's Place Ann Arbor offers alternative programming during the summer months and Clinical Program Staff remain available to support families through consultation.

Peer support groups are divided by age/grade: Preschool/Kindergarten, Early Elementary, Upper Elementary, Middle School and High School. Trained volunteers facilitate the children and teen groups with oversight by Ele's Place Ann Arbor Program Staff. Support groups for the parents/guardians of enrolled children and teens are also available. Licensed mental health clinicians facilitate the adult groups.

As a finale to the onsite program year in May, families gathered the last week of programming for our annual Bubble Release. These evenings provide an opportunity for families to participate in an activity together where they can reflect on wishes or messages they have for the people who have died.

Summer 2023 Programming

At Ele's Place Ann Arbor, we know grief does not take a summer break. In June, we hosted the first of three

monthly **Family Nights** to be held during the 2023 summer session. Summer family nights are offered to enrolled families, as well as families who have completed an intake and are pending group placement. Please note, Ele's Place Ann Arbor welcomes new families to enroll for Fall 2023 programming any time throughout the summer. ♥

These Family Nights are designed to provide a safe space to come together and to support a family in exploring their grief together as a family unit, through guided activities, games and discussions. This open and flexible engagement opportunity aims to support families in communicating about the death of their person(s) and their grief.

At the June Family Night, families engaged in an activity called "Search & Share." This activity allows each individual family member to "search" through seemingly random objects or figures that may resonate with them – perhaps a bandaid reminds them of their hurt feelings, or a camera reminds them of a photo they took with the person who died. Family members then "share" their reasoning for picking that item and add it to a shared family poster. This activity promotes sharing of feelings, memories and experiences among family members. ♥



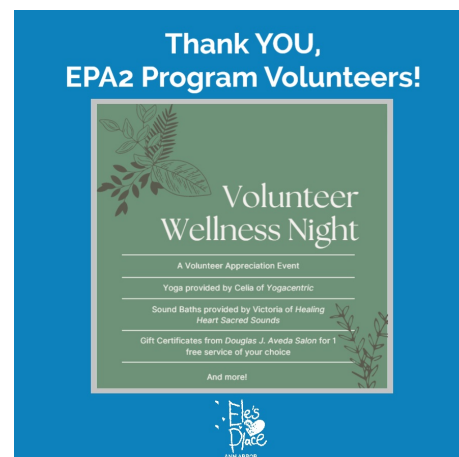
School-Based Programs

We are thrilled we provided nine Ele's Group school-based sessions during the spring of 2023! The Ele's Place Ann Arbor school-based staff and volunteer facilitators support our school partners and their students through **Ele's Group**, our school peer grief support groups, as well as through consultations with school staff members. Working in partnership with school clinical staff to provide 8-week peer support groups in many area middle and high schools, we strive to remove barriers and meet grieving students where they are – at school!

Program Volunteer Appreciation

April was Volunteer Appreciation Month, and we used this opportunity to pamper our Program Volunteers with self-care during a Wellness Event! We were honored to offer them an evening filled with wellness and restoration, including a sound bath experience, yoga sessions and several creative and healing activities. Many thanks to Aveda Salon & Spa, Yogacentric of Saline, and Healing Heart Sacred Sounds of Dexter for their in-kind donations to this event. ♥

These generous people serve as Support Group Facilitators, Activity Room Volunteers, Kitchen Volunteers & Therapy Dog Handlers during our peer grief support programs. We appreciate the warmth, compassion and dedication our volunteers express when they support grieving children and teens in a peer-based setting. So grateful to be able to give back to these amazing humans! ♥



Program Volunteer Training

1 in 11 children/teens in Michigan will experience the death of a parent or sibling by age 18. LET US REPEAT. 1 in 11. ♥ Make an Impact! Consider learning more about becoming a Program Volunteer at Ele's Place Ann Arbor, and about this unique opportunity to give back to our community! ♥

Learn more about becoming a Program Volunteer!

WE want YOU!

Ele's Place Ann Arbor relies on trained volunteers to provide compassionate bereavement support services to grieving children and teens, ages 3-18, through a peer support group model. Volunteers have an opportunity to support children and teens in their grief, while building their understanding of childhood and adolescent bereavement.

For more information about becoming a Volunteer please [CLICK HERE](#) to visit our "Volunteer at Ele's Place Ann Arbor" webpage. Questions about our **Volunteer Training Program** ? Please reach out to **Meghan Thiel, LMSW** , Associate Program Director at mthiel@elesplace.org or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2207.

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

"For me, going to Ele's Place Ann Arbor allowed me to re-find a sense of family. They were individuals who really understood what I was going through. We listened, talked, cried, and even laughed at times. We needed each other for strength, and to get ready to take on the next day, or week. We grew stronger. Ele's Place was all I had. I could relax and let down. I was happy that I was also hopefully doing something good for my three girls." ♥

~ Becky, Former Ele's Place Adult Group Participant



Ele's Place Ann Arbor.

♥

One little HEART story at a time.

EVERY Story FILLS Our HEART!

"HEARTS of EPA2" Stories

Have you had the opportunity to read our **HEARTS of EPA2** stories? This series features HEART stories shared by Donors, Volunteers, Staff, Former Families, Community Supporters, Board Members and Sponsors. Every shared heart story fills the HEART of Ele's Place Ann Arbor. ♥

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to visit the Ele's Place Ann Arbor **HEARTS OF EPA2** webpage and read all of the stories from those who are sharing their HEARTS with us!

NEW!

Heartstrings Fall Fundraising Events – Save the Date – November 2, 2023!

On Thursday, November 2, 2023, please join us for one of our **Heartstrings Fall Fundraising Events** at Ele's Place Ann Arbor. Bring a friend, family member, neighbor or colleague, tour our dedicated healing center for grieving children, teens, and their families, hear from families who have been positively impacted by peer grief support over the past 16

years, and learn more about ways you can support our mission.

The Ele's Place Ann Arbor Heartstrings Fall Fundraising Events will be offered to fit your schedule! We look forward to welcoming everyone into our Home for Healing Hearts!

♥ Morning event: 9:00 – 10:30 AM ♥

Enjoy a continental breakfast at the morning event

♥ Evening event: 5:30 – 7:00 PM ♥

Enjoy lite appetizers and adult beverages at the evening event

Mark Your Calendars!
Registration Links COMING SOON!

Questions? Or, interested in attending or supporting our Heartstrings Fall Fundraising Events, please contact **Lindsay Clark**, Director of Development at lclark@elesplace.org or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2220. ♥

SAVE THE DATE

Community | Connection | Support | Healing

Heartstrings

Join Us for a Fall Fundraising Event
Thursday, November 2, 2023

Morning Event 9:00 AM - 10:30 AM

- or -

Evening Event 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

More details to come...



2023 Derby Day Soirée Wrap-Up



Derby Gratitude

On May 6, 2023, we hosted our **6th Annual Derby Day Soirée**. This event was a huge success because of our amazing community! Together we exceeded our goal, raised over **\$383,000**, and made it to the "Winner's Circle!" ♥

Thank you to EVERYONE – guests, sponsors, underwriters, donors, Silent & Live Auction donors and purchasers, paddle raisers, wager rafflers and volunteers. We are so **G R A T E F U L**! To enjoy the full Derby Day Soirée Wrap-Up email distributed on May 11th, please [CLICK HERE](#).

Derby Mission Video

One of the many incredible parts of the Ele's Place Ann Arbor Derby Day Soirée fundraising event was our mission video! We are forever grateful to the six special humans who graciously opened their hearts and shared their healing journeys and Ele's Place stories with everyone this year. All eyes were on the video in the Derby big top tent, and every guest was completely engaged from beginning to end. [CLICK HERE](#) to access the video on the Ele's Place Ann Arbor YouTube channel. ♥

Derby 2023 Photo Album

Thank you to everyone who joined us at the 2023 Ele's Place Ann Arbor Derby Day Soirée! Our guests enjoyed a gorgeous, mostly sunny evening filled with entertainment, mission engagement and community support. Please [CLICK HERE](#) to enjoy the entire 2023 Derby Day Soirée Photo Album!

♥ Photo credits: Jeremy McGrew & Joanne Skelly



Derby Day Soirée 2024 Save the Date

Mark your calendars! The **7th Annual Ele's Place Ann Arbor Derby Day Soirée** will take place on Saturday, May 4, 2024 at the NEW official venue – REVEL RUN in Chelsea, MI!



Save the Date



New Official Venue!
REVEL RUN
Saturday, May 4, 2024

2023 Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run Wrap-Up

Saturday, June 24, 2023



Thank You!

Walk/Run Gratitude

On June 24, 2023, we enjoyed a FABULOUS morning at our **3rd Annual Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run!** We came together to honor, celebrate and remember those who have died, helped create awareness for our peer grief support programs and helped to ensure our onsite and school-based programs remain **FREE OF CHARGE** for children, teens and their families who are grieving, for as long as they need. Together we raised over **\$43,000!** To enjoy the full Walk/Run Wrap-Up email distributed on June 27th, please [CLICK HERE](#). ♥

Walk/Run 2023 Photo Album

Thank you to our sponsors, underwriters and volunteers – we are very grateful for your support! Thank you to Everyone who participated in our event...current and former Ele's Place families, walkers, runners, "strollers," "cheer-ers," and community supporters! You are all **WONDERFUL!** Please [CLICK HERE](#) to enjoy the entire 2023 Walk/Run Photo Album!

♥ Photo credits: Jeremy McGrew & Rebecca Hullstrung



Tours of the Heart – Schedule a Tour & Visit Our Peer Grief Support Center

Tours of the Heart are an inspirational opportunity to learn more about Ele's Place Ann Arbor, and to visit our dedicated healing space for grieving children, teens and their families.

We welcome scheduling in-person tours of our program facility. A Tour of the Heart provides you with an opportunity to learn about our peer grief support programs, meet our staff, and find out ways you can help support our mission.

PLEASE NOTE, these tours are NOT intended for families seeking grief support. If you need assistance or have questions about grief support for children and teens, our Clinical Program Staff is available to help! Please call Ele's Place Ann Arbor at 734.929.6640 or annarborinfo@elesplace.org.



Questions? Or, to schedule a Tour of the Heart, please contact **Lindsay Clark**, Director of Development at lclark@elesplace.org or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2220.

Grant Funders Supporting Ele's Place Ann Arbor

Thank you to **First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor** for presenting Ele's Place Ann Arbor with an impactful grant award to support our peer grief support, school-based program, Ele's Group! We appreciate that you stand by children and teens who are grieving in communities throughout Ann Arbor, and the surrounding southeast Michigan area! ♥

We're very grateful for the **Mericos Foundation!** You fill our hearts and we appreciate that you stand by children and teens who are grieving in our community, by standing with us! Thank you for presenting us with an impactful grant award for general operations! ♥

♥ Together we make it happen! ♥

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 Ann Arbor, and the surrounding southeast Michigan area.

Are you a **grantor organization** wanting to learn more about the Ele's Place Ann Arbor mission? We LOVE our grantors! Please reach out to **Lindsay Clark**, Director of Development at lclark@elesplace.org or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2220.

Community Partners & Friends GIVE BACK

Sending lots of gratitude to Celia Fellin of **Yogacentric Studio** in

Thank you to **Chelsea State Bank**, as well as their employees &



Saline, MI! We were thrilled she joined us at our Program Volunteer Wellness Event in April! Thank you for volunteering to provide yoga sessions, and for helping us provide self-care for our wonderful

program volunteers! ♥



customers! Since April, they collected change at their branches and donated \$300 to our recent Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run! We loved the creativity of the friendly competition that promoted our event, and

are grateful for the continued support! ♥



Sending huge hugs to **UTEC!** Our old printer/copier wasn't happy anymore! Thank you UTEC for donating a newly refurbished color printer/copier to us...we are happy! Thank you for

being such a generous and committed community partner! ♥



Thank you **Sam Webb & Ira Weintraub** for letting us join you on the air - WTKA 1050 AM radio, "The Ticket," back in April! We loved sharing our mission to provide peer grief support for children and teens with

your audience! ♥



Sending hugs and gratitude to **Jeanne Cooper** for hosting an amazing **Pickleball Tournament** to benefit Ele's Place Ann Arbor at Barton Hills Country Club in June! Shout out to

everyone who played in this third-party fundraiser and raised over \$2,250 for us! Also, a big shout-out to Nick Romano, Barton's Tennis Professional for organizing the pickleball instruction and round robin! ♥



Sending thanks to the small AND mighty group of **Saline High School Volunteers!** Our Home for Healing Hearts was in need of some "deep weeding!" We're grateful for the student volunteers who came together to

clean up our outdoor space in April! ♥ Job well done!



Sharing hugs and gratitude with **UTEC** – a generous and caring community partner! In mid-July, UTEC treated some of our staff to a special night at Ford Field for the Ed Sheeran

concert! Thank you so much for providing this much-needed downtime (and FUN) for our staff! Forever grateful! ♥



Sending big hugs and lots of gratitude to **Chris DeRuyver, Shawn Cool** and **Heidi Ewing** for hosting the **22nd Annual Golf Classic** benefiting Ele's Place Ann Arbor at the University of Michigan Golf Course

earlier this month! Shout out to everyone who played in this third-party fundraiser and raised OVER **\$23,000** for us! Our hearts are full due to all of the wonderful support from this event! ♥

Do you have a **Third-Party Fundraising Event** idea that would support the Ele's Place Ann Arbor mission? We LOVE our Community Partners & Friends! Please reach out to **Lindsay Clark**, Director of Development at lclark@elesplace.org or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2220.

Ele's Place Ann Arbor Spotlight

In April, we welcomed a new member to our Community Board. Welcome to **AJ Sheidt** (Hylant) – we look forward to working with you, and benefitting from your contributions as a Board member. ♥

Shout-out to **Meghan Thiel, LMSW**, Associate Program Director, **KaDerrick Robinson, LMSW**, Bereavement Coordinator, and the Program Staff for creating a space for our Program Volunteers to enjoy some self-care during a Wellness Event! The evening filled with wellness and restoration, included a sound bath experience, yoga sessions and several creative and healing activities. ♥

Shout-out to staff members, **Bree Arvai, Hannah Brown, LMSW, Lindsay Clark, Zoe Hilbert, LMSW,**

and **KaDerrick Robinson, LMSW** for reaching out into our community (and inviting our community into our space) to share our mission with the following groups: Chelsea State Bank Leadership Team, Dynamic Relationship class at Saline High School, the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools at their Mental Health & Wellness Fair, and many more. ♥

Congratulations to two of our Bereavement Coordinators, **KaDerrick Robinson, LMSW**, and **Alexa Schrock, LMSW**, for successfully completing all of the requirements to apply for and receive their Licensed Master's Social Worker (LMSW)! All of your hard work paid off – way to go! ♥

During the 2nd quarter of 2023, we bid farewell to **LaSonia Forté** and **Lori Thomas** as Ele's Place Ann Arbor Community Board members. We appreciate their dedicated volunteer service as advocates for the grieving children and teens we serve, and know they will always be forever friends of Ele's Place Ann Arbor. Thank you, LaSonia and Lori! ♥

In June, **Hannah Brown, LMSW**, Program Director and **Allison Stone**, Intern, represented Ele's Place Ann Arbor at the GrieveWell "Fly & Remember" memorial event that is offered in conjunction with the Kite Festival, in partnership with Arbor Hospice and Ele's Place. ♥

Shout-out to **Stacey Bodner**, Events Coordinator, for simultaneously planning and executing two AMAZING fundraising events - the 6th Annual Derby Day Soiree AND the 3rd Annual Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run! Both events provided opportunities to increase awareness of, and raise funds for, Ele's Place Ann Arbor. Thank you, Stacey, for your heart, your commitment and compassion for Ele's Place Ann Arbor. ♥

Huge shout-out to **Kris Maly**, Communications Manager, for her incredible talents and helping Ele's Place Ann Arbor SHINE!! From our social media posts, graphics, e-blasts, print materials to our program and event promotions, and from this beautiful quarterly e-newsletter to BEYOND...we have Kris to thank!! We are so grateful for her creativity, attention to detail, dedication, commitment and HEART for the Ele's Place mission! ♥

Recently, Ele's Place Ann Arbor welcomed **Naomi Avril, MA, LPC, NCC** and **Amanda Yats, LLMSW** to the Program Staff as Bereavement Coordinators. Welcome Naomi and Amanda! ♥

YOU make the difference! ♥ THANK YOU for standing by Ele's Place Ann Arbor as we stand by grieving children, teens and their families in Ann Arbor, and the surrounding southeast Michigan area. YOUR gift to Ele's Place Ann Arbor ensures that our peer grief support groups remain FREE OF CHARGE. PLEASE click on the button below to make a secure online donation today! ♥

DONATE NOW!

Amazon WISH LIST

Help us fulfill our mission of creating awareness of and support for children, teens and their families who are grieving in our community. Items on our Amazon WISH LIST allow us to:

- ♥ Create activities for our peer grief programs
- ♥ Fill the shelves of our grief library
- ♥ Provide supplies for our work behind the scenes and around our building

IF you'd like to browse the Ele's Place Ann Arbor **Amazon WISH LIST**, please [CLICK HERE](#). When you order, the items are shipped directly to us. Please be sure to include your contact info so we may express our gratitude for your purchase. 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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