

# No Child or Teen Should Have to Grieve Alone



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## 2nd Quarter 2022 Newsletter

### YOUR Newsletter Includes:

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### Peer Grief Support – Program Updates

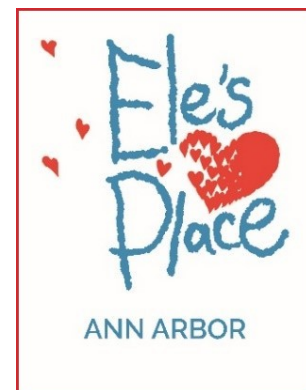
#### Spring 2022 Update

The Ele’s Place Ann Arbor evening peer support groups met Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, two weeks per month through the end of May. In addition, we offered Monday Family Night programming to families who have completed an intake session and are waiting to join groups. These evenings at Ele’s Place Ann Arbor offer families the opportunity to begin exploring their grief together, as a family unit, through guided activities, games and discussions.

Our peer support groups serve grieving children and teens ages 3-18, and their adults, **at NO cost to the family**, and offer the opportunity to connect with others that have experienced the death of a person in an emotionally safe environment that supports the sharing of feelings and experiences. The Ele’s Place Ann Arbor children’s/teen’s groups are facilitated by trained volunteers and overseen by our licensed Clinical Program Staff, and our adult groups for primary parents/guardians are led by licensed Clinicians.

As a finale to the program year in May, families gathered the last week of programming for our first in-person Bubble Release at our new building. 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.

Through the end of the school year, the Ele’s Place Ann Arbor school-based staff supported 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 schools, we strive to remove barriers and meet grieving students where they are – at school! We look forward to continuing our partnerships with our school partners during Fall 2022.



### Summer 2022 Programming

At Ele’s Place Ann Arbor, we know grief does not take a



summer break. In June, we hosted our first of three monthly Family Nights to be held during the 2022 summer season. Summer family nights are offered to enrolled families as well as families who have completed an intake and are pending group placement, and are designed 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.

## Summer & Fall 2022 Volunteer Training

In July, our program staff will host the Summer 2022 Volunteer Training Program for Volunteer Support Group Facilitators, as well as Activity Room Volunteers and Kitchen Volunteers. **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, and to build their understanding of childhood and adolescent bereavement.

We welcome all interested, kind and compassionate adults. We have a particular need for people of diverse backgrounds, including bilingual individuals and male volunteers. Applicants must be 19 years of age, able to commit to one year of service and complete our training program.



While enrollment for our Summer 2022 Volunteer Training has closed, **PLEASE stay tuned for our Fall 2022 Training coming in OCTOBER!** Make an Impact - JOIN the Ele's Place Ann Arbor volunteer team for a unique opportunity to give back to our community! ♥

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](mailto:mthiel@elesplace.org) or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2207.

## In Their Own Words – Lasting Impressions from Derby 2022

"What is really truly important to me about Ele's Place, is that it is not just Ele Stover's life that has made a difference. Ele might have been the first, her name may be on the door, but there are thousands of others who unfortunately have died, and because of Ele's Place their lives have made a significant difference to their surviving family and community. That's powerful to me, meaningful to me." ♥

~ *Woody Stover, Ele's Father & Ele's Place Co-Founder*

"I was able to meet others who had lost a parent, and it truly helped me feel less alone. For me, if I did not come to Ele's Place, I would not have emotional control, and I would not be able to talk about my father and share with others what a wonderful person he was and remember all the positive memories." ♥

~ *A Former Ele's Place Ann Arbor Participant*

## "HEARTS of EPA2" Stories

Have you had the opportunity to read our recent **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 stories from those who are sharing their hearts with us!



## 2022 Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run – Wrap-Up!

On Saturday, June 25th, we enjoyed a fabulous morning at our **2nd Annual Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run!** Everyone came together to honor, celebrate and remember those who have died AND helped fund our peer grief support programs to ensure they remain **FREE OF CHARGE** for children, teens and their families who are grieving, for as long as they need. ♥

We are so grateful that Ele's mom and dad, and the founders of Ele's Place, **Betsy Stover** and **Woody Stover** and their family were with us! Thank you Stover family for sharing Ele's beautiful legacy with our community!



THANK YOU to ALL of our generous sponsors! We are so grateful for your generosity and support! Hugs and shout-outs to:

- PRESENTING Sponsor: **Thomson Reuters Corporation**
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- GOLD Sponsors: **Bank of America, Oxford Companies** and **Mike & Kelly Halpern**
- UNDERWRITING Sponsors: **Athletico Physical Therapy, Enspire Dental, Luminary Counseling Services** and **McKinley Companies**
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- BRONZE Sponsors: **Edwards & Schaefer Orthodontics, Vanessa Keyes at Guaranteed Rate, Hylant, Kelly Orthodontics, Mandy Tousa at Howard Hanna** and **Two Men and a Truck**

THANK YOU: **Thomson Reuters** for hosting our Walk/Run; **CGC Kinetico** for the face painting and water; **Athletico** for the stretching tent; **DJ Nicole Myint** for the music vibes; **Hanna Johnson** for working the first aid tent; and, **Rotpac Racing** for the chip race timing.

THANK YOU to our **WALK/RUN VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE** and **COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS** **Jeanne Cooper** and **Richard Geglio**. We appreciate all of the energy, enthusiasm and time you put into the 2022 Walk/Run. Thank you for loving this family-friendly Ele's Place Ann Arbor event!

THANK YOU to our **VOLUNTEERS!** We rely on volunteers to assist with our support groups, operations and fundraising events. We could NOT do what we do, without our AMAZING volunteers!

THANK YOU to our **VOLUNTEER PHOTOGRAPHERS** who gave their time and talent to digitally record treasured memories of our Walk/Run: **Becca Hullstrung, Jeremy McGrew** and **Joanne Skelly!**

THANK YOU to our Ele's Place Ann Arbor **STAFF** and **COMMUNITY BOARD** for always stepping up and leading the charge!

AND...THANK YOU to **EVERYONE** who participated in our event...current and former Ele's Place families, walkers, runners and "strollers", those who participated in-person and virtually, community supporters from near and far, and everyone who cheered from the sidelines! You are all amazing!



**Save the Date! The 3rd Annual Ele's Place Ann Arbor Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run will take place on Saturday, June 24, 2023!**

Interested in becoming a **2023 Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run Sponsor** ? Questions? Please contact Stacey Bodner, Events Coordinator at [sbodner1@elesplace.org](mailto:sbodner1@elesplace.org) or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2221.

## 2022 Derby Day Soirée – Wrap-Up!

Our 5th Annual Derby Day Soirée was a huge success because of our amazing community! TOGETHER we made it to the “Winner’s Circle,” exceeded our goal and raised over \$305,000! YOU help heal grieving hearts in our community, and your gifts ensure our peer grief support programs remain FREE OF CHARGE, for as long as a family needs!

We enjoyed a gorgeous, sunny evening filled with entertainment, mission engagement and community support. Thank you to our guests who joined us, and ALL who bid on and purchased Silent & Live Auction items, raised their Paddle and donated, and purchased tickets and participated in the Derby Wager Raffle. We are so grateful!



So many committed, dedicated people and organizations make up our VILLAGE – we could NOT do what we do without our amazing volunteers and supporters!! Thank you to everyone who helped make our first in person fundraising event since October 2019 happen! Please [CLICK HERE](#) to read our full “Derby 2022 Wrap Up” where we recognize and thank our entire VILLAGE! Thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

**Save the Date! The 6th Annual Ele's Place Ann Arbor Derby Day Soirée will take place on Saturday, May 6, 2023!**

Interested in becoming a **2023 Derby Day Soirée Sponsor** ? Questions? Please contact Stacey Bodner, Events Coordinator at [sbodner1@elesplace.org](mailto:sbodner1@elesplace.org) or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2221.

## 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 visit our dedicated healing space for grieving children, teens and their families.

We are 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](mailto:annarborinfo@elesplace.org).

Questions? Or, to schedule a Tour of the Heart , please contact Lindsay Clark, Director of Development at [lclark@elesplace.org](mailto:lclark@elesplace.org) or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2220.

## Grant Funders Supporting Ele's Place Ann Arbor

We are grateful for our **Grant Funders!** Their investment in Ele's Place Ann Arbor helps us accomplish our goals and serve the grieving children, teens and their families in the Ann Arbor community, and the surrounding southeast Michigan area.

## Community Partners & Friends GIVE BACK



We're very grateful for all the amazing dancers a t **Shearer's Arts 'N Motion!** In April, the dance studio participated in a year-end competition called "The

Power of Dance" AND held a charity fundraiser for Ele's Place Ann Arbor. Thank you wonderful dancers for raising \$300 for Ele's Place Ann Arbor peer grief support programs. We appreciate you! Congratulations on a fabulous year and competition!



Thank you to **Lewis Jewelers** for hosting an amazing Valentine "Give Love Back" fundraiser of us in February! For every purchase of any heart-shaped OR ruby

jewelry during February, Lewis Jewelers "gave love" back to Ele's Place Ann Arbor (\$2,285) in support of grieving children and teens in our community! Thank you to our community partner, Lewis Jewelers AND to everyone who shopped in February! We are grateful!



We are GRATEFUL for **Ann Arbor Distilling Company (A2DC)** AND all of the "Cranberry Cinnamon Sour" & "Sweet-HEARTED-tini"

cocktail lovers who purchased the Ele's Place Ann Arbor canned cocktails! Your support and enjoyment are amazing! In June, we received another \$375 from A2DC cocktail sales! Thank you to everyone for supporting grieving children and teens in our community!



We'd like to give a shout-out to **Susan West** for giving her time and love to Ele's Place Ann Arbor. Susan has been a friendly face in Ann Arbor every week this summer

helping to organize and stylize our library, sorting and prepping program supplies for fall programming, and giving our office kitchenette a much-needed "spring cleaning." Thank you, Susan, we appreciate your helping hands!



In June, we were able to install a birdhouse dedicated in honor of **Al Gileczek**, who along with his wife **Marilyn Gileczek**, have been long time friends and supporters of Ele's Place. Our favorite "Al quote" is "Remember, it's all

about the kids!" In 2021, Al & Marilyn Gileczek and AF Group were our MATCH DONORS for our February "You Fill Our Hearts" Appeal! At the same time – after an amazing career – Al was retiring from AF Group! To commemorate all that Al has given to so many, Al's AF Group colleagues and friends dedicated a beautiful birdhouse in the Memory Garden at Ele's Place Ann Arbor in his honor. Thank you to **Tony Mitchell** o f **O'Neal Construction** a n d **Scott Maly** for your birdhouse installation services!



We love our volunteers! Sending gratitude to this wonderful group of **Saline High School Volunteers** AND t o **Kathy Clark, Gail**

**Hullstrung, Karen Kohn, Abby Kohn, Kris Maly, Scott Maly, RJ Maly, Alexa Schrock** and **Meghan Thiel** for all of the hard work weeding the mulch beds in June. Our Home for Healing Hearts was in need of some "deep weeding" before the mulch arrived. As Gail Hullstrung, Office & Building Administrator at Ele's Place Ann Arbor, shared at the end of this clean-up project with relief and enthusiasm, "Yayyy! So grateful! They did an amazing job! Made my day!"



Do you have a **Third-Party Fundraising Event idea** that would support the Ele's Place Ann Arbor mission? We LOVE our Community Partners and Friends! Please reach out to Stacey Bodner, Events Coordinator at [sbodner1@elesplace.org](mailto:sbodner1@elesplace.org) or 734.929.6640, Ext. 2221.

## Ele's Place Ann Arbor Servant Leader Spotlight

On April 20th, National Volunteer Appreciation Day, we celebrated our compassionate and dedicated **Ele's Place Ann Arbor Volunteers!** Every day we rely on trained volunteers to assist with our peer support groups, operations and fundraising events. We could not do what we do, without our amazing volunteers!

In May, **Alexa Schrock, LLMSW** was promoted to School-Based Program Co-Coordinator. In

addition to her work as a Bereavement Coordinator, Alexa co-leads the support Ele's Place Ann Arbor provides to our school partners and their students through our Ele's Group school-based program.

Huge hugs and a heartfelt shout-out to **Stacey Bodner**, Events Coordinator at Ele's Place Ann Arbor, for successfully leading the charge for TWO back-to-back fundraising events: the 2022 Derby Day Soirée in May AND the 2022 Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run in June! So much work goes into these events, and Stacey's enthusiasm and attention to detail rock our events out of the park!

In June, Ele's Place Ann Arbor welcomed **Zoe Hilbert, LMSW** to the Program Staff as a Bereavement Coordinator and the School-Based Program Co-Coordinator. Zoe's previous experience includes work as an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant and an Executive Function and Therapeutic Coach.

After joining Ele's Place Ann Arbor as our Office & Building Administrator in February, **Gail Hullstrung** has gone over and above, several times! Thank you Gail for the extra care you have taken to ensure the Extra Group Room was cleaned up, the gardens and landscaping were weeded, mulched and watered, and that the Conference Room will be mold-free!

On June 21st, the **Ele's Place Ann Arbor Program Staff** hosted its first "Bring A Buddy" Volunteer Open House! This is an opportunity for current volunteers to share what they do for Ele's Place Ann Arbor with an interested "buddy." Guests came to tour our program facility, meet our staff, learn about our peer grief support services for children, teens and their families, and learn about how to become a volunteer! Look for more of these events in the future.

The National Alliance for Children's Grief (NACG) hosts an annual symposium that offers 400 children's grief support professionals and volunteers an opportunity to bring new information and renewed energy back to their local communities, as they continue to provide support to grieving children and teens. This year, several staff members from Ele's Place branches around the State of Michigan attended the NACG Symposium in Orlando, FL, including **KaDerrick Robinson, LLMSW**, an Ele's Place Ann Arbor Bereavement Coordinator.

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!](#)

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

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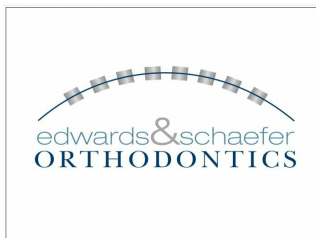
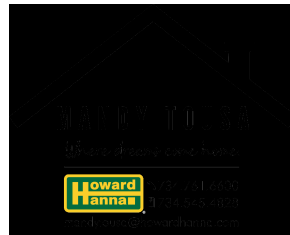


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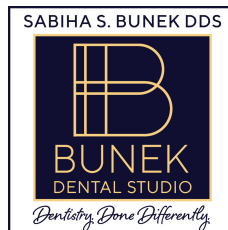
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