



ANN ARBOR

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# 2021 IMPACT REPORT

No Child or Teen Should  
Have to Grieve Alone



# **Bree Arvai**

## **Ele's Place Ann Arbor**

### **Branch Director**



Dear Friends of Ele's Place Ann Arbor,

Our TEAM remains 100% committed to our mission, and dedicated to the children, teens and families who are grieving in Ann Arbor, and the surrounding southeast Michigan area. We were honored to return to our Home for Healing Hearts during fall 2021 for in-person programming, tours, meetings and work. Whether in evening support groups or at our school partners, Ele's Place Ann Arbor provides a safe place for grieving children and teens to share their stories and memories, explore their feelings, learn coping skills, and meet new friends who understand them. Children and teens build a "tool box" of skills to help them express their fears, anger, guilt and sadness while processing their grief.

As we all learn to navigate our new normal, we are grateful to share our 2021 achievements with YOU – our supportive donors, dedicated partners, committed volunteers, and devoted staff and community board members. We are incredibly thankful for the compassion and generosity we receive from so many in our community. YOU are the HEART of what we do at Ele's Place, and YOU truly help ensure our peer grief support groups remain FREE OF CHARGE, for as long as a family needs!

### **First Half of 2021 - Virtual Support, Connection and Healing:**

- ♥ We continued to offer consistent virtual peer grief support groups on Tuesday through Thursday evenings for the increased numbers of children, teens and their families continuing on their healing journey.
- ♥ We successfully re-engaged trained volunteer facilitators through "OPERATION RE-ENGAGE!"
- ♥ We extended our virtual peer support groups to our current families through June and July, to further support our families during the pandemic.
- ♥ We continued to provide support materials to our partner schools and virtual peer grief support groups in schools (Ele's Group), during the time of remote schooling.
- ♥ We held a virtual volunteer training program during the summer, and welcomed a new class of committed facilitators to lead our virtual peer grief support groups!
- ♥ We hosted our second successful virtual Derby Day Soirée @ Your Place fundraising event last May.

# Hannah Brown, LMSW

## Ele's Place Ann Arbor

### Program Director



### Second Half of 2021 – Return to In-Person Support, Connection and Healing:

- ♥ We were thrilled to host our inaugural Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run, in-person on our campus in Ann Arbor! Over 250 community members grabbed their walking/running shoes and came together to honor, celebrate and remember those who have died. This family-friendly event helped us raise awareness and operating funds for our branch.
- ♥ We cautiously and safely welcomed our families back into our Home for Healing Hearts last fall! Everyone responded positively to returning to in-person peer grief support groups, which met in the evening, two weeks per month.
- ♥ We supported our school partners and their students through Ele's Group, our school-based peer grief support groups. Working in partnership with school clinical staff members to provide 8-week peer support groups in many area schools, we removed barriers and once again met grieving students where they were – at school.
- ♥ We hosted our second virtual Healing Hearts Society Fundraising Breakfast in October.

### What's in Store for 2022 – MORE & MORE Support, Connection and Healing:

- ♥ We held an in-person volunteer training program this winter, and welcomed a new class of committed facilitators to lead our in-person, evening peer grief support groups!
- ♥ We returned to in-person Tours of the Heart, providing all of our stakeholders an opportunity to learn more about our mission and how they can support grieving children, teens and their families.
- ♥ We hosted our 5th Annual Derby Day Soirée in May, with over 320 guests in attendance! This amazing fundraising event provided mission engagement and raised over \$305,000 to support our vital peer grief support programs.
- ♥ We gathered in-person with our families and volunteers for our year-end "Bubble Release" – for the first time at our Home for Healing Hearts. This is an opportunity for our community to come together to connect and remember those who have died.

# Ele's Place Ann Arbor

*"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**

## **We're also looking forward to:**

- ♥ Hosting our 2nd Annual Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run in June.
- ♥ Returning to weekly peer grief support groups, with therapy dogs and completely open activity rooms for the children and teens in the fall.
- ♥ Re-engaging with more of our school partners and their students through Ele's Group, our school-based peer grief support groups.

We've always understood that the need for peer grief support will never go away. Now, we're also startlingly aware that COVID-related deaths have increased the need for Ele's Place services even more. Data included in the 2021 Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model report estimates that one in 12 children in Michigan will experience the death of a parent or sibling by the age of 18. Peer grief support can have a positive life-long impact on a young person. Children and teens who are grieving need access to a supportive environment and compassionate peer-based programming. As the need for our services continues to grow, Ele's Place Ann Arbor is committed to ensuring that no child or teen should have to grieve alone.

Our community is so fortunate to have Ele's Place Ann Arbor and we are so fortunate to have YOU. TOGETHER we make an impact on those who need us most. Thank YOU!

**With heartfelt gratitude,**

**Bree Arvai  
Branch Director  
Ele's Place Ann Arbor**

**Hannah Brown, LMSW  
Program Director  
Ele's Place Ann Arbor**

# Ele's Place Ann Arbor

*"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."*

- Former Ele's Place Participant



## FACT:

One in 12 children in Michigan will experience the death of a parent or sibling before the age of 18.

# Ele's Place Ann Arbor

## Total Served in 2021:



### **FAMILY-BASED SUPPORT GROUPS – 395 PEOPLE (232 CHILDREN/TEENS & 163 ADULTS)**

Family based programming, onsite at our healing center, or virtually via Zoom. Provides peer support to children and teens ages 3-18, with optional support group for their parent/guardian.



### **SCHOOL GROUPS – 60 STUDENTS AT 11 SCHOOL PARTNERS**

Peer support groups within the school setting, primarily in Middle and High School. Conducted in partnership with school clinical staff. We collaborated with seven additional schools, however, were not able to complete these groups due to the challenges schools faced during the ongoing pandemic.



### **CLINICAL CONSULTATIONS – 589 PEOPLE**

Phone, virtual or in-person one-to-one grief support, conducted by a clinically licensed Ele's Place staff member. Includes the initial intake appointment for families.



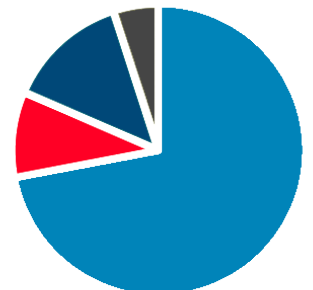
### **COMMUNITY OUTREACH – 429 PEOPLE**

In-person and virtual community presentations, workshops and Tours of the Heart.

*\*All services are provided free of charge to families, schools and all members of our community.\**

## Functional Expenses

- ♥ Program 72%
- ♥ Administration 9.5%
- ♥ Fundraising 13.5%
- ♥ Occupancy 5%



# Thank You To Our Community Sponsors!



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

