

NEWS

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Ele's Place Expands School Partnerships

Ele's Place, a healing center for grieving children, is partnering with two new schools during the 2010-2011 school year, in addition to its current partnership with all five middle schools in the Lansing School District. Now, **Waverly Middle School and Potterville Middle School** are working with Ele's Place to offer its school-based grief support program services. Eight-week support group sessions called "*Ele's Group*" will be held in the schools several times throughout the year for students who are grieving the death of a family member or close friend. The program is underwritten in part by **Comerica Bank**.

"Ele's Place is serving approximately 230 children each week right now at its Lansing location," said **Ele's Place President & CEO, Laurie Baumer**. "But we know there are hundreds more grieving children in our community who will never get the chance to come to Ele's Place. We need to go to them. Word of our success with the Lansing schools has prompted many other schools to ask us for the program – more than we can afford to help at this point – but we're grateful to **Comerica Bank** for its financial support that is helping us to add the two schools this year."

In "*Ele's Group*" students use creative activities to help them express their feelings and memories of the person who died. Most importantly, they have the opportunity to be with others their age who are grieving, and share their sadness, anger, fear and other feelings in an understanding, confidential environment. Feeling less isolated helps them to cope and begin to heal. This program is designed to improve the students' self-esteem, peer relationships, ability to

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verbalize their feelings, academic performance, and general behaviors (attention, participation, acting out).

In addition to the bereavement support groups held at Ele's Place and at selected offsite locations, Ele's Place also provides support services for children and families coping with the life-threatening illness of a loved one through its TLC (Together Learning to Cope) program. All Ele's Place services are offered at no cost to the participating families. Founded in 1991, Ele's Place also serves as a resource and referral agency for the community. A second Ele's Place opened in Ann Arbor in 2007. For more information, call Ele's Place at (517) 482-1315 or visit www.elesplace.org.

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