



A Healing Center for Grieving Children & Teens

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 10, 2013

**Contact: Molly Day**  
**Director of Marketing**  
**(517) 482-1315 #34**  
[mday@elesplace.org](mailto:mday@elesplace.org)

### **New Healing Center for Grieving Children & Teens** *Ele's Place held successful fundraiser and* **NOW ENROLLING in Grand Rapids**

Ele's Place, a healing center for grieving children and teens, held its first annual Healing Hearts Society Fundraising Breakfast on Tuesday, April 9, at the Frederik Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park. The event was underwritten by the Peter C. and Emajean Cook Foundation and the David and Carol Van Andel Foundation, and raised nearly \$300,000 in donations from the 450 guests who attended.

The funds raised will enable the new center to open in Grand Rapids this spring. Enrollment is now open for children and teens coping with the death of a parent, sibling or other loved one. Third Reformed Church on Michigan Street will host Ele's Place programming and office.

The 21-year-old nonprofit, with centers in Lansing and Ann Arbor, is solely devoted to supporting grieving children ages 3-18 years old through weekly peer support groups. The program is provided at no charge to families.

The Grand Rapids branch will offer groups for children, teens, and their parents or guardians. Key components of the program are:

- Weekly support groups throughout the year
- Unlimited participation time
- No cost to families
- Separate groups for age-appropriate activities (ages 3-18)
- Groups for parents/guardians run concurrently

"Unresolved childhood loss is often linked with poor school performance, adolescent and adult depression, violence, alcohol and drug abuse, and suicidal tendencies," said Gerilyn May, Managing Director. "Ele's Place focuses its mission and energies entirely on grieving children,

making a profound difference in their lives. Finally, the grieving children of West Michigan will have access to the same level of support as children in Lansing and Ann Arbor.”

Before coming to Ele’s Place, many grieving children feel alone and keep their feelings inside, not wanting to burden their parents or other family members. Often, friends don’t seem to understand if they haven’t had a similar experience. But each week at Ele’s Place, hundreds of grieving children find a warm and welcoming place to meet new friends who really understand how they feel, while they begin to heal after the death of a loved one.

To enroll, parents or guardians can call 616-301-1605.

For more information about Ele’s Place programs and volunteering, contact Gerilyn May at [gmay@elesplace.org](mailto:gmay@elesplace.org) or (616) 301-1605, or visit [www.elesplace.org](http://www.elesplace.org).

###

For statements or interviews:

Gerilyn May, Managing Director, [gmay@elesplace.org](mailto:gmay@elesplace.org) or cell (616) 460-2141