Ele's Place

Ann Arbor

2022 Impact Report

No child or teen should have to grieve alone









Bree Arvai
Branch Director,
Ele's Place Ann Arbor



Dear Friends of Ele's Place Ann Arbor,

For 16 years, we have served children, teens and their families who are grieving in Ann Arbor, and the surrounding southeast Michigan area. In 2007, Ele's Place planted roots in our community, and since that time we have grown and expanded into an welcoming, dedicated grief healing center – our Home for Healing Hearts. At Ele's Place Ann Arbor, children and teens have a place to share their stories and memories, explore their feelings and learn coping skills alongside their peers, in an emotionally safe space. Most important, they feel heard and understood, and they realize they are not alone.

Data included in the 2022 Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model report estimates that one in 11 children in Michigan will experience the death of a sibling or parent before age 18. That's approximately 188,000 children in Michigan, and by age 25, that number more than doubles to 456,000. Childhood bereavement is a critical issue and an increasingly important national priority. Understanding the number of children and teens impacted by death is essential to helping every one of them find support, connection and healing.

We are grateful to share our 2022 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 how Ele's Place makes a positive impact in our community. You truly help ensure our peer grief support groups remain FREE OF CHARGE, for as long as a family needs!

2022 – Grateful for Support, Connection and Healing:

- Met the $25,000 match from Molly Dobson, exceeded our goal and raised over $51,000 with our You Heal Grieving Hearts February 2022 Appeal!
- Trained a new class of committed volunteer facilitators to lead our evening peer grief support groups during Winter 2022.
- Provided guided tours of our healing center allowing community members the opportunity to better understand our mission and how they can support children, teens and their fami-lies who are grieving.
- Launched a NEW communication series – HEARTS of EPA2 – to provide space for our community to share their hearts. Please CLICK HERE to see the HEARTS OF EPA2 webpage.
- Hosted our 5th Annual Derby Day Soirée in May 2022, 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.
- Gathered with our enrolled families and volunteers for our annual "Bubble Release," for the first time at our Home for Healing Hearts. This meaningful event is held every spring on the last night of the program year.

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



- Held our 2nd Annual Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run in June 2022.
  Our community came together wearing walking and running shoes to honor and remember those who have died.

- Hosted three Family Nights during the summer 2022 break. These evenings support enrolled families as they continue to explore their grief, and provides space for them to share their grief and the death of their person(s) together.

- Congratulated the Summer 2022 volunteer training class that included new Support Group Facilitator Volunteers, AND, Activity Room Volunteers, Kitchen Volunteers, Adult Group Clinicians and Therapy Dog Handlers!

- Returned to offering peer grief support groups four nights per program week, with therapy dogs, potluck meals and completely open activity rooms for the children and teens in fall 2022.

- Invited enrolled families to participate in a Remembrance Family Night in October 2022, during Children's Grief Awareness Month. These evenings invited enrolled families to create a candle in remembrance of their person(s) who have died.

- Designed, created and distributed Grief Toolkits to 33 local elementary schools. These toolkits provide useful grief resources to help school clinical staff support their students about understanding the grieving process, coping with death, and how to provide age-specific support to children.

- Hosted our Healing Hearts Society Fundraising Breakfast in October 2022, with a program filled with bravery, courage and hope, as children, teens, families and special guests shared their grief and healing journeys, as well as their Ele's Place stories. Together we raised approximately $235,000 to help sustain the Ele's Place Ann Arbor peer grief support programs.

- The Ele's Place Ann Arbor Team participated in a Diversity, Equity & Inclusion training session in October, to strengthen our commitment to creating a safe and welcoming space that honors all races, ethnicities, gender identities & expressions, sexual orientations, socio-economic backgrounds, ages, religions and abilities.

- Re-engaged with school partners and their students through Ele's Group, our school-based peer grief support groups, providing 14 eight-week peer group sessions during calendar 2022.

We understand that the need for peer grief support will never go away. We also know that peer grief support can have a positive life-long impact on a young person. Children and teens who are grieving benefit from access to a supportive environment and compassion-ate peer-based programming. Thank you for standing by children, teens and their families who are grieving, by standing WITH Ele's Place Ann Arbor. TOGETHER we will continue to meet the critical need for our peer grief support services for years to come.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Bree Arvai
Branch Director
Ele's Place Ann Arbor

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

Jennifer Wolfe Howard, LMSW
President & CEO,
Ele's Place, Inc.



Dear Ele's Place Supporters throughout Michigan,

Thank you for caring about children and teens who are grieving the death of a significant person in their lives. The support of individuals, companies, and partner organizations help ensure that no child or teen will have to grieve alone.

Children and teens are coping with challenges and losses experienced through the pandemic and the grief associated with losing someone close to them. Our program staff and volunteers across the state continue to observe the increased needs of our program participants and rising requests for our services. Michigan is not alone: nationwide, the need for mental health support services is increasing. Community awareness is essential to bringing mental health support to the forefront and ensuring services are available to those who need them.

The Ele's Place team is grateful for our compassionate volunteers who devote their time and energy to creating a safe space for children and teens to process their loss in a peer setting, and learn they are not alone in their grief. We are thankful for our generous donors who continue to stand by us to help ensure our doors are always open.

During the past 32 years, Ele's Place has served over 40,000 grieving children, teens, and their parents/guardians throughout Michigan. Our dedicated staff and volunteers are committed to serving the grieving families in our communities at our Ann Arbor, Flint, Grand Rapids, and Lansing branches through our onsite and school-based peer grief support programs.

As always, we thank our founders, including the entire Stover Family, who continue to honor the memory of their daughter and sister, Ele. Their continued leadership and direct work with program participants are an inspiration!

As you read your local branch's 2022 Impact Report, we hope you feel the same sense of accomplishment that we do in serving families grieving in our community.

With gratitude,

Jennifer Wolfe Howard, LMSW
President & CEO
Ele's Place, Inc.

Total Served in 2022

FAMILY-BASED SUPPORT GROUPS – 464 PEOPLE (261 CHILDREN/TEENS & 203 ADULTS)

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

SCHOOL GROUPS – 105 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. Ele's Place school-based staff con-ducted 11 on-boarding meetings with current or future school partners.

CLINICAL CONSULTATIONS – 554 PEOPLE

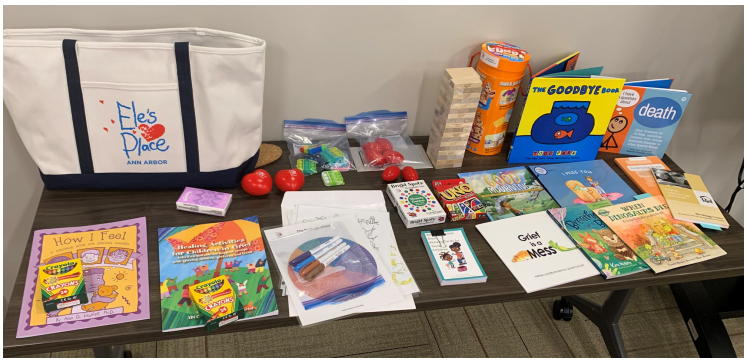
Clinical staff members provide families who are grieving with individual guidance and support upon request. In addition, they assist parents/guardians in helping their chil-dren through the grief process with helpful information, guidance and intake meetings prior to participation in our family-based program. Includes the initial intake appoint-ment for families.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH – 502 PEOPLE

Community awareness presentations, clinical workshops and Tours of the Heart.

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

"For me, going to Ele's Place 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



A sample of one of the 33 Grief Toolkits distributed to local elementary schools, FREE of CHARGE!

2022 Functional Expenses

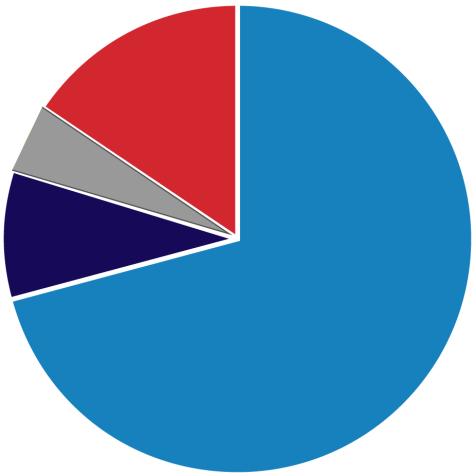
Program: 71%

Fundraising 15%

Administration: 9%

Occupancy: 5%

*Nonprofit industry standards state 70% or more of donor dollars should be spent on programs. Ele's Place Ann Arbor takes great pride in being good stewards of YOUR dollars.





Thompson Reuters Staff helping with clean up at Ele's Place Ann Arbor



A 2022 Derby Day Soiree guest gets into the spirit of the "Run for the Roses!



Community Support of the 2nd Annual Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run

My brother and I started at Ele's Place Ann Arbor soon after our little sister died. We were both in the early elementary group together. At first, I was unsure about attending a grief group because I thought it would feel uncomfortable to share my feelings with people I didn't know well. To my surprise, it was the one place where I actually felt like I belonged during that time. It was comforting to know that the families, volunteer facilitators and staff at Ele's Place understood how I felt. Some kids in our group had a sibling die too so they truly knew what we were experiencing. The early elementary grief group provided the safe space that I needed to work on my grief. Although we had a lot of support from friends, family, and our community, it was at Ele's Place where most of my healing took place."
-Mia, Former Ele's Place Early Elementary Group Participant

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