2023

Ann Arbor

Impact Report

Ele's Place







Bree Arvai
Branch Director
Ele's Place – Ann Arbor



Dear Friends,

I am honored to share with you the significant impact Ele's Place – Ann Arbor has had over the past year. Since 2007, we have dedicated ourselves to providing a safe, compassionate space for grieving children, teens, and their families throughout Ann Arbor and southeast Michigan. We offer a place where young people can find solace, understanding and hope — and most importantly, realize they are not alone.

The importance of our work is underscored by the sobering data from the 2024 Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model report, which estimates that one in 11 children in Michigan will experience the death of a sibling or parent by age 18. This is approximately 201,000 children, a number that more than doubles by age 25. Ele's Place – Ann Arbor is committed to providing the support and resources needed to help young people cope with grief.

In 2023, thanks to the unwavering support of our donors, partners, volunteers, staff and community board members, Ele's Place – Ann Arbor continued to expand our outreach, enhance our programming, and meet the needs of our community — all while remaining to FREE OF CHARGE to all.

Here are some highlights of what we accomplished together in 2023:

- We served 429 children and teens through our on-site and school-based support programs.
- We distributed 20 grief tool kits — tote bags with books for school counselors and students, as well as journals, activities and other resources — removing barriers and providing resources to kids at school.
- More than 120 volunteers donated a total of 6,500 hours to support our programs and services.
- We delivered presentations about Ele's Place and children's grief to more than 467 attendees.
- Our events raised more than $663,000, including our Derby Day Soirée, our Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run, and our inaugural Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Events.
- The community hosted 18 third-party fundraisers, raising more than $73,000 on behalf of Ele's Place.
- And in its third year, our February annual appeal exceeded its goal, raising $58,000 including a $25,000 match from Mark and Amy Blaufuss.

These achievements would not have been possible without the dedication and compassion of each of you. Your support allows us to continue offering hope and healing to grieving children, teens and their families. Together, we are making a significant difference in our community, one heart at a time.

Thank you for being an integral part of the Ele's Place – Ann Arbor family. As we look ahead to the future, we are excited to continue our mission and expand our reach, ensuring that every grieving child and teen in southeast Michigan has access to the support they need.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Bree Arvai
Branch Director, Ele's Place – Ann Arbor

Jennifer Wolfe Howard, LMSW
President/CEO
Ele's Place



Dear Supporters,

Thank you for your interest in the mission of Ele's Place. Betsy and Woody Stover founded our organization in 1991 after the death of their daughter, Helen Louise "Ele" Stover. The idea was simple, but profound: Kids of all ages grieve, and by acknowledging and giving them a safe space to express their grief, we can enable them to effectively move through their healing journeys. At Ele's Place, children and teens have the opportunity to talk to others their age who truly understand what they are going through. They have the space to express their feelings in age-appropriate ways through words, art and play.

At Ele's Place, "all feelings are OK." Because even though there are tears, there is also an abundance of joy and laughter — joy that comes from the connections made here!

Over the past three decades, Ele's Place has established a large footprint in Michigan, proudly serving over 3,100 individuals in 2023 alone. Thanks to the generosity of our volunteers and donors, we have provided grief support services to over 43,000 individuals since we opened our doors.

In 2023, Ele's Place staff and volunteer leadership completed a new strategic plan for the organization, which will serve as our north star through 2026. Our areas of focus will be programs; communications; operational excellence; diversity, equity, and inclusion; and fundraising. This plan is a collaborative effort that will help us on the path toward our vision of ensuring no child or teen in Michigan grieves alone.

We are thankful to each of you — our supporters, advocates, volunteers, donors and friends — for all you do! We would not be here to serve our communities without your passion and generosity. Thank you to Betsy and Woody Stover and family for your vision and for establishing this magical place. Thank you to our families for sharing your hearts and your stories! It is our honor to be a small part of your journeys.

With immense appreciation,

Jennifer Howard, LMSW
President/CEO, Ele's Place

Total Served in 2023

FAMILY-BASED SUPPORT GROUPS – 478 PEOPLE (271 CHILDREN/TEENS & 207 ADULTS)

Family-based programming offered on-site 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 – 158 STUDENTS AT 17 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 conducted three onboarding meetings with current or future school partners.

CLINICAL CONSULTATIONS – 425 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 children through the grief process with helpful information, guidance and intake meetings prior to participation in our family-based program. Includes the initial intake appointment for families.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH – 467 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.

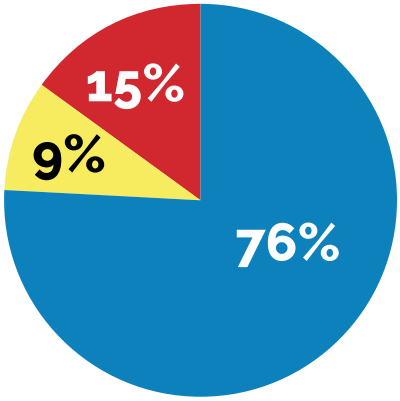
VOLUNTEER HOURS DONATED – 6,500 HOURS

Hours spent each week with our families, 30 weeks per year, not including family nights and events. It take more than 65 volunteers who commit to volunteering every week to run our peer support programs.

> "We started going to Ele's Group after our Uncle Billy died. Because of Ele's Group, we were able to express our feelings easier. It was nice to know we were not alone and learn some new coping skills. Grieving isn't always an easy process. But with the right tools and the right people to help you, it WILL get better."
>
> — Anna and Lily, Former Ele's Group Participants and speakers at our Fall Heartstrings Fundraising Event



2023 Expenses



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

- Program
- Fundraising
- Administration

You Are the Heart of Ele's Place – Ann Arbor









Clockwise from top left: Attendees bid in the Wager Raffle at our sixth annual Derby Day Soirée; our inaugural Fall Hearstrings Fundraising Events offered tours and a chance to learn about our mission; volunteers from AdAdapted, Inc. work on special messages and heart-themed supplies for our evening programs; Ele's Place Founder Betsy Stover leads our annual Healing Hearts Family 5K Walk/Run.

Want to get involved? We are in need of Program Volunteers, Sponsors, Community Board Members and more. Whether you give your time, treasure or talent, we welcome your support of Ele's Place! Learn more at elesplace.org/about/get-involved/how-can-i-help.

Thank You to Our Community Sponsors

AF Group
DELTA DENTAL
JACKSON
A2 HOSTING
OUR SPEED, YOUR SUCCESS
ADVENTURE CREDIT UNION
Auto-Owners INSURANCE
BOMA Mid-Michigan
BOUMA CORPORATION
CAPITAL STEEL & WIRE, INC.
CHRISTMAN BUILDING SINCE 1894
ComericA Bank
Corewell Health
COUPON CABIN
More cash back. Faster payments.
Custom Built Design & Remodeling
Delta Waverly Rotary Club
Dewpoint
Bringing Business and Technology Together
DIVERSIFIED NATIONAL TITLE AGENCY
ACRISURE® PARTNER
Domino's
Edward Jones
EastbrookHOMES
FARM BUREAU INSURANCE
Michigan's Insurance Company
FIFTH THIRD BANK
FOX 17
GRAFF Okemos
GUN LAKE CASINO
HAP CareSource
HONORABLE ORDER OF THE BLUE GOOSE INTERNATIONAL
HIGH CALIBER
KARTING AND ENTERTAINMENT
inovalon
healthcare empowered
JUNGLE JANE PROMOTIONS
kw KELLERWILLIAMS
the SELLING team
McLaren GREATER LANSING
meijer
Mercantile Bank
MioTECH ORTHOPEDIC GROUP
msufcu
MSU FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
NEW HOLLAND BREWING CO
OLD NATIONAL BANK
MICHELLE PESONEN
heal • manifest • flourish
RATHBUN INSURANCE
Rehmann
Retirement Income Solutions
S.A. Morman & Co.
StanCraft
Wooden Boats
Stones of God's Grace
Fred & Sue Sievert
stryker
THOMSON REUTERS
Trinity Health
Vos glass
ARCHITECTURAL METALS

Ele's Place

INCLUSION • DIVERSITY • EQUITY

Ele's Place – Ann Arbor
5665 Hines Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48108
734-929-6640 | elesplace.org

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