

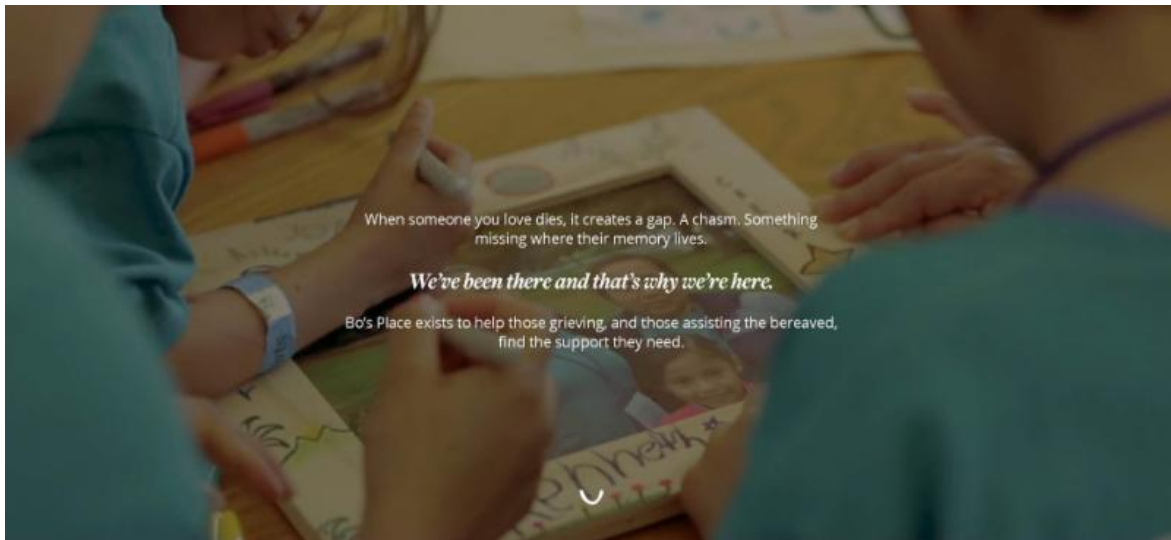
Healing Hearts



Bo's Place

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Visit the new
bosplace.org



One year ago, we began the journey of re-launching our website. After seeking input from the families we serve, colleagues in our field, our staff, volunteers, and many experts, we developed a solid vision of what we wanted to achieve: to provide an immediate resource for anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one.

And, we have done just that. From the visible "Contact us" buttons throughout the site that allow a user to request information at various touch points, to the plethora of support resources in the Resource Library, a visitor to our website

will leave the site with grief and bereavement information and resources and the ability to reach out directly to Bo's Place for additional support.

We also wanted to provide resources in Spanish for those in our community who are more comfortable in their native language and to enhance our Spanish-language programs that we continue to grow and foster. Our website now provides both program information and downloadable resources in Spanish.

Finally, we wanted to capture the "feel" of Bo's Place. If you've been to Bo's Place, you have experienced that sense of comfort and hope that the facility itself provides. Making a computer screen as welcoming as a quiet room with comfy chairs and the security and freedom to talk about the death of a loved one is no small task.

With that goal in mind, the amazing team at Primer Grey accomplished this. From the moment we partnered with them, they immersed themselves in learning everything they could about Bo's Place. It's clear they "get it" because they have helped us exceed our goals with this site. Thank you to Chris, Carra, Francois, and the many others at Primer Grey who turned our vision into a reality.

This website wouldn't be possible without the generous financial support of Houston Endowment, who recognized that this was a transformational project that would enable Bo's Place to expand access to grief resources for the bereaved in our community. On behalf of all of those grieving the death of a loved one, and all of those who are supporting a bereaved person, we thank you.

So with much gratitude and excitement, we are pleased to introduce the **transformational** new bosplace.org!



Back to School and Grief

For many kids, the first day of school is wrought with a combination of excitement and anxiety. But for those who have recently lost a loved one, starting a new school year may

bring added grief stressors. While the routine and social aspect of school is sure to be helpful, those who are grieving will face new challenges, many of which can be eased with a little planning.

The first goal is to help make sure your child feels safe and secure. Losing a loved one can make the world seem scary and random, so ensuring a good support system is in place at school can help ease your child's transition. You may want to contact the principal, your child's teacher, and the school counselor to let them know about your loss. If possible, set up face-to-face meetings with your child's teachers and the school counselor so that you can let them know more about your child and discuss any concerns you may have. While some kids may not want to be singled out in this way, let your child know that it will be important to have a few adults at school who know about the death so that they can help if necessary.

Here are a few more tips on how you can help your child get ready for school after a loss:

- *Start preparing a few weeks out.* While the structure and routine of school will likely be a welcome break for the whole family, going back to school is a change and most kids do best when they know what to expect. Start preparing your child a few weeks in advance for the new schedule by letting them know the who, what, when, where and how.
- *Ask so you don't assume.* Ask your child how they are feeling about going back to school, but try not to ask leading questions such as "are you afraid to go back...?". If your child is not talking about it, watch for non-verbal cues such as changes in eating or sleeping habits. These non-verbal cues may indicate there is some anxiety that could be explored.
- *Find an answer for "What did you do this summer?"* Most kids will start the school year with this question so you may want to talk to your child about how they want to answer. This question may also open the door for discussing how to answer friends, teachers and acquaintances about their loss. Preparing your child with as little or as much detail as they want can help limit their anxiety and distress.
- *Have a grief plan.* If your child becomes overwhelmed with feelings of anger or sadness, let them know who they can talk to at school. Additionally, a small memento or reminder that they can carry in their backpack or keep in their locker may provide comfort when they're feeling down.
- *Remember that grief is physical.* Recently bereaved children often struggle in school because they find it more difficult to concentrate, retain information, and follow through on tasks. You may also notice that your child is more tired than normal and has less energy. You can help by breaking bigger tasks down into smaller tasks and encouraging them to take frequent breaks. Further, let your child know that these obstacles are likely only temporary and will get better as the year

progresses.

Lastly, give your child, and maybe even yourself, permission to be excited about the start of school. It's an exciting time with a lot to look forward to. Remind your child that it is normal to be happy and encourage them to have fun, even though they may be missing their loved one.



Bluebonnet Council

Grief centers from around Texas met at Bo's Place on Friday, July 15, for the annual Bluebonnet Council meeting. Director of the University of Texas Health Science Trauma and Grief Center for Youth, Julie B. Kaplow, Ph.D., A.B.P.P., and her research partner, Christopher M. Layne, Ph.D., began the day by presenting their theory on multi-dimensional grief and different factors that help encourage adaptive grief responses in children. Attendees then discussed current challenges and best practices in working with bereaved families. In the afternoon, Megan Lopez, Program Director for the National Alliance for Grieving Children (NAGC) gave an update on the NAGC's projects for 2016, then council members attended breakout sessions that covered topics such as recruiting and retaining volunteers, providing relevant programming, and non-profit management.



We were happy to host our colleagues from Austin (The Christi Center, My Healing Place, Wonders & Worries), College Station (Mending Hearts Grief Center), San Antonio (The Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas) and the Rio Grande Valley (Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas of the Rio Grande Valley) and look forward to the 2017 Bluebonnet Council meeting, which will be held in San Antonio.



Gift Card Drive!

Bo's Place is in need of \$20 gift cards for Target! Bo's Place is participating in research to better understand how children grieve and the effectiveness of grief support programs. We provide families who participate in the research with a \$20 gift card to Target in appreciation of their willingness to take the time to help us with this research. Your donation will go directly to families receiving support at Bo's Place!



Save the Date!

Hearts of Hope Chairmen, **Susan and David Light, IV** and **Leslie and Randy Newcomer** are excited to announce the 20th annual Hearts of Hope Luncheon will take place on Thursday, January 26, 2017 at the Hilton Americas - Houston. Plan to join us to as we honor **Susan Harvin Lawhon** with the Robin Bush Award and special guest speaker, **Dr. Lucy Kalanithi**, who helped finish and posthumously publish her husband's book, *When Breath Becomes Air*, a memoir started when Dr. Paul Kalanithi received his cancer diagnosis.

For more information about the event, please contact Andrea Sivells, Development Director, at andrea@bosplace.org or 713-942-8339.



ExxonMobil Internship

ExxonMobil, in partnership with Volunteer Houston, funded 70 internships for undergraduate students in nonprofits throughout the Greater Houston area this summer. These students come with various expertise, majors and passions. Bo's Place ExxonMobil Grief Outreach and Special Programs Intern, Sarah Jacobson, and a group of fellow summer interns have been working hard on many projects that will be crucial to Bo's Place during the next year. So far this summer, the intern team developed a social media campaign for National Children's Grief Awareness Day, prepared for and staffed our Summer Fun programs for families, created a six-month social media plan, inventoried our

Pi Beta Phi Lending Library and developed "Healing Hearts" book bags for designated schools that have reached out to Bo's Place for grief support resources. They also spent time at Bo's Place on smaller projects like bulletin boards, ongoing group activities, camp preparation, and assisting in the 3 to 4 year-old Little Friends support group. Thank you to Sarah Jacobson and the rest of the summer intern team - Taylor Bookstaff, Jordan Goldberg, Saif Thobhani, and Lindsey White - for a job well done!



Una Notte in Italia

Tickets and tables are selling quickly for the annual "Una Notte in Italia" (A Night in Italy) which will be held on Friday, November 4, 7:00 P.M. at the Royal Sonesta. As in years past, guests will enjoy fine Italian cuisine and wine, a live and silent auction, and late night dancing with a premiere

tequila bar. The highlight of the evening is the men's fashion show presented by Festari for Men featuring local businessmen and athletes.

Please contact Andrea Sivells at andrea@bosplace.org or 713-942-8339 ext. 123 to reserve your spot!



"It's hard to get the sand of Bo's Place out of your shoes."

Not everyone has the capacity to walk in the shoes of a Bo's Place volunteer facilitator, to share the grief of bereaved children, teens and adults and to offer to companion them with hope as the grief process works to heal their hearts. Those

that do become facilitators have shared that the experience of being a volunteer facilitator in Bo's Place grief support groups is very impactful and rewarding, one that stays with you in powerful ways. As one volunteer



facilitator said "It's hard to get the sand of Bo's Place out of your shoes."

If you or a friend or colleague would like to become a part of this very meaningful and unique volunteer opportunity, please contact Carla Bagalay, Volunteer Coordinator, at carla@bosplace.org or 713-942-8339 for more information and to register for our upcoming Volunteer Facilitator Training on August 27 through 28, 2016. You can also learn more [here](#).

"Bo's Place has taught me how amazing the human heart can be. The strength of the families at Bo's Place has encouraged me to continue volunteering and to give back." -Kim Vu, Bo's Place Facilitator since 2008



Get Social with Team Bo's Place



This year's Team Bo's Place kick-off party will be held at The Dunlavy on Wednesday, August 31, 2016 from 6 to 8pm! This will be your chance to sign up for Team Bo's Place and to run the ABB 5k, Aramco Houston Half or Chevron Houston Full Marathon, meet other team members, and find out some exciting plans for the year! Plan to join us for the celebration. Family and friends are welcome.

Please let us know if you will be attending by sending your RSVP to marathon@bosplace.org.



Happenings



On July 13, Betsy Asad and Mary Claire Crain presented a check to Bo's Place from **First Baptist Church**. "Because you have been identified as a difference-making organization, please accept this check with our appreciation for the amazing effort you are making in our city, causing it to be a better place for all of us to live, work and raise families." -Pastor Gregg Matte!

On July 17, **University of Houston Career Services** staff members visited Bo's Place to provide our summer interns with a group and individual professional development meeting. The interns even got a chance to practice their Bo's Place tour!



Grief is Messy... messy emotions, messy thoughts, messy changes. On July 20, children from our grief support groups explored and expressed all of the "messy" that grief entails with creative writing, bubbles, watermelon explosions, and water bombs. Thank you to **Scholastic's Alliance for Young Artists & Writers** for providing the creative writing component of our evening with a grant funded by the **New York Life Foundation**.

Healthy families create healthy environments for grieving. At Bo's Place, we offer programs that allow our families to bond in fun and safe ways with each other. On July 22, Bo's Place families dressed up for a **Pajama Party** and watched *Inside Out* while popcorn overflowed the room!



LIFE & DEATH

LET'S TALK ABOUT IT.

On July 29 and 30, the Pedi Hope Conference hosted hundreds of palliative care workers in southeast Houston. Program Director, Marian Mankin, gave a presentation entitled *Understanding Children who are Bereaved* and Bo's Place exhibited our traveling photography exhibit ***Life & Death...Let's Talk About It***. See the video exhibit [here](#).



Bo's Place Grief Support Services

At Bo's Place, we believe that enabling grieving families to share their experiences with each other helps these families navigate the grief journey and move towards hope and healing. We offer free Grief Support Groups in English and Spanish to families and individuals.

If you or someone you know would like information about Bo's Place Grief Support Groups for children, families, and adults, [click here](#) or call 713.942.8339.

Bo's Place exists to enhance the lives of those who have experienced the death of a loved one.

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