

Healing Hearts



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CHILDREN'S GRIEF AWARENESS MONTH

Bo's Place
where hearts are healed.

The best way to support children is
to just BE with them.

Every year on the third Thursday in November, Bo's Place proudly observes Children's Grief Awareness Day. Bereaved children are often referred to as the forgotten grievers. Many feel isolated in their grief and are unaware that they are not alone. Children's Grief Awareness Day, which will be observed this year on November 16, is an opportunity for our community to show children that they are not forgotten - that there are people who care. Through that support, hope and healing can be found.

We invite you to participate with us in raising awareness of children's grief by wearing blue on Thursday, November 16. As a show of support for Children's Grief Awareness, take a picture with your colleagues and friends with a sign "*No child should ever have to grieve alone*" and post it on social media. Tag Bo's Place and use the hashtags #bosknowsgrief #helphealhearts #heartforchildren

Thank you for supporting this Children's Grief Awareness initiative. Together we

can raise awareness of the needs of grieving children and ensure that no child should ever have to grieve alone.



Sponsor a meal this holiday season!

For many of our Bo's Place families, this will be the first holiday without a loved one. We know that the holidays can be a particularly difficult time for bereaved families, so Bo's Place has traditionally coordinated with community organizations and individuals to sponsor at least one holiday meal for each support group in November and December.



This year, as we continue to support our families in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, we are increasing our challenge to provide a meal for every grief support group both at the Buffalo Speedway location and in Katy, throughout the holiday season. We still have several spots available, so please contact Carla Bagalay at 713-942-8339 or carla@bosplace.org if you would like to provide a holiday meal for the families at Bo's Place.

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Volunteer Spotlight: Leena Koottungal

Over ten years ago, Leena Koottungal packed up her car and headed across the country to Texas, where she knew virtually no one. Her spontaneous decision has led to a life pursuing her varied interests - like attending art events, trying new restaurants, traveling to beach destinations, writing, listening to 80's hair metal bands, and volunteering at Bo's Place.

Leena has been a writer for technical journals and authored a book, so it's not surprising that it was a book that led her to Bo's Place. While reading about the experience of the death of a sibling, she came across a list of organizations hosting grief support



groups, and found a listing for a children's bereavement center in Houston. Leena was three years old when her brother died of brain cancer. She shared that she wishes there had been a program like Bo's Place for her family, who never really received the support they needed following her brother's death. Leena said "Since it happened in my personal life, I feel a connection. For my family, it is something they will carry with them forever. In some way, through my volunteer work, I feel I am helping them too."

For the past 10 years, Leena has volunteered in the kitchen on Monday nights and has been a strong proponent of ensuring the families receive a hot meal when they arrive for group. Her favorite part of volunteering in the kitchen is greeting the families and creating a warm space for them to come together. "I love being a part of the healing process, supporting this place where they can share their stories, and not feel so alone."

Leena's fellow volunteers feel the same way about her: Carolie Martin shared "She always pitches in, is so personable, and has a great sense of humor. She is a joy to work with, and makes working as a volunteer fun." Bo's Place Volunteer Coordinator Carla Bagalay says "Leena has been an avid supporter of the warm meals for families tradition. Her keen sense of humor is a great asset among the five Monday Kitchen Volunteers." Leena is an inspiration to many who know her, and she credits her daily practice of reading the following quote from Marcus Aurelius: "When you arise in the morning, think of what a precious privilege it is to be alive-to breathe, to think, to enjoy, to love."

We hope to enjoy another decade of Leena's joyful presence here at Bo's Place and thank her for her incredible commitment to our families and our mission.



Our annual Hearts of Hope Luncheon is just three months away! We hope you will purchase tickets or a table and join our Co-Chairmen, Lauren Hamner and Eloise Novotny, on February 15, 2018 at the Royal Sonesta.



Bo's Place will honor Rahul Mehta with the Robin Bush

Award, which is given each year at the luncheon to an individual who has made a marked difference in the lives of children in our community. The program will also include a presentation from former NFL Quarterback Brian Griese and his wife, Dr. Brook Griese. Together they founded Judi's House, a grief center for children in Denver. Like Bo's Place, they are invested in providing grief support for those who may otherwise lack access to the support they need.

We need your help to make this a sell-out event! Your support of our annual

luncheon enables Bo's Place to provide grief support services to children and families at no cost. Please contact Rina Ocampo at 713-942-8339 or Rina@Bosplace.org to make your reservation today.

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Save the date for the second annual Hats, Hearts and Horseshoes on **Saturday, May 5, 2018!** Event Chairmen **Megan and Luke Hotze** and **Hannah and Cal McNair** will be at the reigns again for what is sure to be a fun afternoon on the lawn with mint juleps, tasty bites and a live viewing of the "Run for the Roses". Plan to join our Chairmen and Honorary Chairs, **Jennifer and Richard Hancock** and **Jade and David Shine**, for the best Derby party outside of Churchill Downs.

Last year was a sell out, so make your plans now to join us. Learn more below.

TICKET INFORMATION



Run for a Reason... Run for Bo's Place

Are you signed up for the 2018 Chevron Houston Marathon or Aramco Houston Half Marathon? It's not too late to join Team Bo's Place and run for a reason!

Secure your spot today by [Fundraising for Registration](#) or by purchasing a [HERO](#) entry. Once you raise or donate money for your slot, you will receive a host of benefits that include a custom back bib, tech cap, pass for pre-race private indoor restrooms and more! Bo's Place provides each of our runners a team running shirt, a pre-race pancake celebration, group training runs and many other meaningful motivators along the way.



Join Team Bo's Place or donate to a runner today and help us as we race toward our goal of raising over \$90,000! To learn more:

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Happenings

On September 14, Bo's Place staff members volunteered at NRG to aid in **Harvey relief** efforts.



SpawGlass Construction held its annual Fishing Tournament in memory of C.J. Strnadel IV in late June. Bo's Place was honored to be selected as a beneficiary for the event. On October 4, we gathered with C.J.'s friends and family to celebrate his memory, and Bo's Place received a \$40,000 donation made possible by the wonderful event supporters, SpawGlass, and friends and family. Thank you!

Mental Health America of Greater Houston hosted the **2nd annual Center for School Behavioral Health Conference** on October 13. Katy Program Manager Lori Bokone presented "Bo's Place: Understanding and Supporting Grieving Students." We provided attendees with a school support plan to use as a guide when supporting grieving students. We also gave each participant a copy of

After the Storm, which was generously donated by Centering Corporation to be a resource for other service providers.



On October 26 and 28, over fifty volunteers attended **Camp Healing Hearts Training** in order to learn more about the camp process and how to support bereaved families. We can't wait for camp!



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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