

Healing Hearts



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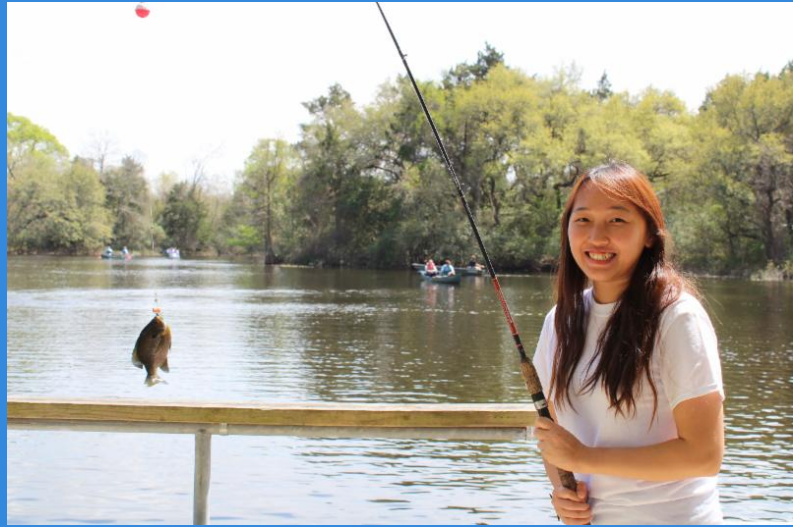
Family Camp Weekend - "Amazing", "Extraordinary", "Rejuvenating" and more!

Bo's Place families returned from a weekend at Camp Healing Hearts and Retiro Sanando Corazones having acquired new healthy coping skills and a strengthened support system. They reported being better able to communicate their thoughts, feelings and memories of the person who died and better able to build a meaningful connection to their deceased loved one. Most of all, they shared having an increased sense of the possibility for a future in which they will once again experience happiness and joy.



The theme this year for Camp Healing Hearts and Retiro Sanando Corazones was Treasure Island. Camp activities focused on how, after being shipwrecked by grief, family members can find ways to support each other, experience personal growth

and explore new possibilities. In addition to the grief related and camp specific activities which have become a tradition at our family camps, campers participated in "theme" related games and activities. For example, they played Peg Leg, a relay race with a plastic baseball bat tied to a camper's leg requiring campers to lean on their cabin mates for support. They also participated in a creative writing exercise to describe their ideal "supportive shipmate" for their grief journey.



Fine-tuning our nighttime camp rituals, we added a new activity called "Niño Time" for the youngest children attending Retiro Sanando Corazones. While their parents/guardians participated in "Talking Tables", facilitated conversation on topics related to the grief journey, and their teen siblings participated in team building activities, the younger children had a special place to play foosball and other games before joining their family members back in their retreat centers for bedtime. Another new activity was the "Box of Love". Throughout the camp weekend, markers and colorful paper were available for campers to write messages to their person who died. Messages left during camp included:

"How's the view up top?"

"Dad, I'm going fishing!"

"I wish you could see camp."



"Don't worry, we remember you all weekend sweetheart."

Thank you to everyone who helped make our family camp weekend a success. A huge thank you to the Hamill Foundation for making this extraordinary family camp weekend, in which we run two camps simultaneously, possible!



Bibliotherapy in Practice

At Bo's Place, most support groups for younger children begin with reading a book together. We find the practice of reading carefully selected books to bereaved children helpful for a variety of reasons including that it can:

- Enable children to see examples of others who have had similar experiences, reinforcing that they are not alone;
- Provide an opportunity to discuss ways in which a character's situation and reactions are the same as or different from their own, helping them validate their own thoughts and feelings and helping them recognize that not everyone grieves in the same way and that there is no right or wrong way to grieve; and
- Offer children a model for and insight into ways to learn, grow and persevere under adverse circumstances as they see how the book characters respond to the challenges they face.

During the curriculum development and planning process for a Bo's Place support group, themes are identified and books that relate to those themes are selected from the Phi Beta Pi Resource Library. Examples of themes that align with our Trauma and Ongoing Family Group curriculums include: understanding and accepting death, emotions (such as anger, worries, fears), continuing bonds, telling your story, personal growth/meaning making and support systems. Our children's support groups typically begin with a time for each group member to check-in, followed by the reading of a book. Facilitated by the volunteer facilitators in their group, children then discuss select questions related to the book, share their own feelings and/or reactions to the story, and explore commonalities and differences between themselves and the book's characters. Children then have the opportunity to participate in an activity based on the theme that incorporates arts and crafts,

music and/or physical activity.

Bo's Place is very fortunate to have the Phi Beta Pi Resource Library as a resource for our clinicians and the Pi Beta Phi Lending Library as a resource for our families. Books in the Lending Library are available to be checked out by current Bo's Place families. For a short list of age appropriate books used in our programming, please visit our website:

RESOURCE LIBRARY



Volunteer Spotlight: Terez Hanhan

Although many people would not intentionally seek out a volunteer opportunity related to grief and trauma, the experience of living in New York during 9/11 informed that decision for Terez Hanhan. As she shared her varied life experiences, it became apparent how much our history impacts the choices we make in our daily lives. Living through the aftermath of 9/11, combined with the unexpected death of a friend's spouse, showed her the need for compassionate grief support. Terez describes her volunteer work at Bo's Place as an incredible chance to connect with others, which isn't always available in other volunteer opportunities, where she always felt "one step removed from helping." She sought that personal interaction with families, the knowledge that she was truly making a difference in people's lives.



Since 2014, Terez has been doing just that, volunteering as a support group facilitator for various age groups across different programs at Bo's Place. She has facilitated Little Friends groups, for our 3 to 5 year old participants, as well as LIGHT, for families who have experienced a sudden or traumatic death, among others. A favorite memory includes her experience as a camp counselor, where she supported a cabin of young boys. With three sons of her own, she was in her element at Camp Healing Hearts, and reflects with deep gratitude the privilege of witnessing the joy that camp can bring for our group members. With her years of experience, when asked what advice she would give to facilitators just starting out, she replied "Enjoy your time, be in the moment. Really listen. And don't give advice." The role of facilitator is often a challenging one, and people will often remark to her "I could never do that, it must be so depressing!" But it isn't, to Terez. She tells them: "Bo's Place is an incredible place where families can come to be around others, with no judgement, and feel a moment of peace."

As a child, Terez was fascinated with weather, and her dream growing up was to become a broadcast meteorologist. Although she went on to study Broadcast

Journalism at the University of Texas, she focused on writing and worked in public relations for a Wall Street firm in New York. But she admits that after all these years, she's still a weather junkie! Other loves include: binge-watching shows on Netflix, True Crime podcasts, and of course, being a mom to her three boys: Jacob, Andrew, and Michael. She has weathered many storms herself through the years, and we are so grateful she is here to help the families of Bo's Place do the same with her gentle compassion and warmth.



A KENTUCKY DERBY AFFAIR | BENEFITING BO'S PLACE

Saturday, May 5, 2018 | 4:00PM

AT A PRIVATE ESTATE IN RIVER OAKS

Invitations are arriving in homes, stylish ensembles are being envisioned, and we are looking forward to holding what is certain to be a sell-out event: Hats, Hearts & Horseshoes on Saturday, May 5!

Don't miss this "Run for the Roses" Derby party in a lively alfresco setting with mint juleps, all while showing off your finest hats or bowties to snag bragging rights for best dressed. It's more than just fun; this special event raises funds that enable Bo's Place to provide grief support to our families at no cost.

Reserve your spot today or contact [Andrea Sivells](#) for more information or to be added to our mailing list!

RESERVE YOUR SPOT





Training for professionals to support grieving children

Although Bo's Place may be best known for our grief support programs, another priority and critical part of our programming is community education. As staff members at Bo's Place, we recognize the importance of engaging and supporting our larger community in efforts to support grieving children in Houston and the surrounding areas. Although we provided grief support groups to over 1,300 individuals last year and responded to over 2,200 inquiries to

our Information and Referral Line, no one person or organization can reach all of those impacted by death. As a community, in addition to relying on organizations who provide grief and bereavement related services, we rely heavily on the teachers, counselors, and social service providers who interact with bereaved families on a daily basis. To help equip these professionals with the necessary tools to work with bereaved families, we offer *Good Grief: Understanding and Supporting the Bereaved*, a full-day training focused on the factors that impact an individual's grief journey and various therapeutic elements that promote growth along that path.

So often when we speak with professionals who work with children, they feel ill-equipped to offer the support needed when a child is grieving. It is common to feel uncomfortable with the painful emotions being expressed by the child and therefore common to seek a better understanding of the normal grief reactions for children at certain developmental stages. Through *Good Grief*, participants are able to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to encourage healing after a loved one has died.

If you are interested in learning more about children's grief, please consider attending our next workshop:

Good Grief: Understanding and Supporting the Bereaved

Friday, May 11, 2018

9:00am to 3:30pm

Bo's Place Training Room

CEUs available for social workers and professional counselors

REGISTER NOW





Join Bo's Buddies for Yoga & Bubbles! After class, enjoy mimosas, browse the silent auction, and receive discounts on food and drinks!

Yoga & Bubbles

Saturday, April 21, 2018

10:00 a.m.

Wicklow Heights

PURCHASE TICKETS



Happenings

Thank you to **Tootsies** for hosting our Hats, Hearts & Horseshoes kick-off party on March 1! Guests enjoyed a runway show, sips and lite bites and a portion of sales were donated to Bo's Place.





Bo's Place celebrated with other "**Run for a Reason**" charities on March 5 where, for the third consecutive year, we took honors for the "**Top Sidewalk Squad Charity**". We're looking forward to race weekend in 2019!

Bo's Place was fortunate to be the beneficiary of the **Hucking For Laura** tournament hosted by the Houston Ultimate Community on March 10. A group of Houston Ultimate players also visited Bo's Place to provide and serve dinner and lend their frisbee skills to our families!



On March 19, volunteers from **St. Martin's Episcopal Church** served a festive Easter dinner for families, complete with table decorations and balloons to give a festive feel!

Members of **St. John the Divine** hosted a delicious meal for families to usher in

the spring on March 20!



The **Houston Police Department** stopped by to drop off books for our Blackout Poetry activity on March 22. Thanks to Officer Johanna Abad and her team in the Public Affairs office.



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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