

Healing Hearts



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How to Make it through the Holidays when You Are Grieving

Many families have an empty chair at the table for Thanksgiving and the holidays. For some, this is the first holiday after a family member's death. How many times have we heard someone ask, "how are we supposed to celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanza without my mother, father, son, or daughter, brother or sister, or other family member after their death?" Or "the holidays were their favorite time of year, and they did all of the cooking or decorating or shopping for gifts." It can feel isolating and draining when everyone around you seems to be excited and looking forward to the holidays. It can be hard to smile and pretend to be joyous when celebrating is the last thing you feel like doing.



Taking time to process your feelings and starting a conversation about the holidays can be a helpful way to acknowledge and prepare ahead of time for those special days. Being intentional and allowing other family members to share and consider each other's ideas and wishes can help grieving families get through the holidays. Being gentle with yourself and each other may allow family members to grieve in their own way and time. Some may read a favorite book, watch a favorite movie, fix a favorite meal, or eat at a favorite restaurant. Holiday celebrations can be big or small, and a little preparation or planning ahead of time can make them a little brighter.

Bo's Place offers a handout (in English and Spanish) with ideas for the holidays and wishes you all the best on your grief journey during the holiday season.

Helping Grieving Families through the Holidays

Ayudando a Familias En Duelo Durante los Días Festivos



Giving Thanks to our November Holiday Meal Sponsors

It is a long-standing tradition at Bo's Place for groups

and individuals to sponsor meals for our support groups during the holiday season, which can be an especially difficult time for bereaved families. Meal sponsors provide and help serve a special meal and give our families a break from the usual potluck-style meals. Thank you so much to The Junior League of Houston, Inc., Professional Pool Supply, the Monday Morning Bible Study Group, Eventellect, and Fred Marshall for your generous support and delicious feasts during the month of November!



Volunteer Spotlight: Jade Waddy

Jade Waddy's dad died when she was 10 years old and not long after that, her mom learned about Bo's Place through their church newsletter. She and her mom began attending Bo's Place in 1997 and remained in the program for about two years.

At the time, Jade felt very isolated as a child whose parent had died. At Bo's Place, she was able to meet friends and not feel alone during her grief journey. Jade shared that "the facilitators helped me to process my emotions and let me know crying, anger, frustration and all of the things I was feeling were okay."

One of Jade's most memorable experiences as a group participant was the activity where everyone created a memory box of their loved one. Jade still has her box for her dad.

These experiences have made Jade so thankful for Bo's Place. So much so that, after graduating from college, Jade explored volunteer opportunities at Bo's Place and began working with Bo's Buddies, hosting fundraising events. Today, Jade serves as a Hospitality Volunteer for Bo's Place.



When reflecting on her volunteer work at Bo's Place, Jade says that "death is one thing we have all likely experienced in some form. During those moments while we are grieving, the best thing we can do for another person is provide a warm smile and support them. Although volunteering in the kitchen seems small, I've been on the other side of that effort and it truly means a lot."

It certainly does mean a lot. Thank you, Jade, for all you do to help heal hearts at Bo's Place!



2024 Hearts of Hope Special Guest Speaker: Kreis Beall

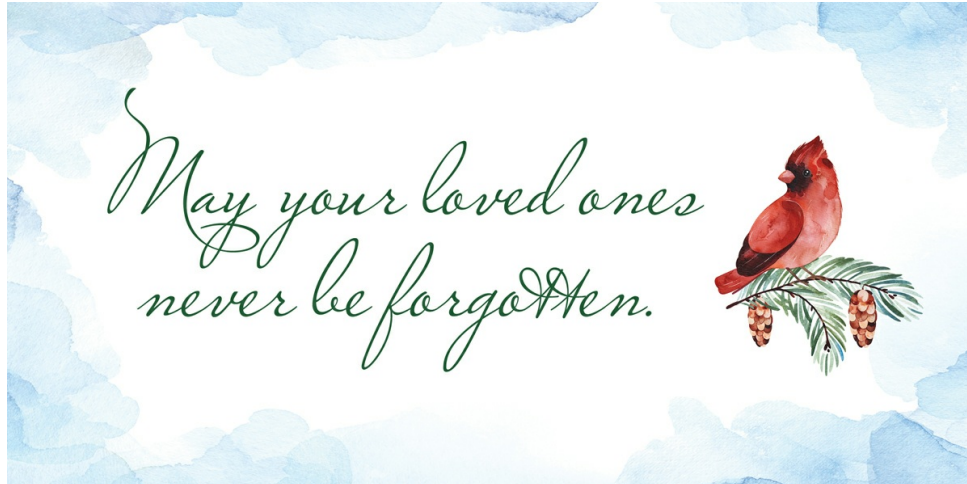
Please join us at the annual Hearts of Hope Luncheon on Wednesday, February 7, 2024 to hear from special guest speaker Kreis Beall. Born with the gift of hospitality, Kreis helped create one of the nation's most renowned destinations, Blackberry Farm, nestled in the Great Smoky Mountains of Tennessee. For decades, she was a fixture in the travel and entertaining world, and frequently appeared in magazines. But at the pinnacle of her success, Kreis faced a series of challenges that reframed her life. Her beloved home burned to the ground, she experienced a brain injury that permanently impaired her hearing, and her 36-year marriage to her best friend and business partner ended. Then, tragically, her eldest son, the young father of 5, died in a skiing accident. Kreis will share her story of what it takes to redefine life after deep loss, a journey she documented in her memoir, *The Great Blue Hills of God*.



Be a part of the 2024 Hearts of Hope Luncheon and help Bo's Place provide support and resources for bereaved children and families at a time when they need it most. For more information, please contact Rachel Daniels at heartsofhope@bosplace.org.



'Tis the Season for Giving



As we near the end of 2023, we want to thank all of our donors who support the mission of Bo's Place. You are the reason Bo's Place can continue to provide grief support services to families at no charge and ensure no one has to grieve alone.

Please consider a donation to our Annual Giving campaign. Your donation of any size will allow us to continue to enhance the lives of those who have experienced the death of a loved one.

[Give Now](#)



Kendra Scott Gives Back

We are pleased to announce a special opportunity to support Bo's Place and check a few items off your holiday shopping list at the same time!

Kendra Scott at the Towne Lake Boardwalk in Cypress is hosting Bo's Place on **Sunday, December 10** from **2:00 – 4:00 pm**.



20% of all proceeds during this time will be donated back to Bo's Place. Great news for those of you who can't make it – you can still participate by shopping online from December 9 through December 10 at KendraScott.com using the **code GIVEBACK-FCYSX**. We hope to see you there!

[View Invitation](#)



Happenings

On November 3, Arlette Rodriguez, LMSW and Lori Bokone, M.Ed., LPC, Bo's Place School Program Managers, co-presented **"Good Grief for School Professionals"** online. Sixty-one school professionals attended and learned how to support bereaved students more effectively.



On November 3, Marian Mankin, LCSW-S, Bo's Place Program Director, presented "Understanding and Supporting Grieving Students" at an all-staff gathering for **Communities In Schools of Houston**.



On November 4, Bo's Place attended the **Houston Marathon Kickoff Series Finale** event at Memorial Park. Runners who visited the Bo's Place tent had the opportunity to learn more about our team and participate in a fun guessing game.



On November 5, Thomas Howard and his self-assembled crew spent the afternoon at Bo's Place completing his Eagle Scout project. They built a fantastic cabinet for use in our school groups storage space, and also planted a garden to create a screen along the fence. We are so appreciative of Thomas for his generosity of time and talent to help beautiful Bo's Place.



Bo's Place received a special \$50,000 gift from **SpawGlass** on November 17 as one of the recipient charities the of the CJ Strnadel IV Memorial Fishing Tournament. Since 2015, SpawGlass has contributed over \$300,000 to Bo's Place from proceeds of this annual memorial fishing tournament. We thank this extraordinary team from SpawGlass for their generosity and support of Bo's Place and the bereaved children and families that we serve.



Dianne Baek, LMSW and Julie Hogg, LMSW, both Bo's Place Clinicians, attended the **HISD Wraparound**

Service Provider Fair on November 7, where they spoke to over 200 attendees about Bo's Place. It was moving to have so many people come by to thank Bo's Place for being there for their friends, families, or for themselves after the death of a loved one.



Volunteer facilitators gathered together on November 16 for an **Advanced Facilitator Training** focused on teaching techniques for using Bo's Place Activity Room activities.



On November 26, twenty-eight members from **The National Charity League Heart of Texas Class of 2028** chapter decorated the Bo's Place building for the holidays.



Bo's Place Grief Support Services

At Bo's Place, we believe that grieving families heal when they share their experiences with each other. 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.



Bo's Place | 10050 Buffalo Speedway, Houston, TX 77054

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