

# Healing Hearts



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## A Note from Jennifer...

This week I had the opportunity to spend some time with some of the nearest and dearest friends of Bo's Place. They shared memories of the early years, and I got a glimpse into a little bit more of the magic of Bo's Place. It's the people that make this place so special. I shared with them a story of a recent opportunity I had to enjoy an exquisite meal prepared by one of my favorite chefs. As my friends and I enjoyed each course, we asked about the farms where the vegetables were grown, the preparation process, the sourcing of ingredients. We wanted to know everything. At one point someone asked, "What makes this butter so much better?" To which the chef responded, "**It's made by people who care.**"



That's part of the magic of Bo's Place – it's made by people who care.

With Bright Hope for Tomorrow,

Jennifer Boubel  
Executive Director



## Volunteer Appreciation Month: *The Impact of Volunteers at Bo's Place*

The month of April has been designated globally as [Volunteer Appreciation Month](#). It gives non-profits an opportunity to look at the impact volunteers make on our organizations and express gratitude to those volunteers.

*So, what is the impact of volunteers at Bo's Place?*

Bo's Place is staffed by 18 full and part-time staff. From July 1, 2023, to February 29, 2024 the organization has served 960 unique individuals in our support groups. This is only possible through the support of our volunteers. Bo's Place would not exist

or function without our volunteers.

- This year, Bo's Place has 390 unique volunteers.
- 170 Facilitators ensure that all our grief support groups are fully staffed and running.
- 71 Hospitality Volunteers greet participants and set up a snack/meal before group time.
- 113 Special Projects Volunteers assist with development, program, and outreach events, as well as on-site projects.
- Every Memory Quilt in the Bo's Place building is made by Quilt Volunteers. There are currently 134 quilts on display in the building.
- 3 Zoom Hosts rename all virtual participants and assign them into small groups.
- 67 Volunteers gave of their time to ensure our Ofrenda: A Día De Los Muertos Event was a success.
- 54 Volunteers went through our Volunteer Facilitator Training this year.
- 8 Junior League of Houston, Inc. volunteers are placed with Bo's Place for the year providing Hospitality and Special Project support.



### *Expressing gratitude to our volunteers.*

Our volunteers have given 6,684 hours of their time so far this year, but the impact they have made on our participants is lifelong. Words do not feel sufficient to thank our volunteers for the time and energy that they have given. They are heart healers. They are the heart of our mission. They are how we help to heal hearts every day.

- If you are one of our volunteers... thank you. You are deeply and dearly appreciated.
- If you know one of our volunteers... let them know that you appreciate the work they do for Bo's Place.

For more information on volunteering at Bo's Place email [volunteer@bosplace.org](mailto:volunteer@bosplace.org).



## Our Family Groups and How to Join

We often get calls with questions about our services, so this month we are providing information on our Family group and how to join.

For families, Bo's Place offers free grief support groups in English and Spanish for families with children ages 3 -18 (still in high school) who have experienced the death of a parent, sibling, or person significant to their family. Children and teens are placed in groups with others their own age or grade level, while parents and guardians meet in separate groups with other adults. It is in these groups that the "magic" of Bo's Place happens. Children share their thoughts and feelings about the death of their person through conversations, expressive arts, and activities.



Families have the following options:

- **9-week Family Group:** Families that prefer in-person groups generally start in this group that meets once a week for 9 weeks on Tuesdays (English and Spanish) or Thursdays (English), from 6:15 p.m. – 8:15 p.m.
- **8-week online Family Group:** Families that prefer an online group meet on Zoom once a week for eight weeks. Adults in the family meet on Mondays from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. and children and teens meet on Tuesdays from 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m..
- **Ongoing Group:** Families who have completed a 9-week or Online Family Group and would like additional support may join an in-person Ongoing Group that meets twice a month on Mondays, 6:15 p.m. – 8:15 p.m. (English) or Saturdays, 9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. (Spanish). A family may attend for as long as they find the program helpful.
- **Little Friends:** Preschool aged children (ages 3-5) and their parents/guardians join this in-person group that meets once week for 6 weeks on Wednesdays from 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Bo's Place support groups are overseen by Bo's Place licensed mental health professionals and led by trained volunteer facilitators. Before starting a group, adults (for families the parent or legal guardian) must complete a registration process. The first step is to call Bo's Place and speak with a member of our program staff for a phone intake. The phone intake usually takes about 20 to 30 minutes. After this step, there is a short registration form to complete and an orientation before being assigned to a group.

All of our groups are for residents of the greater Houston area which consists of the following nine

counties: Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery and Waller. If you would like to join one of our grief support groups, please call Bo's Place at 713-942-8339 during our business hours: Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. and Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

For links to information on our other groups (Adult Group, Young Adult Group (ages 18 to 30), Pregnancy Loss Group, School-Based Groups, Groups in Spanish) please visit the [Grief Support Groups](#) page on our website.



## Don't Miss the Best Derby Party in Houston!

It's not too late to join Bo's Place at the best Kentucky Derby party around! We're bringing the party indoors this year, so you don't have to beat the heat or dodge the rain. Enjoy an afternoon at The Post Oak Hotel with top shelf libations and gourmet bites, including a classic Derby Mint Julep. Snap a photo in your finest derby attire. Stay and play with a "Run for the Roses" racing wall, a silent auction of unique offerings, festive music, and fun games.



Don your bowtie and hat and join us to cheer on your favorite horse in the big race and raise money for Bo's Place!

**Saturday, May 4  
5:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
The Post Oak Hotel**

Reserve your table or tickets today!

[Purchase Tickets or Table](#)

For more information, please contact Rachel Daniels at 713-942-8339 or [derby@bosplace.org](mailto:derby@bosplace.org).



## Grant Spotlight: Huffington Foundation

Bo's Place is grateful for the longstanding generosity of the Huffington Foundation. Since 2003, the Huffington Foundation has donated over \$81,000 to help bereaved families.

Most recently, they supported Bo's Place with a grant of \$10,000 for general operating needs to help sustain our grief support programs. We are so thankful for the Huffington Foundation's belief in our mission!



## Happenings

On March 1, volunteers Evette Ned and Rick Smith staffed a Bo's Place information table at the **Memorial vs. Stratford Unified football game and Crawfish Boil**. The Event proceeds supported The Mental Health Society which raises funds for students to received therapy at Spring Branch ISD.



On March 6, Marian Mankin, Program Director, continued the annual tradition of presenting "Understanding and Supporting Bereaved Children and Families" to the students in the **Grief & Bereavement Class at the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work.**



On March 12, Marian Mankin, Program Director, presented on a panel of bereavement professionals or "Respite Rounds" a **Texas Children's Hospital Palliative Care Department Virtual Conference.**



**Texas Children's  
Hospital®**

Bo's Place was excited to host Fellows from the **Baylor College of Medicine Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Department** for a presentation and tour of our building on March 13. Clinician Julie Hogg shared how to better understand and support the bereaved, how to refer families, and how we do some of our grief activities. Bo's Place is glad to provide grief presentations and trainings to future health care professionals.



On March 19, friends of Bo's Place gathered at Tootsies to kickoff Derby season at **Bowties, Bonnets, & Bourbon.** Guests worked on their Derby look, with a wide array of hats, fascinators, and outfits from Tootsies and bowties from Q Clothier. Guests also brought bourbon to help stock the Bourbon Pull featured at the Hats, Hearts, & Horseshoes event in May. A portion of the proceeds was donated to Bo's Place. Thank you, Tootsies, for hosting a wonderful event!



On March 21, Program Director, Marian Mankin, and Communications Director, Courtney Varner, attended the **BakerRipley Mental Health Symposium.** Parents and community members learned about mental health issues, while visiting with nonprofit vendors with resources throughout the city.



Donna Olson-Salas, Bilingual Groups Coordinator, presented to 15 medical students at the **McGovern Medical School** on March 25. The students are residents who visit the LBJ and Ben Taub hospitals' post-partum patients each weekend as part of their learning about OB/Gyn needs. They participated in the training in order to also be able to address the needs of the women who have experienced the death of their babies through miscarriage, stillbirth and neo-natal demise.



We were so happy to welcome current and former members of the Bo's Place Board of Directors and Advisory Board to a **"Friends of Bo's Place Open House"** on March 27. Attendees enjoyed getting to meet our new Executive Director, while visiting with one another and visioning for Bo's Place future.



## 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.*



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