

# Healing Hearts



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## A Note from Jennifer...

I love sports. I love the games, but I think I love the stories of the players, coaches, and all the people more. As we watch the upsets and celebrate the victories, we see unlikely players become heroes. It may be for just a moment -- but I have to believe those moments last a lifetime and serve as an inspiration to others for years to come.

In the recent March Madness tournament, Oakland, a 14th seed, defeated Kentucky, a 3rd seed who makes regular appearances in the Sweet Sixteen. Jack Gohlke, an unknown student athlete, became a legend in an instant. He was never expected to play high level college basketball. He was amazing on the court, but he was inspirational in the post-game interview.

When asked how the team did it, he said at the beginning of the season they all agreed they were going to love each other, and they were going to trust each other. **Two things: love and trust.** That was what helped them beat all odds. They decided that every day they were going to love each other and trust each other. Everything else came after that. Winning is of course the goal of any sport, but in this case, instilling the values of love and trust in these young people's hearts was the real victory.

That's the magic of Bo's Place. We **love** each other and we **trust** each other. I see that in our incredible staff. I see that in our amazing volunteers. I see it in our families. I see it in the twinkle in someone's eye when they explain why they support Bo's Place. The magic of Bo's Place is the people and their unconditional love and the trust that is extended every time a family walks through our doors.

With Bright Hope for Tomorrow,

Jennifer Boubel  
Executive Director



## Mother's Day

Mother's Day can mean many different things based on your own experiences. For some, it is a celebration of the relationship they have; for others, it is a reminder of what they have lost or hoped for. As Mother's Day approaches, Bo's Place is thinking of those who are grieving and suggests being mindful of the different reactions people may have to the holiday. Over the years, we have heard the following groups mention struggling with Mother's Day:



- Mothers whose child has died
- Children whose mother has died
- Women who experienced a pregnancy loss
- Mothers raising their children alone after the death of their parenting partner
- Parents raising children and missing their own mother or grandmother
- Parents or guardians raising a child whose mother died

If reading this list made you think of someone you know, we encourage you to reach out to let them know you are thinking of them. If you are looking for grief support yourself or wanting ideas on how to support someone else, please contact Bo's Place at 713-942-8339 or [info@bosplace.org](mailto:info@bosplace.org).

Some ideas for approaching Mother's Day and other holidays and can be found in these resources:

Mother's Day Grieving: A List of WYG Articles to Help You Cope

How To Be There When Mother's Day Isn't Easy

How to Help Grieving Families through the Holidays (English)

How to Help Grieving Families through the Holidays (Spanish)



## Volunteer Appreciation Celebration

On April 13th, Bo's Place hosted the Annual Volunteer Appreciation Celebration. Some highlights from the evening included:

- Around 100 volunteers, guests and staff members enjoyed a delicious barbeque dinner, cooked and generously served by the Over the Hill Gang, along with margaritas and Pappas desserts.
- Bo's Place honored seven volunteers who hit their 10 years of service with an engraved heart on the Carla Bagalay Wall of Service. Congratulations to Anne Harvey Paez, Scott Good, Christine Burton, Patricia Figueroa-Cruz, Tami Sheena, Vivian Clark, and Erica McCalmont.
- A moment of silence was observed in memory of beloved volunteer Claudia Iselt who recently died.
- Door Prizes were excitedly won thanks to our generous donors: Cacti Wellness Collective, Latham Fitness Solutions, Kelley Workman Life Coaching Services, The Atrium Yoga Studio, Hilton Post Oak, The Houston Symphony, Masraffs, The Astros Foundation, Tacos Dona Lena, Bright and Early Coffee, My Metaphysical Maven, The Defined Dish, Shirley Webb Designs, The Silver Stone Food Shop, Bernhardt Winery, Kelly Gentry, MD Turner Photography, Christina Greene Jewelry, Robinson Art, Richard Espinoza, The National Alliance for Children's Grief, and specialty items from board members Erika Benz, Maidie Ryan and Megan Hotze.

Additional Volunteer Appreciation Month recognition included a visit to every support group's pre-group by the Volunteer Manager, and social media posts expressing gratitude. Bo's Place could not exist without our volunteers, and we are so thankful for everyone that gives their time to help us heal hearts!



## Matthew's Milk & Cookies Tradition

Throughout the month of May, Bo's Place families enjoy the sweetness of tradition, with Matthew's Milk & Cookies. Beginning in 2018, this tradition commemorates the opening of Matthew's Garden, a whimsical outdoor space created in memory of Matthew Bishop Gray. Providing an area for children in our support groups to explore nature, connect with others, and learn about memorials, the colorful garden is sprinkled with reminders of Matthew's enjoyments in life.



Since one of Matthew's favorite snacks included milk and cookies, Bo's Place families enjoy this delicious treat together (now served as ice cream and cookies) on a designated day during the month. We are grateful to Three Brothers Bakery for donating cookies this year and are delighted to celebrate Matthew with this loving tradition.

More information about our Family Group Programs can be found here:



## Join us THIS FRIDAY for “Understanding and Supporting the Latino/a and Hispanic Bereaved Communities”

For many years Bo’s Place has offered grief support groups in Spanish to better meet the needs of Houston’s growing Spanish-speaking population and also adjusted the English language programs to better meet the needs of the diverse population we serve. This online training is designed for professionals wanting to build their skills to more effectively support the Hispanic & Latino/a bereaved community. Led by Bo’s Place mental health professionals who run groups in Spanish, this 3-hour webinar will provide detailed information on grief in the Hispanic & Latino/a culture, including discussion on cultural considerations when working with the Hispanic & Latino/a bereaved community. Examples of culturally appropriate grief activities and group themes will also be provided.



**Understanding & Supporting the Hispanic & Latino/a Bereaved Community**  
**THIS Friday, May 3, 2024**  
**9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Online Webinar**

Register Now

For questions, please email [alison@bosplace.org](mailto:alison@bosplace.org). Please note: all refund requests must be emailed to [alison@bosplace.org](mailto:alison@bosplace.org) 48 hours prior to the event.



## Camp Aspen Event benefitting Bo’s Place

Be the first to shop the new women’s collection by Camp Aspen on Wednesday, May 15 from 5:00-7:00 pm at Tootsies. Cocktails and canapes provided by PostScript will be available, and a portion of the sales will benefit Bo’s Place.

You can make a night of it and hop next door to PostScript for dinner afterward. Be sure to note Bo’s Place when you call to reserve or book on Resy to raise additional funds for Bo’s Place.

To RSVP, please email [RSVP@public-content.com](mailto:RSVP@public-content.com).



## Happenings

**The New York Life Houston General Office** volunteered for a half day at Bo’s Place on April 2. The NYL agents assisted with flower planting, group room sanitizing, data entry, book bag assembly, and volunteer appreciation preparations.



Courtney Reynolds, Volunteer Manager, spoke at the **Camp Kesem counselor training** on April 13 about understanding and supporting bereaved campers as well as counselor self-care. Camp Kesem provides a weeklong camp for children whose parent is diagnosed with or has died from cancer.



The **St. John's School** grade class four presented their Young Advocates Project on Bo's Place on Friday, April 19. Courtney Reynolds, Bo's Place Volunteer Manager, attended their presentation designed to bring awareness on the organizations services and showcase the ways you can volunteer with the organization.



On April 22, Alison Smith, Community Education & Adult Groups Manager, presented "Understanding and Supporting the Bereaved" to the social workers at **UT Health**.



The 7th annual **Smilin' Rylen Run** was held on April 27 in Katy. This festive, orange-themed event was in remembrance and celebration of Rylen Cowan. Bo's Place is honored to be a beneficiary of the online raffle and thankful to the Smilin' Rylen Foundation for their continued support of bereaved children and families. Jennifer Boubel, Executive Director, and Lori Bokone, School Program Manager, shared information about Bo's Place and joined the community in recognizing Rylen's legacy.



On April 28, Bo's Place attended the **St. John the Divine's Local Mission Fair**. Representing Bo's Place were Lindy Neuhaus, board member

emeritus, Kathy O'Neil, advisory board member, and Rachel Daniels, Associate Development Director. Parishioners had the opportunity to learn more about Bo's Place, including how they can volunteer.



## 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.

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

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