

Healing Hearts



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A Note from Jennifer...

'Tis the season of hope, the joy of believing, and love. At Bo's Place, love is at the heart of what we do — the love shared among families, the love of those who come to honor people they cared about, and the love that fuels our mission of enhancing the lives of those who have lost a loved one.

This season also calls us to believe — in the potential for hope and healing, in the possibility of brighter days ahead, and in the strength that comes from community. At Bo's Place, we see hope every day in the stories of healing and connections made possible because of the care and commitment of people. As we enter the last month of the year, I am deeply grateful for the community of Bo's Place. Together, we are making a difference, one heart at a time. Believe in the magic of Bo's Place.



With Bright Hope for Tomorrow,

Jennifer Boubel
Executive Director



Helping Grieving Families Through the Holidays

The holidays can be especially challenging for the bereaved. It can feel very isolating and draining when everyone around them seems to be excited about the holidays and looking forward to celebrating. It can be difficult to smile and pretend to be joyous when the feelings of grief are overwhelming. This is the time of year

known for traditions and togetherness with family and friends, yet the bereaved are faced with trying to figure out how to navigate through the days, knowing nothing is the same. It is difficult to know whether to keep the same traditions and rituals or to make changes.



Taking time to process feelings and starting a conversation about the holidays with other family members can be helpful. Everyone in the family will process their grief differently, so it is best to allow all family members, even the youngest children, to share their thoughts and ideas on how to celebrate the holidays and other special days. Beginning the conversation in advance of the day to give everyone time to think, process, and be in touch with personal feelings can be helpful. Some families might decide not to make any changes and celebrate the way they have in the past, while others might find ways to incorporate their loved one's memory into the celebration by preparing their favorite meal, singing their favorite song, or visiting their favorite place.

Bo's Place offers a helpful handout 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 - English](#)

[Helping Grieving Families Through the Holidays - Spanish](#)



Ofrenda: a Día de los Muertos Event

Día de los Muertos is a holiday celebrated in Mexico and other countries in Latin America and is increasingly popular in the United States. As a bilingual grief center, this cultural tradition is important to us because it is centered around remembering and honoring the deceased. Each year, we offer all participants the opportunity to join Bo's Place in celebrating this holiday at *Ofrenda: A Día de los Muertos Event*.

On November 1st, we hosted this colorful and magical memorializing event. Some of the memorial activities that were offered include decorating memory frames, designing memory bracelets, creating a luminaria (memory lantern), adding their loved one(s) names to the "We Remember Them" banner, spending time admiring the photo ofrenda (altar), and writing messages to their loved one(s) who died. Other activities that helped bring the event to life included face painting, mariachi performance by Mariachi Amor a Mexico, a dance performance by Mixteco Ballet Folklorico, and delicious food by Tacos Dona Lena.

This event would not have been possible without the hard work of our event chair Maidie Ryan, the Bo's Place staff, and the dozens of volunteers. Thank you to HPD officers Connor Evans and Roderick Rickett II for donating their time to keep our event safe, and Shems Photography for documenting our event. A special thank you to all of this event's funders: The Junior League of Houston, Lopez Negrete, A Sacred Choice, and Dr. Roberta Leal.





Volunteer Spotlight: Talitha Pinkney

Talitha Pinkney is a native Houstonian who has been an educator in Houston Independent School District for 24 years. She received the distinguished honor of being named HISD Elementary School Counselor of the Year in 2023. She has two children and a multitude of nieces and nephews.

While working on her counseling certification in 2018, she took a "field trip" to Bo's Place. In October of 2022, her mother died and Talitha attended a support group with a program called GriefShare. After feeling the impact of being in a support group and remembering the space she toured years before, she signed up to volunteer. She shared "I'm so grateful I choose to volunteer at Bo's Place as it is helping me with my healing process."

Talitha has volunteered in many capacities for Bo's Place, including Support Group Facilitator, Special Programs Volunteer, Development Volunteer, and Data Entry Volunteer.



When asked about her experience as a volunteer, Talitha shared that "volunteering at Bo's Place is so fulfilling because it helps to show how valuable it is to have others to support you along your journey. Volunteering at Bo's Place has allowed me to see the value of giving of myself to others. It has taught me how to be more empathetic and understanding of others, even strangers I meet along the way."

Thank you, Talitha, for sharing your empathy, time, and understanding with the Bo's Place community!



Upcoming Training: Good Grief for School Professionals

Join us for Good Grief for School Professionals on **Friday, January 31, 2025**, from **9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** at Bo's Place.

This in-person workshop is designed for school professionals wanting to build their skills to effectively support bereaved students. Through this training, school professionals will gain an understanding of children's grief at different developmental stages, identify indicators of grief, and learn about current grief theory. Attendees will be provided with tips for talking to students about grief and death and guidance on forming and facilitating a grief support group. Content is intended for those who are trained and experienced in providing social/emotional support to students. This workshop will include interactive exercises and attendees will be provided with educational handouts, samples of grief-based activities, and student support plans.



This in-person training opportunity is being co-presented by Lori Bokone, M.Ed., LPC and Dianne Baek, LMSW, Bo's Place School Program Managers.

Light breakfast will be provided.

What past attendees have said:

- "I learned that grief is not linear and we need to allow our students the space and time to grieve while allowing them to know that we are there to support them."
- "Lots of activities I can use as well as verbiage. This was a great presentation with a ton of excellent materials to use."
- "I have been a school counselor for many years so I had learned most of the materials. However, it was so wonderful to have context and be able to think of particular situations to use the excellent recommendations."

For questions, please email alison@bosplace.org.

Information & Registration



Be a Lifeline

When children, families, and adults experience the devastating loss of a loved one, the support they receive can make all the difference in their journey through grief. At Bo's Place, we provide a safe space where they can find comfort, connect with others, and begin to heal—all while removing the barrier of costs during a time when they are most vulnerable.

As the end of the year approaches, we invite you to make a meaningful impact by supporting Bo's Place. Your donation will help us sustain and expand our programs, ensuring that no one in need of support is turned away.



Give Now



Help Bo's Place Win \$25,000!

The Chevron Charity Challenge is coming and we need your help! From December 3-13, make a donation of any amount to Team Bo's Place to get us one step closer to winning \$25,000. The charity that receives the most number of donations wins. Recruit your friends and families to give—it is all about getting the most number of people to donate during the contest period.



Make a Donation



Donor Spotlight: SpawGlass

Bo's Place received a special \$50,000 gift from SpawGlass as one of the recipient charities of the CJ Strnadell IV Memorial Fishing Tournament. Since 2015, SpawGlass has contributed over \$350,000 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.



Happenings

On November 3, Marian Mankin, Bo's Place Program Director, and MaryScott Hagle, end-of-life doula, participated in a discussion about grief and loss after the matinee of **Main Street Theater's** production of Joan Didion's play *The Year of Magical Thinking*.



At the quarterly networking meeting held on November 7 by the **Brazoria County Sheriff's Office**, Julie Hogg, Bo's Place Clinician, provided information about the services we provide and ways to offer support to families who are grieving during the holidays. Attendees included Crime Victim Advocates, Crime Victim Liaisons, as well as numerous Social Services Organizations from throughout the Brazoria County area.



On November 13, our staff took a field trip to **Camp For All** in Burton, TX! We enjoyed a full tour of the property, enjoyed lunch, and then spent the afternoon meeting and workshopping. Everyone had fun being offsite on a lovely day and getting to vision for Bo's Place in such a special place.



Bo's Place participated in the **Sixth Annual Spindletop Unity in Community Event** on November 15. 65 volunteers created holiday craft packets for families attending in person groups and decorated welcome cards for new participants starting in 2025.



Bo's Place presented our signature **Good Grief for Helping Professionals** training online on November 15. Professionals representing staff from hospitals, schools, community centers, hospices, and other helping organizations learned methods and activities to support bereaved clients in their grief journey using grief theory, indicators of grief, and what grief looks like across the lifespan. Thank you to Bo's Place staff members Marian Mankin and Alison Smith for leading the training and our 54 participants for attending!



Grief over the life span



Our staff enjoyed a **Friendsgiving** on November 20. Everyone brought their favorite dish and we had a feast! We shared stories about our own holiday traditions and expressed gratitude for each other and for Bo's Place.



On November 21, Colleen Rathbun and Hope Conroy, Bo's Place volunteers, staffed an informational table at the **Morton Ranch Jr. High Community Cookout**. The volunteers provided group and volunteer information to community members in Katy ISD.



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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