

Dear Friend,

On behalf of the Stephy's Place Board of Directors, I am excited to introduce our first annual newsletter that captures all that we've accomplished in 2018. We couldn't have done it without the support of our donors and volunteers, and just as rewarding is the community we've built. The trust our participants have placed in us is inspiring: not only in our ability to help them find comfort in their darkest hours but in allowing us to help guide them in their quest to live again and integrate the loss of their precious loved one into their "new life."

In 2015, when Stephy's Place launched, we started with one support group. As of today, we've grown to over 29 groups and we're working hard to expand so we can welcome every person that comes through our doors. As a nonprofit organization, Stephy's Place relies upon donations and grants in order to operate. While all of the services we offer are completely free of charge to those who attend, the cost to Stephy's Place is \$800 per person, per year.

The holidays will soon be upon us! As the year draws to a close, please remember us as part of your 2018 charitable giving. Every dollar raised goes directly to Stephy's Place and the services we provide. There are a number of ways to give.

Please take a moment to browse through what we've compiled. You should feel equally proud of our success and the role you played in it. Thank you again for your interest in Stephy's Place.

*Sheila Martello, Founding Director*

## 2018 at a glance

- Stephy's Place grew to 29 Groups: Loss of Spouse, Child, Parent, Sibling & Loss due to death by suicide
- The addition of a bi-weekly Divorce group
- Bi-weekly meditation classes
- Participants being trained as facilitators
- On average, more than 200 people attend support groups each week
- Promotional video in the making - Videographer service donated by Dr. Jean Hager
- SP will be the beneficiary of this year's Holiday Bliss, Monday, Dec. 3rd, hosted by Allure Plastic Surgery Center, Highway 35, Red Bank

## What we offer

The center's mission is to assist people as they take steps to move forward in grief and begin the journey of living with loss. We help in a variety of ways, including:

- Weekly/bi-weekly support groups.
- Quarterly gatherings and an annual holiday party that brings all of our groups together for a chance to meet and socialize.
- An annual vigil on National Grief Awareness Day to offer an opportunity to connect with other people that are grieving and remember loved ones they have lost.
- A gift bag that includes various items that can aid in the grieving process, upon joining a group.
- A lending library that includes reading materials on loss and grief.
- Daily facebook posts for all griever's near or far

## Fundraisers

Our staff is made up of over 40 volunteers who take on various roles to run Stephy's Place. We have only one full time paid employee. To that end, out of every dollar that is donated to Stephy's Place, less than 1 cent covers our administrative costs.

### MOURNING WALK - A JOURNEY IN THE LIGHT

In September, Stephy's Place hosted its first annual "Mourning Walk - A Journey In the Light." The event began at Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park in Long Branch, NJ. Following a short meditation and butterfly release, more than 300 participants walked in Long Branch from Seven Presidents Oceanfront Park to Pier Village and back, while remembering their deceased loved ones. The event signified the walkers' intentions to move forward although grieving, and to continue their life's journey of living with loss.

Sponsored by many local businesses and participants, Mourning Walk raised close to \$70K that will be used to grow and maintain the grief support services that Stephy's Place provides to hundreds of people.

### COMEDY FOR A CAUSE

In July, nearly 200 people supported the first annual Stephy's Place Comedy For A Cause at the Middletown Arts Center. The event raised over \$11K to support Stephy's Place. It was sponsored by Michael Destefano, Saker ShopRites, Cups & Cakes, and Dreyfus Ashby & Co.

### PERSONAL FUNDRAISERS

Peter Jarck raised \$24,000 when he participated in the Eagleman 70.3 in honor of his son, Pierce

Jim DiOrio raised \$20,000 for Stephy's Place in lieu of retirement gifts

The Bob Kelleher Kids Triathlon raised \$2500

Several participants, as well as friends of participants, raise \$ for SP in lieu of birthday gifts. This is a wonderful way to help raise \$ for Stephy's Place



## GRANTS RECEIVED

St. George's by the River

Investor's Bank

Monmouth Park

Charity Fund

NJECC

## LOOKING TO 2019

- 1st Qtr - "Night Out"
- 2nd Qtr - Comedy Show
- 3rd Qtr - Mourning Walk - Sunday, September 8th
- 4th Qtr - Giving Tuesday/End of year charitable giving
- Endowment Fund
- Growing number of groups as needed
- Addition of a monthly Loss due to addiction group
- Additional participants being trained as facilitators

## Cindy's Story

On June 3, 2015 my heart shattered after my son Jason was killed in a car accident. I was trying everything including counseling and a monthly open support group to put the pieces of my heart back together. I was living in a veil of darkness. Then in October of 2015 while researching groups for a friend, I stumbled across Stephy's Place. I started participating in the Tuesday night child loss group at Stephy's Place. I immediately felt the warmth and support from my facilitators Mary, Elaine and my new broken hearted friends. Slowly, with the help of my new Stephy's Place family, the dark veil lifted as I began my journey of how to live life without my son's physical presence. Most importantly, I learned how to help others again, an important part of my professional life as a social worker. Since Stephy's Place was a beacon of light during my darkest time, I wanted to give back, so in April 2017 I started cofacilitating a child loss group. I love being a companion to others on their grief journey. I am forever grateful to Stephy's Place for bringing light back to my life.



## Ways to Give

[MAKE A GIFT NOW](#)

Choose Stephy's Place as the Beneficiary of your event

In lieu of buying or sending gifts choose Stephy's Place as beneficiary

In lieu of sending flowers make a donation in memory of someone who has passed

Corporate Matching Gifts

Recurring Gift Support

Planned Giving

Annual Giving

Appreciated Stock

Charitable Remainder Trust

Donations in honor or memory of someone

*If you have any questions or need more information about any of the ways to give, please reach out to us.*

## IT TAKES THE HEARTS & MINDS OF MANY

### Executive Board Members

President: Sheila Martello

Vice President: Liz McNally

Secretary: Trish Straine-MacGregor

Treasurer: Tara Butler

### Board of Directors

Founding Director:

Sheila Martello

### Director of Public Relations:

Pat Wotton

### Director of Marketing/Events:

Megan Pelino

### Director of Fundraising:

Kristin Sweeney

### Legal Advisor:

Christina Hardman O'Neal

### Facilitators

Kathy Cesario

Elaine Chevalier

Ken Feldman

Dawn Gambacorto

Denise Gebrian

Kristine Gunningham

Eileen Hoey

Kevin Keelen

Denise Kelleher

Maggie Lubke

Sheila Martello

Patty Milano

Nancy Niedemeyer

Cindy Panek

Megan Pelino

Marilyn Pozutto

Anne Preston

Mary Primavera

Mary Reidy

Christine Reynolds

Judy Schurgin

Jeanette Sheffer

Trish Straine

### Office Caregivers

Kathleen Agresto

Trish Brennan

Tara Butler

Tony Ianucone

Lissette Lynch

Mary Magee

Liz McNally

Jen Ninger

Patricia Pomp

Bette Scott

Lola Shaud

### Wellness Caregivers

Angela Harris, Meditation Specialist

Kristin Gould (Ivoti)

Gerri Weber, Massage Therapist

### Additional Support

Ashley Hadar, Social Media Representative

Dr. Jean Hager, Mental Health Advisor

Leslie Curran, Fundraising and events

Lori Jarck, Fundraising and events

Wendy Sefcik, Suicide Education