



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Hospice of Michigan Hosts Hope for the Holidays Program**

**Grand Rapids, Michigan, September, 23, 2014** – Hospice of Michigan will present a series of Hope for the Holidays events, a free community-outreach program that provides the bereaved with tips to deal with grief during a time when most are happy and expressing joy.

“Holidays can be extremely difficult for those suffering from grief, especially during the first year after the death,” said Desiree Davis-Leslie, grief support services manager at Hospice of Michigan. “While grief is a personal experience that takes place over time, gradually the bereaved begin to feel a new sense of purpose and they will learn to live with the loss and once again enjoy this special time of year.”

HOM’s Hope for the Holidays program teaches that the holidays may be challenging, but there are techniques to help handle grief and find comfort, such as:

- Planning ahead. Bereaved individuals who seem to have the most difficulty with the holidays are often those who have given little thought to the emotional challenges they will encounter.
- Accepting your limitations. Family and social pressures, in combination with decision-making challenges, can be overwhelming. Choose a few issues to deal with and limit the number of decisions you need to make so they won’t overwhelm you.
- Taking care of yourself. Exercise, eating a proper and balanced diet and getting the proper amount of rest is critical. Avoid the temptation of excessive alcohol.
- Lowering expectations. Go easy on yourself and try not to over-extend in order to reduce overall stress.

Events will be held:

- Wednesday, Oct. 22, in Grand Rapids at St. Paul the Apostle, 2750 Burton St., from 3:30-4:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, Nov. 4, in Lowell at Gilda’s Club, 34 S. Hudson, from 6:15-7:30 p.m.
- Monday, Nov. 10, in Grand Rapids at Gilda’s Club, 1806 Bridge St. N.W., from 6-7:30 p.m.
- Thursday, Nov. 13, at the HOM Muskegon office, 1930 E. Apple Ave. from 6-7:30 p.m.

The Hope for the Holidays program is open to all those dealing with grief, whether a loved one died recently or decades ago. Participants are invited to enjoy refreshments and listen as grief experts discuss holiday coping techniques such as planning ahead, accepting limitations, and finding someone who will listen.

To register or receive additional support, please contact Davis-Leslie at 616.356.5258.

**About Hospice of Michigan**

A nationally recognized leader in end-of-life care, Hospice of Michigan is the original – and largest – hospice in the state. The non-profit cares for more than 1,700 patients each day, raising more than \$4 million each year to cover the cost of care for the uninsured and underinsured. HOM offers a broad range of services to enhance the quality of life at the end of life, including At Home Support™, our advanced illness management program, community-based palliative care and pediatric care programs. HOM provides grief support and counseling, caregiver education and support, and education programs for physicians and healthcare professionals through its research, training and education arm, the Hospice of Michigan Institute. For more information, call 888.247.5701 or visit [www.hom.org](http://www.hom.org).

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