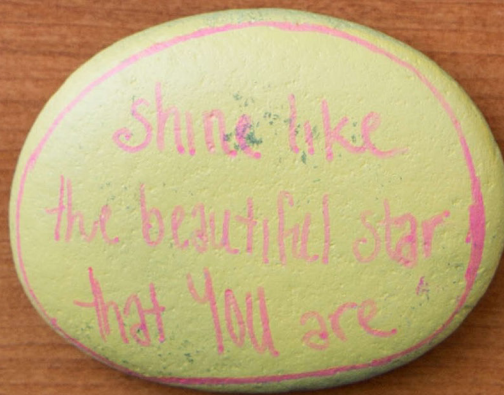


EMPOWER

MOTHER'S DAY + FATHER'S DAY EVENTS toolKIT



EMPOWER

Empower is an international nonprofit on a mission to empower, support, and connect children and young adults up through age 24 who have experienced the loss of a parent.



OUR STORY

The first Empower Mother's Day Retreat was held in 2014 and today serves as our flagship event. In 2014, 7 teenage girls from across MA attended. Today, hundreds of children and young adults will come together in honor of Mother's Day and Father's Day for fun, food, games, and connection. At the events, the attendees spend quality time with others who have experienced the same life-altering, profound early loss of their mother or father. Activities include yoga, art projects, skincare/ makeup classes, games, special guests, and more. For many children, these events are a life-preserver: the difference between grieving in isolation on Mother's Day or Father's Day and feeling supported and loved in a like-minded community.

The events are planned and produced by volunteer committees and lead by 1 or 2 Co-Chairs (location dependent). The event is at no charge to the family.

EVENT OVERVIEW

The Events include some of the following aspects:

- Enrolled children of all ages (up to 24 years old) are invited to attend. Please plan to make other arrangements for your own children during the event.
- Events are held in Boston in honor of Mother's Day and Father's Day
- Event Duration for girls is 1pm-5pm for all ages
- Attendance at each event may be up to 100 participants
- The Events is produced by the support of dozens of volunteer facilitators (i.e. yoga instructors) and day-of volunteers in addition to the 10 Chaperones
- The Events will be separate for girls, boys, and nonbinary youth.

GUIDELINES

Empower staff will perform a CORI background check on all Empower Events Chaperones, facilitators, and day-volunteers. All volunteers who will offer transportation for a child must submit a DMV driving record to Empower for review.

All Empower families must register for the events via online submission and must sign a liability waiver as well as photo and media waiver. All information will be recorded in Airtable for your review and will be shared with the committee prior to the event.

Please remember that Empower is a volunteer-driven organization and all events are at no charge to the family. Our goal is to host low cost events with in-kind donations from our local communities as much as possible. The facilitators of the Events are asked to donate their services, for instance, and the venue contract is negotiated by the Empower Executive Team. The Events expenses total more than \$65,000 each year to include operational and indirect costs as well as food and lodging. The venue is asked to waive conference areas, discount food and rooms and more.

Safety is our main concern at the Events as well as their emotional well-being, as this is our most emotional event of the year.



PRE-EVENT PLANNING

KICK-OFF MEETING: The event begins planning in the Fall with 2 Event Co-Chairperson(s). The Committees are made up of 10+ Volunteers representing the four cohorts (GoML, BoML, GoFL, BoFL), many of which have experienced parent loss.

SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS: Monthly meetings take place and committee members are encouraged to work offline in subcommittees and/or use email communication for follow-up. An Empower representative may attend each meeting (remote or in-person).

SOFTWARE: Empower uses Airtable, a cloud-based database for all event information. Chairpersons are required to use Airtable (and download on their phone). Airtable stores all committee contact information, tasks assigned, list of attendees, budget and more.

DIGITAL INVITE: Each Event welcomes a new “theme” brainstormed by the Chaperones and Empower staff is responsible for creating the invitation sent to all families via text and email. Staff will follow-up with email and text message to remind the family to register on our website.

REGISTRATIONS are collected in-house and shared regularly to include important information regarding allergies, special accommodations, and other pertinent information necessary to ensure the safety of all attendees. Empower ensures all attendees know what to expect (some are nervous and apprehensive) and what to bring, where to park, and more.

PLANNING CHECK-LIST

VOLUNTEER ASSIGNMENTS are identified and reviewed 4 weeks before the event.

- Setup
- Greeters
- Escorts
- Guides (age 19-24)
- Supplies & Materials
- Gift Bag Assembly & Dissemination
- Take Down

VENDORS + FACILITATORS must be identified and screened before the event:

- Facilitators/Instructor (Inkind)
- Gift Bags (Inkind)
- Photographer/Videographer (Inkind)





EVENT DAY

WELCOME: Upon arrival, all participants are welcomed with open arms! Chaperones identify greeters who are positioned curbside at the hotel and greet each girl & family. Attendees are then escorted by a volunteer and walked to check-in table. Families are encouraged to drop-off; however, some would like to stay to talk further and greeters must plan accordingly.

AN EMOTIONAL DAY: Please remember, parent loss makes us all uncomfortable at our core – Families may be feeling anxious and uneasy at drop-off and volunteers assigned to “Greeter” should be empathetic and welcoming. Volunteers should also be prepared to spend time alone with a child if it becomes apparent they need a break, needs some 1:1 attention or simply needs a shoulder to cry on.

PURPOSE OF EVENT: To connect with others who can relate to the loss. The mantra offered at the event of each event offers her a necessary reminder, “you are enough,” “your feelings are a gift,” and “it is okay to ask for help”. See “Introduction and Closing Procedures”

GROUND RULES: We are always kind and respectful of one another and have empathy for each unique story we share. Information shared at an event is not shared outside an event unless directed. All attendees must remain at the event and are not permitted to leave the event. Please be sure to remind all attendees they have the option to share and the option to “pass” while in Yoga, Circle, or any other activities.

PRIVACY: Also remember any stories, personal experience(s) and feelings should not be shared outside the event. It is very important that the attendees know we respect their privacy. Information will be kept confidential, except information that requires us to share with families or the authorities to include any indication they are being harmed by someone, is harming someone else or is harmful to themselves.

CLOSING: At each event, a designated volunteer will facilitate our closing and Mantra. A reminder of our Mentor Program is also provided (see staff for review of mantra and closing).

PROPOSED SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Committees are encouraged to be creative & flexible in event party planning.

SUNDAY

1. Welcome by Chaperones and Purpose of Event/Ground Rules (See “Event Day”)
2. Ice Breakers in Small Groups/ Opening Circle
3. Brunch/Lunch
4. Session 1
5. Session 2
6. Snack/Break
7. Session 3
8. Session 4
9. Goodbyes

A MOST SINCERE THANK
YOU TO ALL OF OUR
TALENTED & COMMITTED
VOLUNTEERS!

POST EVENT WRAP-UP

EXPENSES: Please submit all receipts & list of expenses to sam@weareempower.org and allow 2 weeks for the reimbursement to be processed.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Please send high resolution photos of your event to sam@weareempower.org and/or the designated Google Drive folder as soon as possible! When doing so, let us know how to credit the photographer. Please keep in mind, for legal reasons, that you must have permission from Empower to share ANY photos of the girls (via email or social media).