



The Compassionate Friends

South Bay/LA Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

JANUARY 2014 ISSUE

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OUR NEXT MEETING

will be Jan. 8th, the second Wednesday (Due to the holiday) of the month at 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:

The Neighborhood Church
415 Paseo Del Mar
Palos Verdes Estates, CA 90274
(South of Torrance Beach)

"This newsletter is sponsored by an anonymous family in memory of our children".

DIRECTIONS: Pacific Coast Hwy. to Palos Verdes Blvd. → Palos Verdes Blvd. becomes Palos Verdes Drive West. Veer Right. → Go to Via Corta (stop sign just past Malaga Cove Plaza). Turn right. → Go down hill to Arroyo (stop sign). Turn right. → Continue down hill to end of street. → Turn left on Paseo Del Mar. → Meetings are held at the west end of the church.

--Please remember to park in the church parking lot and not on the street.--

The Compassionate Friends Mission Statement....

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

The January Meeting will be on January 8th due to the holiday. This meeting will start with "Facing the New Year; Will it ever get better?"

For a free Picture Button of your child, call Ken at (310) 544-6690.

TCF Lunch Group meets for lunch at Mimi's Café every Friday at 1:00. (Crenshaw and PCH). All members are invited.

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Jan 8th topic...

Facing the New Year; Will it ever get better?

How we will survive the new year without our child here with us? There are many things we do as we start each new year. Resolutions, plans, preparing for something in the future. But what do we do when we are so consumed with grief that we could care less what the future holds? How do we go on with our precious child not here? How do we regain a sense of balance in our life? Will it ever get better?

The answer is yes. It will never be the same as it was before our child died, but it will get better with time and attention to our grief work. This month we will be discussing some of the ways we can help ourselves regain our balance and focus on life again. Please join us as we explore ways to continue our grief work and find some kind of future we can again look forward to in 2014.



What Kind Of "New" Year Will It Be?

Well, since you are reading this, you must have survived those dreaded holidays. Some of you may be holding onto your sanity by the skin of your teeth, but you're here. For now, that's enough. If this is your first or second new year without your child, consider that an emotional victory. I'm sure you wondered several times how you could possibly survive all that family warmth and frivolity without your child. Well, you did.

Now it is a brand new year. It's up to you what you make of it. Do you want to spend the year bitter, angry, withdrawn, and tormented? Or do you want to begin to enjoy life again and start healing? Believe it or not, it is up to you.

I'm going to assume that you want to begin healing. There are a few things that you must know. It absolutely is NOT disloyal to your child's memory to smile again or enjoy yourself. Would your child wish everlasting pain on you? Would he/she want you to cry every day for the rest of your life?

One of the key elements to softening the pain is to try to think about all the good things that you have instead of what you've lost. I know that seems impossible, but force yourself to try. If you've got family, friends, health, whatever, count your blessings.

Another important element to healing is to be grateful that you had your child at all. I know this seems ludicrous when you feel you've been robbed

because you "should" have been able to watch your child grow old. The fact is that you aren't going to do that. Whatever memories you have of your child, or whatever joy you get from having loved him/her, no matter how briefly you had them, is worth hanging on to.

You also need to trust. Look around your next TCF meeting. Do you see the veterans laughing and sharing joyful stories with each other? Do you hear about new babies, weddings, hope, and love? Trust that these parents love their children as much as you love yours. Trust that life can go on again. Even though it sounds impossible, trust us when we say you will find happiness again. No one will try to tell you that you eventually heal to the point where it doesn't hurt at all. No one will tell you that you'll be your old self soon. We realize you have been changed forever by the death of your child. For now, you'll just have to take our word that it does get better and the pain does dull itself a little with time.

It's a brand new year, why not try to make it one of healing and health, occasional smiles, reaching out to others, and remembering the good times? Maybe you can even start looking forward to the future.

As radical as all these concepts may seem to you now, guess what? When you do finally feel that you've made some progress, these will be what you did to get there.

Take it easy on yourself. We're with you.
--Kathy Hahn TCF Lower Bucks, PA

Suggestions for A New Year

I will not try to expect so much understanding from others who have not walked the same path. I will be kind to myself - in health, appearance, and time to be alone. I will try to remember that I owe it to myself to try to enjoy life. I will be more considerate of my spouse, children, and parents. They too are coping and deserve my help. I resolve in memory of my child to help someone else. For I know in doing this, my child will live on through me.

--TCF Mobile, AL newsletter

Hope is being able to see
that there is light
despite all of the darkness."

--Desmond Tutu Contra Costa newsletter



New Year's Resolutions for Bereaved Parents

I Resolve:

That I will grieve as much and for as long as I feel like grieving, and that I will not let others put a time table on my grief.

That I will grieve in whatever way I feel like grieving, and I will ignore those who try to tell me what I should or should not be feeling and how I should or should not be behaving.

That I will cry whenever and wherever I feel like crying, and that I will not hold back my tears just because someone else feels I should be "brave" or "getting better" or "healing by now".

That I will talk about my child as often as I want to, and that I will not let others turn me off just because they can't deal with their own feelings.

That I will not expect family and friends to know how I feel, understanding that one who has not lost a child cannot possibly know how I feel.

That I will not blame myself for my child's death, and I will constantly remind myself that I did the best job of parenting I could possibly have done. But when feelings of guilt are overwhelming, I will remind myself that this is a normal part of the grief process and it will pass.

That I will not be afraid or ashamed to seek professional help if I feel it is necessary.

That I will commune with my child at least once a day in whatever way feels comfortable and natural to me, and that I won't feel compelled to explain this communion to others, to justify or even discuss it with them.

That I will try to eat, sleep, and exercise every day in order to give my body the strength it will need to help me cope with my grief.

To know that I am not losing my mind and I will remind myself that loss of memory, feelings of disorientation, lack of energy, and a sense of vulnerability are all normal parts of the grief process.

To know that I will heal, even though it will take a long time.

To let myself heal and not feel guilty about feeling better.

To remind myself that the grief process is circuitous—that is, I will not make steady upward progress. And when I find myself slipping back into the old moods of despair and depression, I will tell myself that "slipping backward" is also a normal part of the grief process and these moods, too, will pass.

To try to be happy about something for some

part of every day, knowing that at first, I may have to force myself to think cheerful thoughts so eventually they can become a habit.

That I will reach out at times and try to help someone else, knowing that helping others will help me to get over my depression.

That even though my child is dead, I will opt for life, knowing that is what my child would want me to do.

—from the Brooksville/Spring Hill FL. newsletter

Reflection on a New Year

We begin a new year, one that many of us enter with reluctance. After all, it means another year away from our child and another year to be lived without the physical presence of the one we have lost.

Apprehensive about any new challenges that we may be called upon to face in our broken condition, we call out, "Wait, I'm not ready yet!" The death of our child changed the course of our life; nothing will be the same again. But it also has shaped us into who we are today. And it will continue to do so as we learn to incorporate this loss into who we are to become.

Have you found that you have already begun to live differently? Compassion toward others is more profound. Trivial things are no longer important. Appreciation for life, and those in our lives, is paramount.

We're living the same life – differently. Tragedies, disappointments, and heartaches combine with beauty, love and joy to fashion our life. These are all part of life, and our challenge is to incorporate them into our world. The difference that our child's life has had upon the world continues through us.

So, rather than being fearful of the challenges that lie ahead, perhaps a better question to consider at this time might be: what opportunities will present themselves in the coming year to honor this loss that is already a part of our life? Our child has become more integrally entwined into our being than ever before. We bring him or her to every situation that we encounter. How can we make that situation better because of this bond?

The start of a new calendar year is a good time to remember that we are in the midst of life. It is not perfect. Nor is it one that we might have chosen. But, our struggles do not put life "on hold."

Rather, they are a part of life itself! Our life is ours to make the most of, with many gifts that we can share with others. There is no better time than the present to gather up the pieces and recognize the uniqueness made more wonderful because of our child's presence in the life we choose to live.

--By Paula Stasiunas Schultz, South Suburban Chapter, Evergreen Park, IL

BEWARE ... Of The Post Holiday Slump



It can happen in the best of our times. Our days were filled with list making and holiday shopping. With careful planning and preparation, our obligations were flawlessly carried out. The pleasant distraction of baking cookies, planning the meals, and wrapping presents has warmed our hearts. Now family and friends have bundled up their loved ones and started their journeys back home to their own lives. The house no longer smells of cedar boughs and fir needles. The holiday chaos has subsided and warm greetings have faded.

This can be the time when the familiar feeling of being alone begins to creep in again. At times it can be a peaceful feeling and at other times a feeling of being let down. The challenges of the holiday season and the dim promise of a happy New Year may leave us unprepared for the post holiday slump. You may have prepared yourself well for the holidays by carefully planning events and filling your days to allow a joyful time with family and friends. Now the new year has begun and there may be little or no preparation for returning to a peaceful life without your loved one.

The same preparation you carefully applied to the holidays can be extended to these difficult days following the holidays or the post holiday slump.

Give yourself permission to grieve and give yourself permission to enjoy life and your time alone.

Continue to do those things that you found helpful in preparing for the holidays. Here are some suggested ways you can pamper yourself and encourage healthy and healing grieving:

- * Surround yourself with supportive friends and family members.
- * Set aside time for your "grief work".
- * Do memory work; reminisce, look at photographs.
- * Establish healthy daily routines.

- * Identify the most difficult time of day and do something for yourself during that time
- * Eat right.
- * Exercise.
- * Volunteer and/or be helpful and supportive in other ways.
- * Take a class or start a project.
- * Continue rituals, old and new.
- * Try new recipes and/or activities, or get back to your old favorites.
- * Make lists and check off accomplishments.
- * Be realistic with obligations and expectations.
- * Keep a journal; write down your thoughts and feelings.
- * Practice saying "no."
- * Be patient with yourself; you may still feel vulnerable.

* Give yourself permission to continue grieving
William Worden, a psychotherapist and researcher, believes that we begin to emerge out of the grieving process when we are able to reinvest in life and once again find joy in living. This means we still love the person and we still remember our loved one. It also means that we have found ways to take care of ourselves and have found ways to feel comfort and appreciation of all the "gifts" our loved one has left us.

This may be your first holiday season without your loved one, or it may be your fifth, or your fifteenth. That sudden sensation can sneak up on you when you least expect it and leave you feeling empty and overwhelmed. This realization is a reminder that your life has changed in so many ways and that what was, is no longer, and that we did not choose this change.

This is all part of a normal grieving process. This can be an opportunity to gain strength and to rely on our inner resources to become a stronger and better person.

Preparing for the slump can be the best way to begin the new year with new meaning, new hope, new friendships, and a new life. Remember to be patient with yourself and that the post holiday slump is a natural and normal part of a healthy and healing grief process. We may spend a lifetime grieving the loss a loved one; however, knowing that this grief can evolve into a deep richness allows us to heal and reinvest in life again.

—Mary Miller, MS,LPC,CGC

Wounds of the spirit... are most gently soothed
and made whole by the passing years.

Under the old scars flows again
the calm, healthful tide of life....

Under a great loss the heart impetuously cries
that it can never be happy again, and perhaps in its
desperation says that it wishes
never to be comforted.

But though angels do not fly down to open the grave
and restore the lost, the days and months come as
angels with healing in their wings.

Under their touch aching regret passes into tender
memory; into hands that were empty new joys are
softly pressed; and the heart that was like the trees
stripped of its leaves and beaten by winter's
tempests is clothed again with the green of spring.

--George S. Merriam



Grief Is Not Depression

When a family member or close friend dies, people may say that we're depressed, but in reality what we're experiencing is grief. Grief is different from depression, which is an emotion or feeling, like anger or glee.

It's only partially correct to tell a mother whose 4-year-old daughter has died of leukemia that she's depressed, or to tell a husband whose wife has been killed in an automobile accident that he's suffering from depression. What also has happened to each person is the onset of grief.

What is grief?

Grief is a condition of moral and spiritual crisis. All of the beliefs which we have, are challenged when a family member or friend dies. We find ourselves asking many painful questions:

- What does it mean to be mortal?
- What does it mean that everyone I love is finite and mortal?
- Why do bad things happen to good people?
- Why is there suffering?
- Does suffering have meaning?
- Is life inherently tragic?
- Does life have meaning?
- What role does fate (being in the wrong place at the wrong time) play in our lives?

A spiritual crisis.

This spiritual crisis-which is not necessarily a religious one - involves both an intellectual and emotional struggle with a variety of emotions, only

one of which is depression. Sometimes, a clinical depression will be provoked by a tragic disaster. But along with feelings of depression, there are likely to be feelings of despair, longing, guilt, shame, blame, anger, shock, sorrow, denial, loneliness, fear, and rage. All of this surrounds us as we grieve. We find ourselves asking: If babies die of agonizing diseases, and if people can become widowed in a matter of seconds, can we trust life at all, much less a loving, divine God who is good and all powerful? If such tragedies can happen, how can we feel safe or know the earth won't spin off its axis or that gravity will hold?

There appears to be no order, no meaning to life as we have known it, when we grieve.

A crisis of the entire human condition.

This is why grief transcends emotions, becoming a crisis of the entire human condition. In addition to the wrenching emotional pain that occurs when we grieve, our intellectual understandings are cracked wide open, forcing us to our knees. We are overwhelmed with doubt, even if we thought we had faith.

An entire reworking of our fundamental beliefs will have to take place, from the ground up, as we work through our grief. Most of us go through life believing that bad things should not happen to good, law-abiding, God-loving individuals. It becomes important in a time of loss to find a philosophy of life that can incorporate an unfair, undeserved catastrophe. This takes a hard and rigorous searching of the soul.

Often, our grief excludes those systems, beliefs, and friends we used to count on for discourse. Working through the grieving process can be a lonely, exhausting, and relentless process. Sleep disorders, eating disorders, and mood swings often characterize the period surrounding grief. Our constant questioning may require the help of professionals (psychotherapists, psychologists, or clergy).

Become better, not bitter.

The grieving period can take months, even years. In time, courageous individuals choose to become better rather than bitter. We realize that the only way out of grief is through it. We don't get over it. We get used to it by incorporating the loss into our revised beliefs and philosophies. Only then can we continue on with our lives.

--Peg Armstrong, Grief and Bereavement Specialist, San Antonio, TX

Grief and Depression: What about the use of antidepressants?

By Richard Dew, M.D.

It was a typical TCF meeting. We were discussing what had helped us cope with the loss of our child. Joanna, a quiet lady who seldom spoke, suddenly blurted out, "I take Prozac. I couldn't have made it without it, and I don't care what anyone thinks." After a few moments of stunned silence several others confessed to "using drugs."

As a clinician, I have been uneasy with what seems to be an almost blanket disapproval of medications by TCF. We are encouraged to cry, beat on pillows, scream, journal, or whatever it takes to deal with our grief. Each must grieve in his own way and that is okay, we say. But, if one must take medication, there is a subtle, and often not so subtle, message that they are not grieving "right."

The great physician, William Oster, said, "The desire to take medicine is perhaps the greatest feature that distinguishes man from animals."

Americans particularly seem to think that there is a chemical solution to every problem. Doctors as a group tend to prescribe too freely. Caution must be exercised in deciding whether medications are needed. Just as important, caution is needed in deciding what drug should be used when medication is indicated. (See side bar)

I agree with the old adage "You can have depression without grief, but you cannot have grief without depression."

Unfortunately, in the minds of many lay persons and medical professionals, depression requires medication for treatment. Therefore, if grief entails depression, grief must require medication. This is faulty reasoning. Most depression is best treated without medication. However, there are some types of depression which require medication... In fact, some must be treated with medication.

I have found it useful to divide depression into two categories: situational Depression (SD) and Chemical Depression (CD). The vast majority of cases, SD, are best treated without medication. On the other hand, CD usually requires medication as part of its treatment plan.

Situational Depression (SD) occurs in response to stresses and losses we experience in life: divorce, loss of a job, children moving away, problem children, death of a loved one, death of a child. From my own personal experience, I feel the death of a child entails not only a grief reaction but also the severest form of SD. Medication helps minimally, if at all. In my opinion, the cornerstones of treatment of SD are the same as those of grief.

The first is a conscious decision that you will survive, no matter what. The second is to talk about and share our loss. For me TCF was indispensable in accomplishing these. Grief counseling can be helpful, but I feel the contact and sharing with fellow bereaved parents is fundamental.

Ronald Knapp, in his book *Beyond Endurance, When a Child Dies*, recommends eight other coping methods to deal with SD. They are equally valid in dealing with grief.

1. Be sure you get enough rest. The old standbys of a bedtime routine and a warm bath are helpful. Medication for sleep should be used with caution. Avoid barbiturates, benzodiazepines, and alcohol entirely. Benadryl is safe. Desyrel is often used for more severe cases.
2. Eat regularly, five times a day if possible. Eat no more than you would in three meals. Frequent, small meals minimize swings in blood sugar which can affect mood and energy levels. Keep sugar and sweets to a minimum for the same reason.
3. Spend some time alone each day. It is your time. Journal, read, cry, meditate or whatever gets you out of the daily hustle and bustle.
4. Do something "fun" each day. You won't necessarily have fun, but try to continue some of the activities that you enjoyed in the past:

Medications to be Avoided -

addictive, tend to make depression worse: Barbiturates- (Seconal, Nembutal)
Alcohol - When used as a medication, i.e. to sleep, relax, or ease tension or when drunk in larger quantities than previously.

Medications to be Used with

Caution - Potentially addictive, tend to make depression worse.

Benzodiazepines: (Valium, Serax, Antivan, Tranxene, Xanax) May be used short term for relief of anxiety and agitation. Halcion, Ambien -sleeping pills with unpredictable side effects.

Newer Antidepressants -

Non-addictive, safe, few side effects: Prozac, Paxil, Zoloft, Effexor, Wellbutrin
Desyrel -often used alone or in combination for sleep disturbances.

Older Antidepressant -

Non-Addictive, significant side effects. May aggravate heart or prostate problem: Elavil, Pamelor, Ludiomil, Sinequan.

gardening, fishing, potting plants, etc.

5. Accomplish some task each day. Keep it simple. Big projects may be counterproductive. Mow the grass. Wash the car. Do laundry. Fix that loose shutter. At the end of the day you will not feel it was a total waste.

6. Do something physically strenuous each day: walk, jog, split firewood. This can burn off a lot of frustration and also lend a sense of accomplishment.

7. Do something social each day. Just as you need time alone, you also need human interaction. Have lunch with a friend. Call a friend on the phone. Take a friend for a walk.

8. When all else fails, get away for a while. A short vacation. A short day trip. A weekend. A change of scenery and routine from time to time is helpful.

Chemical Depression (CD) results from lowered levels of substances in the brain called neurotransmitters, primarily the chemicals serotonin and norepinephrine. It is generally believed that 10% of the population is genetically predisposed to CD. Bipolar Disease is a well known form of CD. If the neurotransmitter level is low enough, deep, potentially suicidal depression may occur, often for no apparent reason. Those predisposed to CD may do well until something happens that lowers their neurotransmitter level. A classic example of this is the depression that follows taking certain types of blood pressure medicine or cortisone preparations. The hormonal urges associated with pregnancy and delivery can trigger a chemically induced postpartum depression. More pertinent to us, the stress of a severe grief reaction or the SD that accompanies grief may bring on CD.

Medications used to treat CD serve to raise levels of neurotransmitters in the brain. Unless near normal levels of these are reestablished, the depression will persist. For us to imply that “drugs are bad” and if one were only stronger, or had more moral fiber, or worked hard enough they should be able to overcome their depression is wrong. It makes as much sense to tell the diabetic who is deficient in insulin, that if they were stronger and worked hard enough they would not need “drugs”, i.e. insulin.

People who have had previous bouts of depression or have a strong history of depression in their family are more prone to CD. Many times however, it is impossible to differentiate between severe SD or a CD. Often a trial of antidepressant

medication is the only way to tell. It will take four to six weeks to see if there is a response. I always caution my patients that antidepressants will not make you feel good. They make you feel more near whatever is normal for you. Unfortunately, for us, that is the normal degree of SD that goes with grief. You don't feel good, but at least you are more able to do your grief work and benefit from it.

This is important to remember. Medication may be a necessary aid to recovery in a small percentage of bereaved parents. But they, just like the rest of us, still must do their grief work, share, use the coping skills learned at TCF, and utilize Knapp's suggestions for dealing with the SD that inevitably accompanies the death of a child. Medication may be a necessary aid, but it is only one part of the healing process.

A final observation: I have often heard of medication disparagingly referred to as a “crutch.” Some may view it as such. But if a person can't get to TCF because they have a broken leg, who are we to deny them a crutch?

--Dr. Richard Dew has been a family practitioner in Oak Ridge, TN, since 1970. He began attending TCF meetings after the murder of his son, Brad, in June 1992. He has served as a chapter leader, and presented at past conferences. This article is from his, “To Medicate or Not to Medicate—That is the Question” workshop at the Chicago National Conference. Reprinted from We Need Not Walk Alone National TCF Newsletter.



The Gift of Time

When Laurie died by suicide in 1980 I was told, “Take your TIME”, “It takes TIME”, “TIME HEALS”...

I didn't want to wait for TIME... I wanted this agony to be over and gone — “in a hurry”, ASAP, sound familiar?

Now I look at TIME differently. It has been a gift in many ways. As Iris Bolton said in her book *My Son, My Son*, she was told there would be a gift in her son's suicide! What? A gift? How could that be?

But TIME does reveal a gift we never thought possible. My TIME, since Laurie died, has been used in different ways I never would have known otherwise

The TCF friends I've met have been a gift to my being — it takes time — (of course we would have preferred meeting under other

circumstances...)

The gift of TIME has also been returned to me through reaching out and being there for other bereaved parents...who in turn have given me the gift of their TIME... a gift I didn't ask for but TIME has helped me recognize.

May you find many new gifts this holiday season..."it takes TIME – but is worth it.
--by Carole Katz, Cape Cod TCF

One Week Young

Seven long and lonely days have passed
Since you were born

It is the anniversary of the day
You lay on my lap
Breathless.

And in your quiet beauty
I shall always remember
How perfect you were

And those few treasured moments
Of joy and pride

In knowing

That you would always be my son
No matter what.

--Bonnie Rabic, Jasper, GA



Newly Bereaved...

Understanding My Bananas

A bereaved mom posted a picture of her beautiful little girl, happily munching on a banana. Under the picture the mom had written that eight months after losing her little girl, she and her surviving children were finally able to go to the food store to buy bananas again. She went on to describe how traumatic the experience was; that people who have not lost a child can't understand how challenging it can be to face your fears, to walk into a store and buy bananas– the whole time thinking of your child's love of bananas and that now she wasn't here to enjoy them. She said it ripped to the core of her soul, reducing her to tears.

Her simple words had a profound effect on me. I knew just how she felt. Having been crushed with the anguish and heartache of losing our children, little ordinary day-to-day things like bananas can bring us to our knees. I wrote back to the mother and said I was so sorry she lost her beautiful little girl; that I understand how she felt because I have my bananas too. The bereaved mother wrote

back and thanked me for truly understanding when so many people do not. As grieving parents we all have our triggers– or bananas, if you will. Every time I see a Mini Cooper car or a young pretty woman with long light brown hair wearing a certain brand name of clothing, or hear a certain song on the radio, my heart breaks, and these are just a few examples.

All bereaved parents have them. Realizing and understanding these triggers will help you prepare for those times when you're faced with your own bananas. The dictionary's definition of a trigger is an event that precipitated other events. It is my hope that the day will come for each of us that when confronted with our own bananas, we can instead smile and be comforted with the exquisite and beautiful memories of our beloved children as they

envelope us in their love.

-- Louise Lagerman, Houston, Texas.

For Friends and Family...

Don't Tell Me

Don't tell me that you understand
Don't tell me that you know.
Don't tell me that I will survive,
How I will surely grow.
Don't tell me this is just a test,
That I am only bless,
That I am chosen for this task,
Apart from all the rest.
Don't come at me with answers
That can only come from me.
Don't tell me how my grief will pass,
That I will soon be free.
Don't stand in pious judgment,
Of the bonds I must untie.
Don't tell me how to suffer,
Don't tell me how to cry.
My life is filled with selfishness
My pain is all I see,
But I need you, I need your love,
Unconditionally.
Accept me in my ups and downs,
I need someone to share.
Just hold my hand and let me cry,
And say, "My friend, I care."

--Joanena Handel, TCF South Dade, Florida

Welcome...



Slipping Up A Slide

Did you ever try to climb up a slide when you were a child? Skip the stairs— once you've mastered the slide that way, it seems impossible to pass up the challenge of climbing up the slide itself. Up and inch or two, then back, and on it goes until you finally reach the top.

The more bereaved parents I talk to, the more I know that life after a child's death is like "that venture up the slide. Daily decisions and trials push us backwards on that slide. Faith and courage shove us up toward the top. Set a goal to live and work with spirit, even though you lose your footing and slide backwards now and then ...

We will reach the top – TOGETHER.
 --Mary Pauley, La Grange, GA, TCF
 Editor's note: We welcome you to join us as we find ways to rebuild our lives after the loss of a child. Everyone grieves in their own way, but often we find what has helped another bereaved family can help our own.



Helpful Hint...

I wish I could tell everyone who has lost a loved one how important it is to let themselves, and their family, remember. Forget, if you can, the sickness or tragedy that took them, but give them a place in your life. My family speaks very naturally of their father and their sister. We remember the fun, the love, and the closeness. We have memories to cherish, and we shouldn't cheat ourselves by not doing that. I don't mean that we should constantly talk about them, but when something we're doing reminds us of something good that happened when we were still a whole family, we don't hesitate to say so.

--Bereavement Magazine



Book in Review...

THE WORST LOSS, by Barbara D. Rosof. How families heal from the death of a child can depend on many things. The age of the child, how the child died and the family structure all affect the healing process. This book is a "must read" for down-to-earth practical advice to guide families through healing after the death of a child.

--Review by Cheryl Groth

JANUARY ONE

New Year
 new life
 new hope
 new expectations
 new beginnings

Old Times
 old fears
 old places
 old disappointments
 old dead ends

I am aware of my resistance to change
 I am aware of how reality is and how
 Life Goes On
 I am aware
 of how I feel vulnerable

Birthdays
 Deathdays
 Celebrations
 Anniversaries
 Seeking a new future
 as the haunting past returns

I AM ME.
 Change is possible and difficult and inevitable.
 I LIVE ON... NOW
 --Cindy Bouman, TCF Hinsdale, IL

A Mother's Tear

I hear the wailing cry of a mother as she is told her child is gone.
 I see the pain each and every hour since, as she tries to keep herself together to make the necessary arrangements.
 I hear her sob all night long as she begs God to "please bring her child back to her".
 I hear her cry out, "Why my child, why not me?"
 "Why does this have to happen to me?"
 "What did I ever do to have to go through the rest of my life without my child?"
 I heard her say that she "never fathomed that the depth of pain could ever be so deep".
 She says "it hurts too much to even breathe."
 She asked God, "how can I keep going on when I no longer exist inside?"
 I hear her say to herself, "I can't go on, the pain is too strong."
 I see her die a little more every day since then.
 I know inside me that she is but a shell of herself,
 And she will never be whole again.
 I hear her say "I cannot go on, please God, please

take me too”.

Her love is so strong, she longs to be joined with her child.

She loves this child enough to want to go away.

But I beg you, dear Mother,

“PLEASE, LOVE ME ENOUGH TO STAY.”

-- Rev. Tina Marie Thompson, In memory of her son, Troy Michael Franklin, and friend, Johnny Ristic-Likes

Healing

Lord, teach me that one day I will heal.

That I will slowly move away from this agony

And learn to accept what is.

For to have one's child die, Lord,

is too much to bear.

Help me to be gentle with myself and others

And to thank You that he has been,

And he was and still is ours.

The time we shared is so precious.

Teach me to forgive those who do not understand,

And as they talk about their child

who may be in England,

Give me courage to speak of My child

- whose address is now Heaven.

I am so anxious, irritable, angry, and sad, Lord.

Will this last forever?

I am fearful it will,

but pray somehow it won't

Hoping someday I will learn

to live and smile again.

Help me Lord to help myself,

And bless a thousand times

Those who reached out to help me.

It is hard to think of others when you are grieving,

But let me reach out and touch my family.

Help us share this loss together,

So that we may begin to heal together.

Lord, one day I will have traveled far enough

To risk loving again without fear of losing,

To make an album,

To plant a tree,

To give myself time,

To cherish every memory,

And to regain confidence,

For You, Lord, know how much I love and miss him.

So please give me strength, Lord,

To find my way out of this fog and confusion,

To believe once more in all that is good -

Your own Mother Lord, was once as I.

I now thank You, Lord,

For my family, my friends,

My sight, hearing and health,

And for giving me the strength to float through

The bad times, never giving up'

Lastly, thank You for the promise

That one day we'll all be together again.

--Teen & Brian Schreenan, Melbourne, Australia,

son Tim died age 19 in an accident with his best:

friend.

Tomorrow Never Comes

Tomorrow is not promised to anyone

Young or old alike,

And today may be the last chance

You get to hold your loved one tight.

So if you're waiting for tomorrow

Why not do it today?

For if tomorrow never comes

You'll surely regret the day

That you didn't take that extra time

For a smile, a hug or a kiss,

And you were too busy to grant someone

What turned out to be their one last wish.

So hold your loved ones close today

And whisper in their ears,

Tell them you love them very much

And you'll always hold them dear.

Take time to say, "I'm sorry,"

"Please forgive me,"

"Thank you," or "It's OK."

And if tomorrow never comes

You'll have no regrets about today.

--Norma Cornett Marek

Thank-you for the Year End Donations

Chris & Larry Laulhere in memory of

Cherese Mari Laulhere

Paula & David Hartman in memory of

Rachel Anne Hartman



Our Children Remembered



Ron Acker
Born: 10/65 Died: 5/95
Mother: Ursula Spey-Acker
Father: Heinz H. Acker

Jonathan Adams
Born: 1/81 Died: 2/08
Parent: Siv & Eddie Adams

Ramon Alvarez
Born: 10/84 - Died: 2/07
Mother: Terrie Alvarez

Sumer Nicole Alvarez
Born: 5/85 Died: 7/005
Parents: Dave Alvarez & Sandy Murphy

Noah William Aragon
Born: 1/05 Died: 3/06
Parents: Rich & Michele Aragon

Brandon Armstrong
Miscarried: July 1995
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Joshua Arevalo
Born: 7/93 Died: 8/11
Mother: Vilma Alfaro

Joseph David Artino
Born: 11/51 Died: 11/07
Mother: Nancy Graybill & Step-father: Art Graybill

Jason M. Bakos
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07
Father: James Bakos

Alexandra Renee Balesh
Born: 9/73 Died: 3/95
Parents: Ron & Stella Balesh

Kimberly Barcenas
Born: 2/88 Died: 10/06
Mother: Maria Guadalupe Ixta

Christopher Barnhart
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07
Parents: Ron & Susan Mother
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Christopher Michael Barta
Born: 2/72 Died: 9/04
Mother: Mary Barta

Stephen Barrington Baxter
Born: 7/61 Died: 4/99
Parents: Cash & Betty Baxter

Vincent Beagle
Born: 11/82 Died: 5/10
Mother: Angela Beagle

Tristina Ann Beale
Born: 12/80 Died: 9/08
Mother: Kathy Beale

Frank Becker
Born: 11/61 Died: 8/07
Parents: Al & Louise Becker

Kimberly Belluomini
Born: 10/62 Died: 10/00
Parents: Joyce Anderson & Ronald Assmann

Sammy Bloom
Born: 2/59 Died: 12/82
Parents: Lois & Sam Bloom

Kurt Boettcher
Born: 12/71 Died: 06/95
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Todd Boettcher
Born: 2/79 Died: 10/79
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Robert Bolde
Born: 7/94 Died: 9/12
Parents: Diane & Paul Bolde

Alan Bolton
Born: 11/63 Died: 3/06
Mother: Helen Eddens

Kevin Border
Born: 11/88 Died: 11/09
Mother: Kelly Border

Antoinette Botley
Born: 12/67 Died: 7/10
Mother: Fredia McGrew

Renee Bouchard
Born: 3/75 Died: 5/06
Mother: Susan Bouchard

Tamara Lynette Boyd
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/00
Parents: Gloria & Gayle Jones

Jazzelyn Braga
Born: 11/08 Died: 5/09
Father: Leonard Braga

Lawrence Tom Brennan
Born: 11/86 Died: 12/10
Parents: Manuel & Lisa Jo Hernandez

William Joseph Britton
Born: 3/62 Died: 7/85
Mother: Jean Anne Britton

Sayumi Claire Brower
Born: 9/08 Died: 9/08
Parents: Scott & Maiko Brower

Devon Leigh Brown
Born: 5/90 Died: 3/92
Mother: Heidi Brown

Eric Michael Brown
Born: 11/65 Died: 9/00
Mother: Beverly Young

Benjamin Matthew Bryan
Born: 10/84 Died: 6/96
Mother: Karen Merickel & Robert Bryan

Robert L. Buckner
Born: 2/92 Died: 3/03
Parents: Brad & Cindy Buckner

Scott Buehler
Born: 3/80 Died: 2/08
Mother: Elizabeth Buehler Miller

Tony Burack
Born: 12/63 Died: 12/87
Parents: Rita & Herb Burack

Brittany Nicole Cail
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/08
Mother: Raquel Cail

Albert Caldera
Born: 3/78 Died: 2/10
Parents: Refugio & Maria Caldera

Christina Califano
Born: 10/90 Died: 11/06
Father: John Califano

Cesar Isaac Cancino
Born: 01/05 Died: 01/05
Parents: Claudia & Cesar Cancino

Kenneth Capparelli
Born: 1/77 Died: 1/04
Mother: Sandy Capparelli

Kevin Castaneda
Born: 4/94 Died: 4/13
Parents: Fernando & Aleda Hockenberry

Frank Christopher Castania
Born: 8/94 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie Castania --Grandparents:
Richard & Ann Leach

Vanessa Roseann Castania
Born: 2/97 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie Castania-- Grandparents:
Richard & Ann Leach

Ryan Cavanaugh
Born: 6/83 Died: 11/06
Mother: Kimberly Cavanaugh

Zackary Kenneth Charlton
Born: 11/81 Died: 3/10
Parents: Christine & Kerr
Sister: Allie Bentley

Nathaniel Choate
Born: 7/80 Died: 5/08
Mother: Vicki Blain

Andrew Alexander Chou
Born: 12/03 Died: 12/03
Parents: Lu-Sieng Siau & Wibawa Chou

Michelle Christian
Born: 10/67 Died: 04/13
Parents: Paul & Toni Saben

Ophelra Grace Clark
Born: 10/82 Died: 9/10
Sister: Rebecca Clark

John Francis Cleary
Born: 12/74 Died: 8/93
Mother: Pauline Cleary Basil

Kelly Swan Cleary
Born: 3/59 Died: 3/95
Parents: Dick & Bev Swan

Sarah Elizabeth Cooper
Born: 10/95 Died: 8/00
Parents: Mark & Sandra Cooper

Tiffany Corkins
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/05
Mother: Nancy Lamb

Hugo Ignacio Corbalan
Born: 4/84 Died: 5/08
Mother: Isabel Acosta

Marika Critelli
Born: 3/78 Died: 11/09
Father: Michael Critelli

Joseph Francesco Michael Curreri
Born: 9/80 Died: 10/07
Mother: Karen Curreri

Scott Curry
Born: 8/59 Died: 7/08
Mother: Marilyn Nemeth

Justin Dalton
Born: 9/74 Died: 8/09
Mother: Janis Farran

Rodney D. Day, Jr.
Born: 4/96 Died: 6/01
Parents: Jersuha Day

Danielle Ann Davis
Born: 10/78 Died: 3/10
Mother: Jackie Davis

Michael David Deboe
Born: 12/75 Died: 5/09
Parents: Dave & Judy Deboe

Phillip Dennis Delurgio
Born: 11/64 Died: 7/10
Mother: Denise Nolan Delurgio

Anthony Joseph Demasio
Born: 6/52 Died: 7/00
Vivian Demasio
Lee Denmon, III



Born: 7/79 Died: 3/03
Parents: Frances & Lee
Denmon, Jr.

Douglas Thhorn Dethlefsen
Born: 11/64 Died: 11/09
Father: Douglas G. Dethlefsen

Cori Daye Desmond
Born: 3/80 Died: 12/09
Parents: Mark & Monica
Desmond

Luke Edward Devlin
Born: 12/07 Died: 12/07
Parents: Jacqueline & Tom
Devlin

Allison Jeanine Kirkbride
Dewart
Born: 10/87 Died: 1/06
Parents: Z & Michael Dewart

Gary A. Dicey, II
Born: 4/82 Died: 6/98
Father: Gary A. Dicey, Sr.

Michael A. DiMaggio
Born: 10/54 Died: 7/01
Parents: Neno & Helen Di
Maggio

Amy Elizabeth Dodd
Born: 1/74 Died: 7/02
Mother: Kathleen Dodd

Heidi Dominguez
Born: 8/68 Died: 06/13
Grandmother: Rita Menendez

Wayne Douglas
Born: 9/71 Died: 1/10
Mother: Marie Galli

Ramsay Downie, II
Born: 2/64 Died: 10/99
Ramsay & Sally Downie

Joel Draper
Born: 1/84 Died: 5/04
Mother: Tracy Solis

Rachel Sheridan Dunlap
Born: 9/69 Died: 3/09
Mother: Janell Dunlap

Myaka Kaitana Durham
Born: 1/04/06 Died: 1/06
Parents: Jahman & Ampy
Durham

Scott Michael Dykstra
Born: 7/72 Died: 10/01
Parents: Mike & Rita Dykstra

Gary Edholm
Born: 5/56 Died: 9/95
Parents: Patti & Bob White

Mark Edler
Born: 11/73 Died: 1/92
Parents: Kitty & Rich Edler

Timothy Charles Egnatoff
Born: 11/92 Died: 9/08
Parents: Rick & Cathy Reny

Lorian Tamara Elbert
Born: 5/66 Died: 10/07
Mother: Dorota Starr Elbert

Luke Emery
Born: 7/89 Died: 12/99
Parents: Karen & Glenn Emery

Jeffery Mark Engleman
Born: 6/61 Died: 2/10
Parents: Janette & Laszlo
Engelman

Richard Paul Engelman
Born: 02/66 Died: 03/95
Parents: Janette & Laszlo
Engelman

Henry Espinoza
Born: 12/63 Died: 9/98
Mother: Virginia Espinoza

Kurt Faerber
Born: 8/63 Died: 3/87
Mother: Trudy Faerber

Jarod Ryan Faulk
Born: 8/86 Died: 12/08
Father: Joe Faulk

Chase Feldkamp
Born: 5/05 Died: 3/06
Parents: Buddy & Jessica
Feldkamp

David Joseph Ferralez
Born: 2/74 Died: 12/02
Parents: John & Rebecca
Ferralez

Michella Leanne Matasso
Fincannon
Born: 8/86 Died: 1/06
Parents: Bill & Cheryl Matasso

Emma Nicole Fisher
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06
Parents: Nancy & Elliott Fisher

Casey Owen Flint
Born: 5/75 Died: 7/09
Mother: Catherine Flint

April Lou Flynn
Born: 4/61 Died: 1/05
Mother: Peggy Flynn

Mark Frazee
Born: 5/79 Died: 7/07
Mother: Kathy Cammarano

Hunter Rebecca Bloem Freese
Born: 1/02 Died: 4/12
Parents: Brian & Michelle
Freese

Peter J. Fuentes
Born: 2/68 Died: 3/98
Mother: Pat Fuentes

Donald A. Funk
Born: 12/41 Died: 9/00
Parents: William & Norma Jean
Funk

Mark Scott Galper
Born: 2/62 Died: 5/97
Mother: Sheri Schrier

Melinda "Peeper" Gardner-
Collins
Born: 6/56 Died: 8/07
Mother: Pat Gardner

Justin Brian Gartland
Born: 10/81 Died: 4/05
Parents: Brian & Paulette
Gartland

Richard Lamar Gibbs
Born: 3/84 Died: 5/05
Mother: Ann Wasecha

Steven Paul Giuliano
Born: 4/55 Died: 4/95
Mother: Eleanor Giuliano

Jacob Seth Goar
Born: 1/79 Died: 5/01
Parents: Michael & Venus
Nunan

Morgan Leeann Gomez
Born: 1/08 Died: 1/08
Parents: Amanda & Louie
Gomez

Nicholas Gonzalez
Born: 2/63 Died: 10/01
Parents: Nick & Gloria Gonzalez

Evan Leonard Grau
Born: 8/82 Died: 5/04
Parents: Maria & Wayne Grau

Christopher Dudley Gray
Born: 5/83 Died: 2/04
Parents: Dudley & Laurie Gray

Matthew Ryan Gregory
Born: 3/80 Died: 1/11
Parents: Carol & Fred Gregory

Adam Francois Guymon
Born: 4/89 Died: 4/06
Mother: Eileen Guymon

Anthony Joel Guzman
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/08
Mother: Teresa Guzman

Andrew John Gvist
Born: 7/88 Died: 5/05
Father: Mark Gvist

Justin Todd Gwizdala
Born: 10/75 Died: 6/96
Parents: Kathy & Gary Gwizdala

James Burman Hahn
Born: 11/68 Died: 12/05
Mother: Berna Hahn &
J. Thomas Hahn

Dakota Max Haight
Born: 9/27 Died: 9/12
Parents: Gail Cochran & Bill
Scar

Grant Henry Hampton
Born: 3/79 Died: 7/05
Parents: Jeri & George Medak

Brandon Allen Hanson
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/10
Mother: Yolanda Alepe

Robert Belmares Harris
Born: 12/66 Died: 12/95
Parents: Bea & Larry Harris

Leslie Geraci Hart
Born: 6/66 Died: 7/11
Father: John Geraci

Rachel Anne Hartman
Born: 2/91 Died: 7/04
Parents: David & Paula
Hartman

Caleb Haskell
Born: 6/78 Died: 9/06
Parents: Karen & Kim Haskell

Daniel Hassley
Born: 2/71 Died: 2/90
Parents: Eila & Richard Hassley

Alicia M. Hayes
Born: 1/81 Died: 5/96
Parents: Becky & Dave Jordan

Jason Patrick Healey
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/09
Mother: Sharon Sykes Healey

Emma Joy Heath
Born: 5/98 Died: 6/07
Parents: DJ & Phil Heath

Kent Hisamune
Born: 6/00 Died: 6/00
Parents: Toshi & Hideko
Hisamune

Jesse Hoffman
Born: 1/86 Died: 8/10
Mother: Gina Hoffman



Our Children Remembered



Hope Ann Honeycutt
Born: 12/62 Died: 6/00
Mother: Donna Honeycutt

Adria Horning
Born: 12/91 Died: 3/07
Parents: Gary Horning & Linda Cipriani

Jeremy Michael Howard
Born: 7/83 Died: 6/94
Mother: Donna Howard-Scruggs
Grandmother: Charlotte Crager

Jennifer Nicole Hower
Born: 6/75 Died: 12/04
Brother: Jeff Hower

Miranda Howells
Born: 8/91 Died: 11/09
Father: Walter Howells III

Rachel Suzanne Hoyt
Born: 2/70 Died: 1/95
Sister: Laura Hoyt D'anna

Tara Hudson
Born: 1/86 Died: 1/07
Mother: Mari Hudson

Chad Michael Huisinga
Born: 10/74 Died: 12/95
Parents: Alan & Melinda Huisinga

Hannah Nichea Hupke
Born: 9/87 Died: 6/05
Parents: Bruce & Joni Hupke

Zane Austin Hutchins
Born: 9/03 Died: 2/04
Parents: Mae Rivera & Jon Hutchins

Casie Leean Hyde
Born: 3/89 Died: 12/05
Mother: Kelli Rigby-Hyde

John Joseph Iacono
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/04
Parents: Nancy & Anthony Iacono

Ben Francisco Inez de la Cruz
Born: 1/71 Died: 11/91
Parents: Francesca Inez & Emmanuel de la Cruz

John E. James
Born: 6/62 Died: 9/93
Parents: Marilyn & Lupe Arvizo

Kalaea Jennings
Born: 4/07 Died: 9/07
Parents: Nacio & Maria Jennings

Melissa Gale Jetton
Born: 5/58 Died: 7/84
Parents: James & Cathie Jetton

William Jimenez
Born: 3/94 Died: 5/04
Sister: Adrianna Jimenz

Daniel A. Jones V.
Born: 5/92 Died: 10/09
Father: Daniel A. Jones IV.

David B. Jones
Born: 3/50 Died: 3/01
Mother: Lucille Jones

Thomas Sean Jordahl
Born: 7/67 Died: 4/03
Mother: Lynda Orr

Jeff Joyce
Born: 2/68 Died: 4/01
Mother: Wadene Duffy

Lance John Juracka
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/06
Parents: Frank & Nancy Juracka

Heather Mary Kain
Born: 6/83 Died: 2/10
Mother: Maura Kain

Edwin J. Kaslowski
Born: 11/67 Died: 7/96
Mother: Carolyn Kaslowski

Emily Matilda Kass
Born: 6/95 Died: 3/06
Mother: Susan Kass

Scott Ira Kaufman
Born: 4/68 Died: 7/95
Mother: Renee Kaufman

Douglas Drennen Kay
Born: 3/72 Died: 9/06
Parents: Steve & Diane Kay

Kalin Marie Keech
Born: 10/90 Died: 6/09
Richard & Kris Keech

Kathryn Anne Kelly
Born: 12/72 Died: 1/91
Parents: Dick & Timmy Kelly

Timothy Michael Kerrigan
Born: 4/68 Died: 8/02
Mother: JoAnna Kerrigan

Sean A. King
Born: 7/63 Died: 12/07
Parents: Catherine & Michael King

Kay Dee Kinney-Palser
Born: 6/87 Died: 6/99
Grandmothers: Diana Palser & Kay Kinney

Colby Joshua Koenig
Born: 6/84 Died: 1/10
Parents: Cindy Tobis & John Koenig

Keith Konopasek
Born: 1/63 Died: 7/95
Parents: Ken & Mary Konopasek

Michael Kroppman
Born: 12/88 Died: 3/12
Parents: Brenda & Greg Kroppmann

Susan Ann Kruger
Born: 9/64 Died: 6/08
Mother: Gloria Swensson

Kyle Kubachka
Born: 1/89 Died: 11/08
Parents: Keith & April Kubachka

Natalie Samantha Large
Born: 6/05 Died: 6/05
Parents: Burke & Maya Large

Dolores LaRue
Born: 8/57 Died: 11/08
Mother: Maggie Ramirez

Cherese Mari Laulhere
Born: 9/74 Died: 3/96
Parents: Larry & Chris Laulhere

Bernard Lawrence
Born: 2/63 Died: 12/06
Mother: Jackie Bowens

Bryan Yutaka Lee
Born: 12/70 Died: 9/07
Mother: Kathee Lee

Steven J. Lee
Born: 1/63 Died: 10/06
Mother: Donna Lee

Avery James Lent
Born: 12/03 Died: 7/06
Parents: Crystal Henning & Dan Holly

Wendy Levine
Born: 10/65 Died: 11/95
Parents: Paul & Sharon Levine

Michael Lococo
Born: 2/55 Died: 1/10
Mother: Patrina Lococo

Richard Lee Luthe
Born: 11/76 Died: 1/98
Parents: Jeff & Lorraine Luthe

Shauna Jean Malone
Born: 8/70 Died: 1/13
Parents: Tom & Mary Malone

Michelle Marie Mandich
Born: 5/89 Died: 2/05
Parents: Michael & Lori Mandich

Daniel Edward Manella
Born: 9/67 Died: 10/98
Sister: Kathleen Manella

Elizabeth Mann
Born: 7/60 Died: 5/05
Parents: David & Olivia Mann

Janet Sue Mann
Born: 10/61 Died: 9/10
Mother: Nancy Mann

Gabriella Mantini
Born: 5/85 Died: 8/06
Mother: Martha Mantini

Alex J. Mantyla
Born: 3/89 Died: 8/08
Parents: Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla

Kyle Jeffrey Martin
Born: 11/80 Died: 7/04
Parents: David & Joanne Martin

Jason Lee Martineau
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07
Father: James Bakos

Audrey Sinclair Marshall
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00
Parents: Don & Kimberly Marshall

Paul Martinez
Born: 1/86 Died: 3/08
Mother: Lorraine Martinez

Daniel George Mateik III
Born: 12/84 Died: 6/09
Mother: Stefanie Hudak

Daniel McClernan
Born: 7/53 Died: 2/07
Mother: Lee McClernan

Robert Andrew Mead
Born: 5/65 Died: 4/11
Mother: Carol Mead

Nicole Marie Megaloudis
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/04
Mother: Gail Megaloudis-Rongen

Alexis Melgoza
Born: 3/90 Died: 6/11
Mother: Gina Melgoza

Shawn Mellen
Born: 05/81 Died: 8/99
Godmother: Rose Sarukian



Damion Mendoza
Born: 7/76 Died: 6/92
Parents: Carlene & Paul
Mendoza

Shannon R. Middleton
Born: 2/77 Died: 5/94
Mother: Candy Middleton

Steven Douglas Millar
Born: 2/70 Died: 10/00
Parents: David & Suzanne
Millar

Patricia Acha Miller
Born: 1/62 Died: 11/10
Mother: Christina Acha

Jamie Susan Mintz
Born: 11/52 Died: 12/04
Sister: Jessica Mintz

Angel Flores Misa, Jr
Born: 10/69 Died: 7/06
Parents: Roland & Luscita Dilley

David F. Mobilio
Born: 7/71 Died: 11/02
Parents: Richard & Laurie
Mobilio

Danielle Ann Mosher
Born: 8/78 Died: 6/97
Parents: Paul & Rose Mary
Mosher

Benjamin A. Moutes
Born: 3/07 Died: 5/10
Parents: Kevin & Claudia
Moutes

Peter Anthony Murillo
Born: 11/72 Died: 10/04
Mother: Stella Murillo

Christopher Myers
Born: 10/86 Died: 5/06
Parents: Janet & Larry Myers

Edward W. Myricks II
Born: 4/72 Died: 10/11
Parents: Edward & Sandra
Myricks

Annamay Rebecca Celine Naef
Born: 4/95 Died: 10/11
Parents: Heinz & Ursina Naef

Christian Paul Nagy
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/02
Parents: Paul & Teresa Nagy

Richard Paul Negrete
Born: 6/43 Died: 2/04
Mother: Sally Negrete

Joy Ellen Nelson
Born: 1/97 Died: 1/97
Parents: Mary Desmond &
David Nelson

Eric M. Neuan
Born: 1/79 Died: 3/09
Parents: Eric & Lynn Neuman

Danielle Nice
Born: 7/81 Died: 8/04
Parents: Daniel & Debbie Nice

Monique Nicholson
Born: 7/71 Died: 1/08
Sister: April Nicholson

Denise Northbrook
Born: 2/67 Died: 8/31
Parents: Mike & Barbie Schafer

Geoff James Nowak
Born: 11/97 Died: 2/98
Parents: Christen Murphey &
Geoff Nowak

Logan Kay Nunez
Born: 1/95 Died: 4/05
Parents: Mike & Laura Nunez

Michaela Grace Nunez
Born: 2/05 Died: 7/05
Parents: Roger & Jennifer
Nunez

Sally Anne O'Connor
Born: 12/62 Died: 2/11
Mother: Grace "Darline" Dye

Thomas Jinkwang Oh
Born: 2/72 Died: 6/03
Sister: Barbara Oh

Tyiri Ojose
Born: 9/10 Died: 7/10
Mother: Maureen Ojose

Dominique Oliver
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/02
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Elliott Shawn Oliver
Born: 8/75 - 2/13
Parents: Elliott Joseph Oliver Jr.
& Linda Barcela

Henry Ortega
Born: 5/97 Died: 7/08
Parents: Henry & Wendy Ortega

Caitlin Nalani Oto
Born: 10/88 Died: 2/05
Father: Carl Oto

Sally O' Toole
Born: 10/53 Died: 03/85
Mother: Kay Arndt

Masahiro Ozaki
Born: 5/78 Died: 8/09
Sister: Etsuko Moromi

Lucas Hunter Palar
Born: 11/89 Died: 5/06
Parents: Hugh Palar & DeAnna
Williams

Armon Parker
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/04
Mother: Sabrina Parker

Annemarie Pellerito
Born: 9/73 Died: 8/03
Parents: Vicki & Pete Pellerito

Joseph Ryan Persh
Born: 1/03 Died: 2/03
Parents: Gary & Jane Persh

Daniel Andrew Peterson
Born: 1/78 Died: 5/85
Mother: Gay Kennedy

Richard Phillips
Born: 9/81 Died: 3/11
Mother: Lisa Grant

Jennifer Pizer
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/91
Parents: Janis & Bud Pizer

Chris Pierce
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Steven Randall Prather
Born: 9/62 Died: 8/10
Parents: Stu & Evalyn Prather

D'Juan Marcel Pratt
Born: 12/79 Died: 11/06
Mother: Gwendolyn Elaine
Maiden

Shannon Quigly
Born: 11/2/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Shortridge

Daniel Paul Rains
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/91
Mother: Janet Ferjo

Jeffrey Alan Rakus
Born: 10/86 Died: 7/06
Parents: Tony & Donna Rakus

Julius Ramirez JR.
Born: 8/10 Died: 8/10
Parents: Bridle & Jules Ramirez

Leo Joshua Rank II
Born: 3/11 Died: 4/12
Parents: Roberta Redner & Leo
Rank

Tejal Pati Reddy
Born: 6/86 Died: 12/08
Parents: Pranitha & Krupa
Reddy

Richard R. Reyes
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/08
Mother: Terry Reyes

Aaron Rico
Born: 12/89 Died: 12/10
Parents: Cameron & Annette
Rico

Keith Patrick Riley
Born: 3/69 Died: 10/99
Parents: Kevin & Debby Riley

Christopher Rivera
Born: 10/67 Died: 1/06
Mother: Katherine Wagner

Ryanne Robles
Born: 10/12 Died: 10/12
Mother: Glenda Osborne

Ruth "Vanny" Rodriguez
Born: 10/73 Died: 5/01
Parents: George & Ruby
Rodriguez

Christine E. Rojas
Born: 6/64 Died: 12/94
Parents: Ray & Esther Rojas

Jamie (James) Lloyd Roman
Born: 4/78 Died: 2/97
Mother: Carolyn Roman

Frankie Romero
Born: 10/81 Died: 9/93
Mother: Magdalena Hilda Salas
& Francisco L. Romero

Dominic Roque
Born: 8/02 Died: 1/09
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

James Garrett Ross
Born: 12/74 Died: 10/05
Parents: Jim & Sharon Ross

Michael William Roth
Born: 6/71 Died: 12/08
Parents: Karen & William Roth

John Patrick Rouse
Born: 1/78 Died: 7/02
Mother: Sharon Rouse

Michael B. Ruggera, Jr.
Born: 4/51 Died: 4/96
Parents: Michael & Frances
Ruggera

Shannon Quigley Runningbear
Born: 12/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Crowley
Shortridge

Joseph Sahu
Born: 6/89 Died: 4/12
Parents: Ron & Cathy Sahu



Armando Sainz
Born: 6/76 Died: 2/02
Mother: Jennie Hernandez

Miaamor Jennine Steen
Born: 7/05 Died: 9/10
Father: Donya Steen

Lexi Noelle Valladares
Born: 4/04 Died: 7/10
Parents: Fausto & Erica Valladares

Dennis William Webber
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/05
Parent: Blaine & Sin Young Webber

Andrew Patrick Sakura
Born: 3/90 Died: 3/08
Parents: Bruce & Karen Sakura

Daniel John Swiggum
Born: 6/88 Died: 7/08
Parents: Stewart & Marian Swiggum

Mark T. Vasquez
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/11
Parents: Manuel & Blanca Vasquez

Sharon Ann Wendt
Born: 6/54 Died: 4/99
Parents: Mr. & Mrs. Carmel Doucet

Jeffrey Alan Sampson
Born: 3/86 Died: 5/05
Parents: Claude & Paula Sampson

Elizabeth D. Szucs
Born: 4/72 Died: 6/11
Parents: Dolores & Frank Szucs

Gregory Earl Veal
Born: 2/90 Died: 7/00
Mother: Virginia Veal

Brian Scott West
Born: 8/70 Died: 4/08
Parents: David & Connie Schlottman

Lisa Sandoval
Born: 9/76 Died: 12/92
Parents: Susan & Ruben Sandoval

Anthony Tanori
Born: 8/12 Died: 8/12
Parents: Chuck & Sylvia Tanori

Tommy Villanueva
Born: 10/68 Died: 5/02
Parents: Jennie & Edgar Villanueva

Andreas Wickstrom
Born: 12/83 Died: 12/01
Parents: John & Inge Wickstrom

F. Marlow Santos
Born: 10/84 Died: 7/93
Parents: Fred & Julie Gillette

Joseph Tauaefa
Born: 2/85 Died: 7/10
Parents: Loi & Sioka Tauaefa

Justin Alexander Velasquez
Born: 7/12 Died: 7/12
Parents: Ricardo & Marcie Velasquez

Victoria Winchester
Born: 2/57 Died: 2/84
Mother: Erin Adams

Karen Ailegra Scholl
Born: 8/64 Died: 4/99
Mother: Kay Scholl

Kristi Nicole Taylor
Born: 5/80 Died: 9/94
Parents: Kathy & Cory Taylor

Eric Douglas Vines
Born: 7/77 Died: 7/91
Parents: Doug & Lynn Vines

Jennifer Winkelspecht
Born: 7/75 Died: 8/95
Parents: Brian & Lisa Winkelspecht

Matt Scholl
Born: 2/73 Died: 4/08
Parents: Bill & Kay Scholl

John Teresinski
Born: 12/67 Died: 1/00
Parents: Beverly & Victor Teresinski

Mark Daniel Vinson
Born: 11/78 Died: 7/10
Mother: Virginia Vinson

Jordan Michael Witte
Born: 1/87 Died: 11/08
Parents: Licha & Mike Witte

Candace Arond Schonberg
Born: 3/98 Died: 11/00
Parents: Andrene & Arond Schonberg

Ryan William Thomas
Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04
Mother: Linda Thomas

Serena Yasmeeen C. Viveros
Born: 11/05 Died: 11/05
Mother: Brenda Viveros

Bob Woodyard
Born: 7/55 Died: 10/08
Bill & Barb Woodyard

Jonathan "Jamie" Schubert
Born: 7/65 Died: 12/06
Parents: Lynn & Roy Schubert

Laura C. Toomey
Born: 1/69 Died: 12/78
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth Toomey

Chris Henry Vogeler
Born: 9/66 Died: 12/04
Parents: Frank & Lois Fisher

Amy Woolington
Born: 10/85 Died: 1/07
Parents: Pam Weiss & John Woolington

Melissa Lauren Schweisberger
Born: 10/84 Died: 11/99
Parents: John & Margarita Schweisberger

Michael D. Toomey
Born: 4/62 Died: 2/05
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth Toomey

Marisa Ann Vuoso
Born: 7/83 Died: 3/93
Parents: Debbie & Marco Vuoso

Christopher Wootton
Born: 11/86 Died: 5/08
Father: Jim Wootton

Dylan Elwood Sievers
Born: 8/08 Died: 8/08
Parents: Daren & Marne Sievers

Nathan Torbert
Born: 1/78 Died: 12/05
Mother: Rebecca Williams

Kristopher Wadman
Born: 11/82 Died: 10/00
Parents: Michael & Melodie Wadman

Cristofur Daye Wroten-Kennedy
Born: 2/75 Died: 9/01
Mother: Dusty Wroten
Father: Joe Kennedy

Tyson Donald Sievers
Born: 8/08 Died: 9/08
Parents: Darren & Marne Sievers

David Torres
Born: 6/66 Died: 3/06
Mother: Joyce Whirry

Carl Alan Wagenknecht
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/04
Parents: Tom & Janis Wagenknecht

Steve R. Young
Born: 7/57 Died: 2/90
Mother: Marjorie Young

Spencer Simpson
Born: 1/80 Died: 6/13
Parents: Rich & Shelly Simpson

Marcelo Torres
Born: 8/81 Died: 9/03
Parents: Jaime & Carmen Torres

Jeffrey Sinclair Wagstaff
Born: 9/80 Died: 4/99
Parents: Johnny & Barbara Walker
Sister: Sheimekia Wagstaff

Whitney Marie Young
Born: 8/87 Died: 11/06
Parents: Marlene & Steve Young

Gerald Slater
Born: 2/71 Died: 8/94
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Brian Gregory Trotter
Born: 10/78 Died: 8/94
Mother: Abby Trotter-Herft

Cory Dylan Walker
Born: 8/76 Died: 3/01
Parents: Jim and Susan Walker

Thomas Zachary
Born: 12/85 Died: 7/11
Father: Bob McGaha

Joel Paulson Draper
Born: 1/84 Died: 3/04
Mother: Tracy Solis

Ubong Jabari Uko
Born: 2/81 Died: 5/09
Mother: Denise Dues

Eric Webb
Born: 6/85 Died: 10/07
Parents: Jim & Vickie Webb

Kevin Zelik
Born: 11/85 Died: 6/10
Parents: Joe & Linda Zelik

Larry A. Stauffer
Born: 1/67 Died: 5/08
Mother: Shirley Fininn

Vance C. Valdez
Born: 10/90 Died: 3/12
Mother: Maria R. Valdez

Birthday Tributes...



In honor of your child's birthday, we welcome you to submit a birthday tribute. Though your child is no longer here to buy a present for, think of this as a birthday present about your child. This tribute is an opportunity to share your child with us all. (We thank you for any birthday donations that help offset chapter expenses.)

Sorry, No tributes were submitted this month

For Siblings...



A Sibling Dies

It is January first. My heart twinkles once again because the holidays are over. How can a season of light bring so much dark? Thirty years ago, on Christmas morning, my brother died in our home by suicide in a very violent manner. He was 23; my other brother was 24; and I was 19 years old. Our family of five was irretrievably shattered.

Don, my brother who died, was so much a part of us. He brought so much joy in his living and then so much pain in his dying. Who am I to grieve him still? The memories well up every December like a deep dark night unbidden. Anger, sadness, rejection, guilt become my Christmas ornaments. "Give me back my family - give me back my Christmas, you creep. Give me back your laughter," I want to shout at him. Who am I to miss him? Who am I to rage when he was the one in the grips of a pain so untenable that he could not speak of it, but only act upon it? Who am I to cry? Well, I'm entitled. I'm a survivor after all. One doesn't get there on a water slide, if you know what I mean.

When Christmas rolls around, I do my dance with grief once again. Some years, it's a waltz; other years a tango. It doesn't seem to matter if it's two, twenty or thirty years since my brother died, I get out my dancing shoes. I don't go looking for pain like some wacky masochist. It finds me.

Some years I announce - around November 25th, "I'm over this." I act accordingly. I shop for Christmas Cards and don't go near my dancing shoes. It doesn't matter. They find me. It's not like I didn't have therapy. I've had dance therapy, art therapy, regular therapy, travel therapy, friendship therapy, biofeedback/hypnosis therapy, cream puff therapy, swimming therapy,

forgiveness therapy, spiritual community therapy, law school therapy ... Law School therapy? The fun had to end somewhere.

Seriously, losing a sibling is heart wrenching and no laughing matter. It took me ten or fifteen years to truly laugh again, let alone make light of myself. That just happened this year. No doubt, because I am writing of it, rather than speaking of it, which I rarely do. It feels safer to write. Other than to therapists, I've spoken of his death to three people in thirty years. Who could understand, I felt, and why diminish his being or expose myself?

I adored my brother Don - he made me laugh like a monkey. I adore both my brothers; as a child they were my world. Not very healthy perhaps, but it worked for me. Home life was chaotic and quite frightening because my father was more than a little nuts. My mother's energy was spent containing his insanity and keeping our bodies and souls together. She was part steel, part angora.

We never spoke of Don after his death. The community ostracized us; my father took a trip down devil 's lane, and my mother mourned my brother until the day she died. I'm sad to say that we never had Don's picture in our home again, because the pain was too severe. It seems we could not get past it. We went to our separate corners and quietly mourned. It was different years ago; so much remained hidden. Self-healing groups were non-existent, shrinks were stigmas, and the Catholic Church unforgiving.

I couldn't save him. I was the last person he talked with on Christmas Eve. For months, I barely spoke and relived the shock daily. I ate a lot. Death by mashed potatoes. That was sure to bring him back. I retreated into a private world for several years where if I wasn't dead, I'd sure like to be. This is grief. And it does soften over time. It softens like water softens rock, in its flowing, gentle, rushing, mysterious way. It softens like a sweet whisper of a memory that lulls you to sleep, knowing that love knits the bones of despair together, tighter, stronger, more curious, more delicious than ever before. Knowing that the fires of your being burn the cross of despair. Knowing that the chamber of the heart is strong beyond measure and can take it and transform the pain into joy. Joy for having known this person, for a day or ten years or two months. Joy for having the courage to be. For

knowing yourself in many garments. For taking a risk to love anyone again: a neighbor, a friend, a cat, a lover, a stranger, yourself. The broken heart opens and mends itself. In the middle of the night, when no one is there but many are listening, joy seeps into me. After all, I'm entitled. I'm a survivor.

--TCF Mann County & San Francisco Chapters

We welcome and encourage you to submit contributions you found meaningful to you in your grief. We prefer your original poems and thoughts, but we can also print other material if proper credit is given to the author. Members, please take the time to submit a poem or article you found helpful.

TCF Now on Facebook Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National Organization's new Facebook page by becoming a fan. You can get there by clicking on the link from TCF's national website home page at www.compassionatefriends.org. Or, you can log into Facebook and search for The Compassionate Friends/USA. In addition to the social support aspect, The Compassionate Friends/USA Facebook page will have information about upcoming events.

Our Website... We are now posting a tribute page for each of our children. Please visit the site and add your child's information. You can also download the monthly newsletter which will help defray chapter expenses of the printing and mailing of your newsletter. (Please let us know if you can be removed from the regular mailing list.) Contact Crystal at: crystal@tcfbsla.org and she will help you with the steps to create your own tribute.

The National Office of TCF has an ongoing support group for parents and siblings online. For a complete schedule and to register for Online Support, visit <http://compassionatefriends.org> and follow the directions to register.

Healing the Grieving Heart... Featuring experts who discuss the many aspects of grief, with a main focus on the death of a child and its effects on the family. "Healing the Grieving Heart" can be heard on the Web live at www.health.voiceamerica.com.

Welcome New Members ... We welcome our new members to our chapter of TCF. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting. Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. Each meeting is different, and the next one might be the one that really

helps.

We encourage you to take advantage of our resources. We have a well stocked library of grief materials, a phone friend committee that welcomes calls at any time, and a members' directory to call another parent you have met at the meetings.

Thank You ... Thank you to all those who donate to our meeting basket or send donations to our chapter. Since there are no fees or dues to belong to TCF, your donations keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help.



Birthday Tributes... During your child's birthday month, you may place a picture and either a short personal message, poem, or story about your child in the newsletter. (Less than 200 words, please.) Do not cut your picture. We will block off unused areas. If it is a group photo, identify the person to be cropped. This tribute is an opportunity to tell a short story about your child, so we will be able to know them better. Photos must have identification on the back. Enclose a SASE in order for photos to be returned by mail. (Please do not send your only picture.)

Tributes must be in by the 1st of the month preceding your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Dec. 1st for Jan. birthdays). Otherwise they will appear if space permits or in the following month's issue.



Phone Friends ... Sometimes you want or need to talk about the life and death of your child with someone that understands and can share your pain. The following friends are on the telephone committee, and are available to talk when ever you need someone who understands.

- Cheryl Stephens.....(323) 855-2630
- Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221
- Karen Merickel.....(310) 375-2498
- Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213
- SIBLING PHONE FRIENDS**
- Kristy Mueller..... (310) 373-9977
- Joey Vines..... (310) 658-4339
- REGIONAL COORDINATOR..... (818) 516-2420**

Memory Book... Our chapter has an ongoing Memory Book. Each child is given a page in the book. Pictures, poems, or a tribute you choose that will help us to remember your child can be included. Feel free to add your picture to the Memory Book at any of our meetings. This is one way we can meet and remember the new member's children.

Library Information... At each meeting we have a library table. It is on the honor system. You may borrow a book and can bring it back at the next

meeting. Many of you have books you got when you were newly bereaved and may no longer need. Perhaps you would like to donate books on grief that you found helpful. If you wish to donate a book to our library, please let the librarian know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

Newsletter... For those of you who are receiving the newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us that you might find it helpful. We warmly invite you to attend one of our meetings. Please let us know if you know of someone who could benefit from our newsletter which is sent free to bereaved parents. We do ask that professionals, friends, and family members contribute a donation to help offset the costs involved. If any information needs to be changed, or if you would like your child included in the "Our Children Remembered" section, please contact the editor at (310) 530-3214.



Additional Grief Support Bereavement Organizations and Resources:

TCF National Newsletter: For all bereaved parents and siblings. Published quarterly; subscription fee. Contact TCF Inc., P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 (630) 990-0010

FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MURDER VICTIMS: Rose Madsen, (909) 798-4803 Newsletter and support group, e-mail Roseydoll@aol.com

ALIVE ALONE: For parents who have lost their only child, or all their children. 1112 Champaign Dr., Van Wert, OH 45891 Newsletter available. www.Alivealone.org

SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE: Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Sam & Lois Bloom (310) 377-8857

OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE: 1950 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 255, L.A., CA (310) 475-0299

PATHWAYS HOSPICE: Bereavement support and sibling group. Bill Hoy (562) 531-3031

NEW HOPE GRIEF SUPPORT COMMUNITY: Grief support and education groups for adults and children. Susan K. Beeney, P.O. Box 8057, Long Beach, CA 90808, (562) 429-0075

PROVIDENCE TRINITY CARE HOSPICE AND THE GATHERING PLACE: Various bereavement support groups including support for loss of a child, support group for children 5-8, 9-12, and teens. Call Patty Ellis (310) 374-6323

Torrance Memorial Bereavement Services: (310) 325-9110 Weekly grief support.

THE LAZARUS CIRCLE: Monthly grief support.

Meets third Thurs of each month, 6-7:15 at First Lutheran Church, 2900 W. Carson St. Torrance
SHARE Pregnancy & Infant Loss: Contact: Megan Heddlesten (800) 821-6819
Walk With Sally: Cancer loss bereavement & art therapy for children- Monica Fyfe (310) 378-5843

Other Grief Support Websites...

agast.org (for grandparents) groww.com
goodgriefresources.com childloss.com
beyondindogp.com griefwatch.dom
angelmoms.com babysteps.com
healingafterloss.org webhealing.com
survivorsofsuicide.com opentohope.com
taps.org (military death) alivealone.org
bereavedparentsusa.org save.org
pomc.com (families of murder victims)
grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)

LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS

Los Angeles: (310) 474-3407 1st Thurs.
Orange Coast/Irvine: (949) 552-2800 1st Wed.
Orange Co./Anaheim: (562) 943-2269
Pomona/San Gabriel: (626) 919-7206
Redlands: (800) 717-0373 3rd Tues.
Riverside-Inland Empire: (909) 683-4160
South Los Angeles: (323) 546-9755 last Tue
Ventura Co. TCF: (805)981-1573 1&3 Thurs.
Verdugo Hills: (818) 957-0254 4th Thurs.
San Fernando Valley: (818) 788-9701 2nd Mon.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Post Net Printing for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to
The Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

CHAPTER OFFICERS:

CHAPTER LEADERS: Cheryl Stephens & Linda Zelik
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines
PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks
TREASURER: Ken Konopasek
CARDS & WEBSITE: Crystal Henning
NEW MEMBER FOLLOW-UP: Cheryl Stephens
STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:
Kristy Mueller Linda Zelik
Lori & Dudley Gray Cheryl Stephens
Cheryl & Bill Matasso Lynn Vines
Nancy & Elliott Fisher Ken Konopasek
Kitty Edler Crystal Henning
Susan Kass

DONATIONS TO THE SOUTH BAY/L.A. CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

In loving memory of Brandon Armstrong, July 1995 - July 1995 and Dominique Oliver, May 1985 - March 2002.... not a day goes by where I don't think of you or miss you. You two are the guiding force that makes me want to live, not just exist...

Love, Mom

In loving memory of our grandchildren, Frank Christopher Castania, July 1994 -July 2005 and Vanessa Roseann Castania, Feb 1997 - July 2005. You are always in our thoughts-

Love, Grandpa and Grandma Ann, we love you so.

In loving memory of Eric Douglas Vines, July 1977 - July 1991. Merry Christmas son. We will light your special Christmas Candle and include you in our holiday thoughts once again.

We love you, Mom

With sincere gratitude and deep appreciation, we acknowledge the generosity of the previous individuals and companies. Your tax deductible donation, given, in memory of your loved one enables us to reach bereaved parents with telephone calls and information, and they also help defray newsletter and mailing costs. Please help us reach out to others in this difficult time. Indicate any special tribute you wish printed in our newsletter.

When making a donation, please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt.

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter
P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

In loving memory of _____

Birth date _____ Death date _____ Sent from _____

Tribute _____

To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month or it will appear in the following issue.

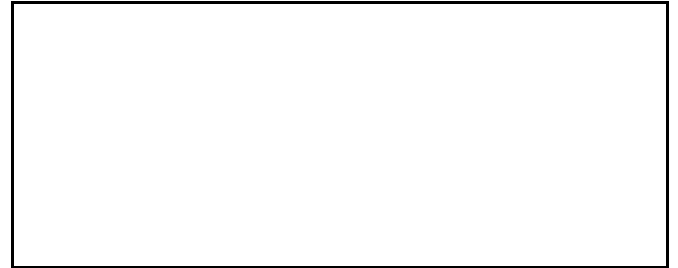
The Compassionate Friends
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter
P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171
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Time cannot steal the treasures
that we carry in our hearts.
Nor dim the shining thoughts
our cherished past imparts.
For memories of the one we loved

still cast a gentle glow,
to grace our days and light our paths
Wherever we go.
--author unknown



January 2014

Time Sensitive Material, Please Deliver Promptly



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain,
just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.
We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.

We are young, and we are old.

Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh
and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength,
while some of us are struggling to find answers.

Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression,
while others radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other
our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves,
but we are committed to building a future together. We reach out to each other in love
to share the pain as well as the joy,
share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts,
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.
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If you no longer wish to receive this mailing or have a new address, please contact us.