The Compassionate Friends
South Bay/LA Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A newsletter for bereaved parents and their families

November 2026 ISSUE **EDITOR: LYNN VINES (310) 530-3214** **e-mail: Lynntcf@aol.com**

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

OUR NEXT MEETING:
Nov 5th,
the first *Thursday of the month,*
at 7 p.m.

NOVEMBER & DECEMBER MEETINGS TO BE HELD IN ROOM 204/205 on the second floor. Follow signage.

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

Park in the EAST lot. Follow the path to the back patio. Meetings are held at the EAST end of the church. The Patio Meeting Room is classroom 101. Follow the signs. (Last door, first floor.)

Please remember to park in the EAST church parking lot, not on the street.

The Compassionate Friends Mission Statement...

When a child dies, at any age, a 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 daughter, a brother or sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.

Nov. 5th meeting topic

"The Holiday Season and Grief."

To participate in our Zoom meetings, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or liccia79@gmail.com for the link.

The TCF Friday Lunch Group offers you a place to talk about your grief every Friday from 1–3. We meet at different locations each week, so call to let us know you are coming! Everyone pays for their own lunch, so arrival times and locations are flexible. Please call (310) 963-4646 for more information.

For a free Picture Button of your child, call Connie at (310) 292-5381.

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The Thursday Nov. 5th meeting will start with "The Holiday Season and Grief."

Dear Friends,

It's hard when the Holiday Season comes around during a difficult time in our lives. We know the pain of being without our children, but it intensifies especially around this time of year.

While most people are celebrating and rejoicing the holidays, those of us going through this grief journey only know the pain and sadness in our hearts.

It can be helpful to share our anxieties and listen to others who are further down this road of grief. For many of us, sharing with the group has given us the strength and comfort to help get through these difficult times.

Each passing event tells us that we can survive.

Whatever is beautiful, whatever is meaningful, whatever brings you happiness, may it be yours this holiday season and throughout the coming year.

--Lucille



Keeper of a Name

When a person is here, their name points them. You say it, and there they are – turning their head, answering the phone, walking through the door. After they die, their name no longer points to a living presence. Instead, it points to an entire world that existed. A voice. A history. A thousand ordinary moments. The whole weight of a life becomes compressed into a few syllables. That is why hearing a beloved name unexpectedly can stop us in our tracks.

Not because it is a word. Because it is a doorway.

Perhaps that is why so many grieving people fear the day their loved one's name is no longer spoken. It is not the word they are protecting. It is the person's place in the world. And yet, every time you tell a story about them, every time you say "they used to…" or "they loved…", you are doing something rather extraordinary. You are refusing to let the world become a place where they were never here. That, I think, is one of the quiet duties of love. To become the keeper of a name. To carry it forward through the years, not as a burden, but as a lantern. And when others hear it spoken, even briefly, the light falls upon the life that bore it.

-- Sharyn Marsh

Grief is a Constant Companion for the Mother Who's Lost a Child

Never easy, but especially excruciating when it was the life you created, carried, birthed, and held. It is so important to remember your child, but also important to remember you.

Grief is one of the most uncomfortable topics in the world. When you grieve, you often struggle to capture the wide range of emotions felt day-to-day, or you struggle to grasp what kind of support you need when asked. But for others watching you grieve, it's awkward and sometimes silent.

People say the words "take as long as you need" and yet they expect you to come back to work in a week or at least get out of bed. There's this unspoken expectation that eventually you will stop talking about it or it won't be at the forefront of your daily life anymore.

But the truth is, you have gone through a great loss, one like no other. Although that grief will look different over time, it IS a part of you. I say this because it is OK to feel it. It's OK to take as long as you need, because you will need forever. It's OK to feel the range of emotions, to talk about it, to cry, to not be OK sometimes. The norm SHOULD be that we expect each other to grieve for a lifetime, and that we unconditionally accept that your loss will shape you in a different way forever.

While grief may take a lifetime, healing allows your pain to feel like that boulder on your chest each and every day is a little lighter. It is anger and acceptance, pain and comfort. But healing is possible.

Your journey in this matters. You matter. The child you lost matters. As you and your family adjust to a new ways, be able to put your finger on what's best for you at each moment, it is important to surround yourself with others who allow you to grieve in your own time and your own way.

Phrases like, "Yeah I know that was tough but . " or, "Well it's been so long isn't it time to move on? Or try again?" are damaging and can be toxic.

Generally, people mean well. But because our society still treats grief as an awkward pause in life, it is vital to set boundaries. In your grief, use your voice. It's OK to tell others in your life that what they said was hurtful or that it wasn't what you needed. It's OK to set boundaries with others that you may not want in your life anymore but they might still exist in your space such as work, church, or family. It's OK to give yourself the power to remember that your grieving process is yours and no one else's.

Don't compare. The woman who spoke at your support group who lost her child last year might have seemed to "get through it" faster, but that comparison minimizes what you need. Comparison is the thief of joy, and to compare your grief is to prevent future possibilities of joy as you heal. It's important to remember that you can reach out to those who have embraced your grief with you.

Creating networks of friends and family for you as an individual and you as a family is crucial to healing. Allowing yourself to ask for what you need—maybe a meal, maybe time alone, maybe a friend for comfort and company—gives you the new ability to get in tune with your feelings and needs daily in order to take care of yourself.

Self-care is similar to healing, but not the same. Self care leads to healing. It is an active practice of understanding who you are as you undergo major transitions in life. Losing a child is the worst, major transition that no one would ask for. But in your grief and your process to heal, you only benefit you and your family when you begin to assess what you can and will need from yourself and from others. If you don't know right now or tomorrow? It's OK. It takes time. If it feels selfish at first, that's OK, too.

It's not selfish, but it can be uncomfortable to put your needs first when so many of you are feeling the weight of such a heavy loss.

However, when each of you allow yourselves to prioritize what you need that will benefit your life and health and reach out to the people who help you accomplish that, it WILL lead to healing. You transform the process in which you understand the importance of your grieving and the importance of healthy coping. You begin to understand how to set boundaries with those who do not honor your loss as an ongoing process and you unapologetically move on from toxic environments toward true community. Through self-care you recognize that when your mental health improves, others around you benefit and want to improve too.

You remember that your journey matters and that you matter. And the child you lost matters. You are not alone. Many others have endured the tragedy of losing a child. However, your journey through this difficult loss is different, and as important as any other mother's. You deserve unlimited time to grieve and unlimited time to heal.

How you do that is up to you. But remind yourself of the power you have to take care of yourself, to reach out, to set boundaries and to take time. Your grief and healing matter. So take your time because you matter, too.

--Tiffany Wicks Tiffany is a therapist, specializing in maternal mental health at Push Counseling & Coaching. She survives coffee, friendship, and daily cuddles. Tiffany lives in Dallas, Texas with her husband, daughter, and two dogs.

Hearing Intent

TCF appreciation

By Debbie Rambis, Executive Director of

The Compassionate Friends

The Dr. Phil Show left a voicemail for The

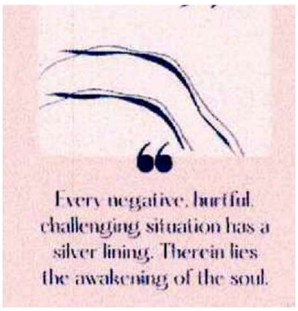
Compassionate Friends, requesting a return call because they were looking for someone who had "successfully gotten over their grief." Before returning the call, I mused over the phrase "successfully gotten over their grief." One thing I have learned, and still need to practice, is listening not to the actual words said, but rather to the person's intent.

I have learned that I must listen differently than I listened before Tony drowned. Before, I could listen and take what someone said pretty much at face value. For example, if someone asked how

I was doing or how my day was going, I knew they didn't necessarily want a minute-by-minute recap of things but were probably interested in hearing a quick summary of how I was doing or how my day was going.

After Tony died, when someone asked how I was doing or how my day was going, I learned to hear their intent, which was different from the words spoken. I learned that they really were not asking those questions. In the early years, with the exception of my "special" friends, when someone asked those questions, they really only wanted to hear that things were "okay" and for me to know they were thinking about me. I base this observation on the times I did actually answer their questions instead of their intent.

When I gave them the honest answer that I still felt lost, wondered what my purpose was, or felt extreme, nearly constant fatigue mixed with anxiety about nearly everything, their facial expressions instantly changed to dismay. Awkward transitions to other meaningless conversation occurred, if the person didn't just find a reason to suddenly disappear.



After slowly learning this lesson, I forced myself to try to hear their intentions rather than their actual words. From that point forward, if someone other than a "special" friend asked me how I was doing, I realized their intent was to let me know they were thinking about me. They didn't want to hear how horrific the grief journey of losing a child, grandchild, brother, or sister was, but simply wanted to let me know they were thinking of me.

Subsequently, when well-meaning people said things that might have earlier resulted in my impulsively asking why they would say something so ridiculous, I paused and instead heard their intent. I heard them say they were sorry and they just didn't know what to say. Now, when someone says something like, "At least you have other children," I hear their intent of trying to comfort me. When I listened to the young lady's voice say "someone who had successfully gotten over their grief," I paused, thought, and heard the intent of the message. The intent, I believe, is that the producers wanted someone who could attempt to explain how an individual can go on living after such a horrific loss.

At the taping of the Dr. Phil Show on

Wednesday, 1/24, I will tell them how all of us are able to survive and about the life-saving support received from "special" friends, The Compassionate Friends.

--Posted on 1/22/2018
https://www.compassionatefriends.org

Thanksgiving

The time draws near
And the calendar says Thanksgiving is really here.
Time to reflect and time to gather
Thoughts of what to be thankful of.
Thankful? I think not.
My life is not full these days
And to be thankful is beyond my grasp.
But to give thanks? This, I believe, can be done.
Searching my soul deep within
Reasons to give thanks surface to the edge

Yes, I give thanks
For the memories of yesterdays,
The love, the laughter, the joy of each day when James was with us
The trials & tribulations of being an active parent,
The rewards & the challenges of raising a child,
The days of blissful ignorance when I thought tragedy would never visit our home,
The days when life was normal, even though I took it all for granted.
For the treasures of today,
The sunrise, sunset, the changing of the seasons,
The new found friends along this journey I reluctantly travel
The tried & true friends who stand by me still,
The strong and everlasting love of my husband
—Meg Avery (James' mom) TCF Lawrenceville, GA

Seasoned Grievers...

Thanksgiving of Life

Posted on November 6th, 2023

Only a month after Daniel's death, Thanksgiving arrived, full of symbols of plentiful harvest and thankfulness, while we felt bereft of everything. We fled to Maryland. There, among the many around my sister's table, Daniel's empty place stood out less starkly than at home. Love and family pressed around to hold back despair and the loneliness.

Though we could not feel the spirit of Thanksgiving, we did appreciate the support and caring of our family. We marveled that any positive feelings were able to emerge.

Upon our return to New Jersey, we were greeted by a neighbor flushed with surprise and excitement. During our absence, Daniel's dog, Puffy, had given birth to three puppies – in her powder room! Our caring neighbor had served as midwife throughout the night of their birth, alternately crying for the loss of Daniel and laughing with the joy of new life.

That Thanksgiving, eleven years ago, held many special messages for us: messages of love, family, neighbors, and giving. Greatest of all was the message of life. Though we went away, we could not flee the holiday nor the pain of separation; we could not run from life. It was waiting for us at my sister's. It was waiting for us upon our return.

Yet, a long time passed before we could accept living again. Puffy's puppies, however, were the beginning. As they nibbled our fingers or wet the carpet, they caused us to care about them and their antics. Their damp noses and velvet ears helped us to feel something beyond the pain of Daniel's death. When they grew up, they forced us to interact with the community through searching for their adoptive families. We also practiced letting go as each puppy left.

For us, holidays are again happy occasions for the same reason they were originally difficult.

Holidays are days set aside for love, togetherness, sharing, and families. The death of a child turns those wonderful aspects of holidays into pain.

What we discovered that Thanksgiving long ago is that even with the pain comes the beginning of healing from the love, togetherness, sharing, and families that holidays include.

So, change your routine or surroundings this Thanksgiving, but do not try to flee from life. Life is the pathway to recovery. Allow yourself the reassurance of feeling life's healing power this holiday.

—Marcia Alig TCF Mercer Area (NJ)

Friends and Family

Life's Fragile Truth

We are all one accident, one diagnosis, or one unexpected phone call away from a different life. Our routines, plans, and comforts can change in a moment. Even what we believe will last forever can vanish like smoke.

That is why humility and gratitude matter. Never take a loved one's laughter, your health, or an ordinary day for granted.

Stay humble. Stay soft. Hold those you love a little closer, speak kindly, and forgive more readily. Take nothing for granted.

—Naadira Chhipa

Welcome...

Years ago, I left my first meeting of The Compassionate Friends and drove home in tears. My son, Max, had died a few short weeks before and I had been anxiously awaiting this evening. These people must have some answers, I thought. With paper and pen in purse, I was ready to take notes and do as they prescribed. I would do anything to ease the ache in my soul.

But when I walked out into the spring air later that night, I felt betrayed. I hadn't heard any answers. Instead of learning how to leave my grief behind, it had been confirmed, made more real with expression. I knew I would miss Max forever. Now I wondered if I would grieve forever. Would it always be this way, a flash of pain aligned with every memory?

During the next months and years, I attended TCF meetings and conferences, read books, raged, kept busy, sometimes spent the day in bed. I wrote, cried and talked about Max. Slowly, I discovered the answers I had long feared were true: yes, I will grieve forever, and yes, my memories will often provoke tears. But something had changed.

My grief was now more forgiving, my tears almost sweet with memory. Max's life took shape again as the anguish of his death began to recede. If I would always miss him, I would also always have him with me in so many ways. I wanted to carry his memory into the future: joy, the lessons, and the inevitable pain. How could I do otherwise?

As I walked to my car after that first meeting, the TCF chapter leader caught up with me. "How can I stop this pain?" I asked. She put her arm on my shoulder. "Just do what feels right to you," she said, "Listen to your heart. And we'll be here to listen, too."

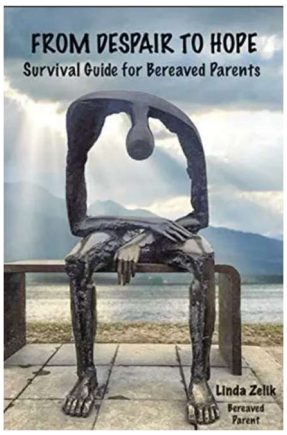
Sometimes the best advice is none at all.

Mary Clark

In memory of Max

TCF, Sugar Land-SW Houston Chapter, TX

Book in Review..



Raising children is a joy filled with challenges but oh so many rewards. How often does one just wish there was a manual to guide us towards the joyous future?

Then a sudden loss changes everything, without invitation and without a manual to guide the way. Linda Zelik lost her son suddenly and found herself untethered from reality and joy. Over time, a sense of "normalcy" slowly developed. The Compassionate Friends became part of that journey, and its support meant so much to her that she dedicated herself to its mission as a long-time member and leader.

"From Despair To Hope" is Linda's gift to newly bereaved parents. Drawing on extensive personal experience and consultations with experts in the field, it offers empathy and insights across a wide range of topics. The book extends a knowing, friendly hand to readers facing dreaded days.

Bent But Not Broken

The beautiful flowering tree planted in Nina's memory on Memorial Day a year short of a

decade ago (by her favorite cousins) looked so regal and smelled so delicious yesterday. I

like to think it flowers this time of year as a special birthday message from my "baby girl". However, with the vicious storm we had last evening I watched the soft white petals drift and swirl to the ground, as if a deluge of tears from a breaking heart. Today, it sits almost bare - a few petals still hanging on for dear life, unable to let go, desperate to regain its former beauty.

I can't help but see a symbolism in that tree that I can associate with. It is as if it stands as a monument to my grief, the ebb and flow of emotions that I have felt for the past nine years since Nina no longer walks this earth. When the tree is in full flower it seems much like family life "before". Of course, there were short-term crises that now seem insignificant in

comparison and life's speed bumps along the way, but all in all, pretty good. I mean, at least our family was intact. When the leaves were suddenly stripped of their branches and thrown to the ground in the furious hailstorm, it was like our lives after Nina's sudden death; thrown suddenly into a world of intense pain and sorrow, trying desperately to survive the unthinkable.

But, yet this morning, the tree stands, more barren and most definitely battered, but still hanging in there. Nine years later, those who love her, have weathered the tornado-like force of grief and loss. And nine years later, much like Nina's tree, though the storm has taken its toll, we will still manage to be upright; definitely bent, but still standing. And somehow, life roars on…

With gentle thoughts,

Cathy L. Seehuetter
TCF St. Paul, MN
In Memory of my daughter, Nina

Seasoned Grieving

The Monday before Thanksgiving my emotions pulled a surprise attack. Cold sunny weather provided a Texas-perfect backdrop for Thanksgiving week, with Monday marking the first official day of preparation. Dinner would be at my sister-in-law and brother's this year. I was thankful for the contributing duties of mashed potatoes, fresh green beans and cranberry relish. Organization brings comfort; I was working on my week's list.

Then my heart wandered back to The Thanksgivings before, anticipating events that had once shaped our family holiday, traditions that my mind logically knew could never be. It seemed as if I had to teach myself all over again. Sarah would not breeze in the door, home from college on Wednesday night. We would not huddle up to watch Texas Tech football and the Dallas Cowboys or attend worship services. I would not make a big pot of potato soup for her homecoming, hear the excited chatter of her arriving friends, or go for Mexican food the Friday after.

Sarah would be almost 35 now but I could not move my years past her 24 years of life. She was now the way I had always thought of President Kennedy after 1963, frozen solidly in time. Forever Young.

I encouraged myself. I am working to move forward, reviving my interests, creating a "new life." I appreciate my loving friends and family and am grateful for the tremendous healing power of a struggling faith. Writing through the days helps me to focus. I have learned who to trust with my thoughts and when to lock up.

Thinking back before Sarah died, it is true that until I had experienced the loss of my own child, I was incapable of understanding the depths of such pain. I was sympathetic but not empathetic. This insight allows me to forego or lower my expectations of other people and to better control hurt, anger and disappointment. Most importantly, I have learned that rich healing takes place when hurting people extend themselves to others who struggle in grief. Listening, sharing with honesty, encouraging. These gifts of truth and service honor the memory of our precious children and continue their legacy.

But this Monday before Thanksgiving I'm crying. I miss my girl. It's hard to envision the years ahead having lost the most vital part of my life. I am not ashamed of my sorrow or my tears or worry that I'm not "making progress." What parent does not think on his or her son or daughter whether they are alive or have passed on? These thoughts cannot be shut off like a water faucet. I have given myself the right to set the standards of my very personal grief, to measure my path using my own yardstick.

I have mastered an essential lesson. "Do the next thing." I recall the words of my friend, Pat, whose daughter Stephanie passed away years ago, when we were talking one day about our hopes for again experiencing life's purest joy. "I'll die happy with a broken heart." This week there are beans to snap.

—Carol Thompson of Tyler, Texas is the mother of Sarah Kathryn Thompson, who died in a 2005 pedestrian hit-and-run. Carol is a member of The Compassionate Friends chapter serving East Texans. She finds healing in writing about the everyday-life aspects of living with grief after Sarah's death.

Different Wants

In some couples, there seems to be turn-taking in emotional control. When one partner is deep in grief, the other controls his or her emotions enough to do the basics. Perhaps that spouse says things that are meant to be soothing and supportive. The one who wants more conversation might decide to wait it out, but might still feel angry that the partner will not talk.

Also, just as the spouse who wants to talk finds the other's silence frustrating and infuriating, the spouse who wants to talk less can be irritated by the other's pressure to talk.

The main point is that you should expect and tolerate differences between you and your partner. Doing so is not likely to make the grieving process any easier. However, it should help you and your spouse to maintain a stronger couple relationship as you deal with the death of your child.

—marriagemissions.com from TCF 7 July 2022 Central Indiana Chapter Newsletter

Your Pup and I



Your old pup sleeps
before the fire,
Muzzle resting on
outstretched paws.
He twitches with a little
yelp,
Reaching to a dream
gone bad that he can't help.
A sound from outside jerks his head alert,
Ears listening intently,
Radar in search of your special step.
Not hearing the sound that he wants, he looks hurt.
His head goes down with a sigh.
He looks to me with mournful eyes.
I declare I think that dog sometimes cries…
He, like I, never dreamed you'd be the first to die.
He misses you as badly as I.
Even old pups want to know why…
And they grieve, like us, for one last good-bye,
And tonight I joined him as he cried.

—Fay Harden, TCF Tuscaloosa, AL

Grandparents Remembrance:

We are the grieving grandparents, the shepherds of our children and grandchildren's lives. Our grief is two-fold, and at times we feel powerless to help. We seek to comfort our children in the depths of their grief, and yet we need the time and space to face our own broken hearts.

We have been robbed of the special tender touch a grandparent shares with a grandchild, and we have lost a symbol of our immortality.

As we walk by our child's side, we both give and draw strength. We reach into their hearts to comfort them, and when they reach out to us in their distress, we begin the journey to heal together.

We continue to be their guardians. We allow traditions to change to accommodate their loss. We support the new ones, which symbolize the small steps on their journey. It is in their healing that our hearts find comfort.

Susan Mackey
TCF Rutland, VT

Memory Loss after a Death in the Family

After a death in the family, the first few weeks are usually spent in a "fog," doing all the necessary tasks in robotic fashion, while the mind is far away. During this time and in the following months, you may begin to notice lapses in memory—not only where you put the keys, but finding the apples in the freezer or the bread on the living room table. It's as if the normal powers of doing things by routine have collapsed, and repeated random actions leave you constantly hunting for things you have misplaced, wracking your brain for the appointment date you didn't write down, or suddenly realizing it's dinnertime and you haven't started anything.

People actually have the fear of dementia or Alzheimer's Disease at times when memory loss becomes severe. However, it is simply a symptom of extreme stress and grief. Your mind is overwhelmed with more than it can handle, being forced to "accept the unacceptable and believe the unbelievable." You may be unable to sleep well, have no appetite, and almost certainly you are totally out of your normal

routine; all these things contribute to a sense of "losing it" and being unable to function.

Try not to expect too much of yourself. You are fragile right now, and you are going through one of life's most difficult—if not the most difficult—experience you will ever have to survive. Like any "survival experience," your priorities must necessarily be different.

Take good physical care of yourself so you will have strength to endure the long haul. Try to eat regular nutritious meals, even if they are small. Drink plenty of water, and try to get some exercise. Walking in the fresh air is one of the best ways to get exercise while relieving stress. If you are a little more active in the day, you may rest better at night.

Give yourself time to grieve, as well—grief takes time and can be exhausting, yet the work of mourning is essential to coping with your devastating loss.

Keep lists. Have a central place such as a clipboard on the dining table that won't be as easy to misplace as pieces of paper. Keep your lists all in the same place: grocery list, to-do list, appointments. Cross things off as they are finished, or if you begin to realize that something weighing on you is not really that important.

Take breaks during the day to listen to music or read a paragraph or two from a book. Remind yourself that memory lapses are normal for someone in your situation, and that they are temporary.

By caring for your physical needs, pacing your activity, giving intentional time to grieving, and prioritizing what you need to do, above all the things that there are to be done, you will find it easier to cope until you are able to think more clearly again.

—Carol A. Ranney, Bereaved mother and author of Broken Hearts, Living Hope: free support for bereaved families: www.brokenheartslivinghope.com

When Your Infant Has Died



The death of your infant has shattered your hopes and dreams for the future. It has sent shock waves through your body; this is one of the most difficult times in your life. It may seem as if the world has stopped and everything is moving in "Slow Motion." Infants are not supposed to die, and so it seems especially difficult to understand what has happened.

If your baby was very young or not yet born, some people may discount your grief. They may assume that because you did not have time to develop a long-term relationship with your baby, your loss and your pain will be less. Sometimes a miscarriage or stillbirth is not even acknowledged by other family members and friends. These assumptions only increase the pain and feeling of isolation.

You did, however, have a long-term relationship with your child, if only in your mind. You dreamed of watching your child grow up and you anticipated being a parent for a long time.

It is important to understand that you won't get over the death of your baby; you will learn to live through it. There will always be moments of intense pain as you remember the birthday, the anniversary of the death and as you mark the passing of events you had planned to enjoy with your baby. Be prepared for these moments of grief and do not be alarmed as they continue throughout your life. Parents do not stop loving a child simply because the child has died.

There are many things you can do to help yourself through grief. Acknowledge your loss and begin to accept the pain of grief. Try to live through it, not avoid it. Postponing the hurt simply intensifies it later. Take care of yourself; allow yourself to begin to heal. You will laugh again and enjoy life once more, but it will take some time. Do not be disturbed by your first laugh; it does not mean you have forgotten your baby, and it does not mean you are over your grief; be patient with yourself.

Create a ritual to help you remember your baby. Lighting a special candle on important days, establishing a memorial fund in your baby's name, or donating a toy, money, rocking chair or time to a special charity all may help you commemorate your child's life.

Right now you may want to talk to someone who has traveled his or her grief journey a few miles ahead of you. It really helps to know you are not alone, or crazy or a failure. And if you have misplaced your hope for a while, borrow it from a friend. Grief lasts far longer than anyone expects; be gentle and kind to yourself.

Your baby has died, but you did not lose the love you shared; even though death has come, love never goes away.

—Accord Publishing, ©1999



Our Children Remembered



Troy Akasaka
Born: 1/91 Died: 2/15
Parents: Jay & Sharon Akasaka

Angel Alva
Born: 12/91 Died: 6/24
Mother: Jackie Alva-Ornelas

Josue
Born: 3/04 Died: 6/07
Mother: Elizabeth Centeno

Brandon Armstrong
Miscarried: July 1995
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Connor Aslay
Born: 5/99 Died: 7/18
Mother: Erin Aslay

Jeremiah Bell Born: 1/88
Died: 6/15 Mother: Angela Albarez

Scott Berkovitz
Born: 5/88 Died: 1/16
Parents: Carl Berkovitz & Maria Moore

Noah Bernstein Born: 6/87 Died: 2/17
Mother: Beth Bernstein

Cheiann Jayda Berry
Born: 12/01 Died: 7/16
Mother: Kristina Berry

Sam Boldissar Born: 10/91 Died: 3/17
Parents: Jeeri & Frank Boldissar

Alex James Bonstein
Born: 11/91 Died: 7/16
Mother: Cynthia Sanchez

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

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

Larry Broks Jr.
Born: 7/88 Died: 9/17
Mother: Thessia Carpenter

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

Julian Burns
Born: 12/18 Died: 1/19
Parents: Daniel & Marta Burns

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

Carina Chandiramani
Born: 5/86 Died: 9/18
Mother: Norma Chandiramani

Blair Chapin
Born: 4/82 Died: 5/18
Sister: Elizabeth Chapin

Alexandra Chi
Born:2/03 Died: 12/24
Father: David Chi Parents

Michael Edward Clapp
Born: 2/93 Died: 4/18
Mother: Patti Clapp

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

Matthew Hales Clifford
Born: 1/80 Died: 3/15
Parents: Bob & Melissa Clifford

Aaron Christopher Cochran Born: 11/90
Died: 9/12 Mother: Julia Carr

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

Hannah Elizabeth Cortez
Born: 9/92 Died: 7/13
Parents: Rafael & Shari Cortez

Mike Sebastian Cortez
Born: 5/97 Died: 6/17
Mother: Rita Cortez

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

Michael N. Daffin
Born: 2/85 Died: 4/17
Parents: Michael & Diana Daffin

Daniel Elijah Day
Born: 4/93 Died: 5/16
Mother: Kristen Day

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

Sean Michael Denhart
Born: 3/88 Died: 12/20
Mother: Janna Denhart

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

Nicolas Frank DiMarco
Born: 9/89 Died: 9/22
Father: Frank DiMarico

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

Ryan Dobie
Born: 7/92 Died: 2/19
Parents: Linda & Douglas Dobie

Michael John Dornbach
Born: 7/60 Died: 10/17
Parents: Maria Triliegi & Edward Dornbach

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

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

Joel Draper
Born: 1/84 Died: 5/2004
Mother: Tracy Solis

Brian Daniel Edelman
Born: 5/86 Died:8/23
Father: Ray Edelman

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

Gregory Robert Ehrlich
Born: 4/91 Died: 2/19
Mother: Sarah Ott

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

Bettina Mia Embry
Born: 8/65 Died:4/22
Parents: Larry & Elena Bruns




Our Children Remembered




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

Cody Jarod Esphorst
Born: 3/02 Died 7/19
Parents: Jesse & Julie Esphorst

Jesse Eric Esphorst
Born: 9/00 Died: 3/17
Parents: Jesse & Julie Esphorst

Chidinma Ezeani
Born: 8/89 Died: 10/19
Mother Ifeoma Ezeani

Robert Justin Fields
Born: 1/00 Died: 1/22
Parents: Loree & Bob Fields

Shawn Eric Fillion
Born: 12/82 Died: 8/21
Mother: Lise Fillion

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

Bryce Patrick Fisher
Born: 10/86 Died: 8/21
Mother: Nancy Goodson

Miles Andrew Gallas
Born: 2/89 Died: 3/21
Mother: Denise Gallas

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

Lexie Rose Gilpin
Born: 4/09 Died: 4/09
Mother: Michele Gilpin

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

Marc David Guerreva
Born: 7/97 Died: 7/17
Mother: Sharon Cortez

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

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

Christie Hagenburger
Born: 4/63 Died: 12/17
Father. D.W. Hagenburger

Bishop Michael Hernandez
Born: 3/98 Died: 6/21
Father: John Hernandez

Jesse Hernandez
Born: 2/90 Died: 11/22
Mother: Joann Hernandez

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

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

Sarah Jade Hurley
Born: 6/97 Died:5/17
Father: Tim Hurley
Grandmother: Laurie Hurley

Taylor X. Hyland
Born: 8/06 Died: 7/20
Mother: Tessa Hyland

Steven Ishikawa
Born: 9/75 Died: 4/17
Mother: Miki Ishikawa

Alexander John Jacobs
Born: 3/90 Died: 8/19
Mother: Diane Jacobs

Stefanie Jacobs
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/97
Father. Rob Jacobs

Jason Christopher Jenkins
Born: 4/86 Died: 11/20
Parents: Alvin & Caprice Jenkins

Lizzie Jester
Born: 6/93 Died: 7/18
Father: Lee Jester

Zachary Hyun Joon Jeong
Born: 12/24 Died: 12/24
Parents: Ken Jeong & Cydne Shapiro

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

Jillian Nicole Katnic
Born: 3/87 Died: 10/18
Mother: Debbie Hughes

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

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

Chase King
Born:4/87 Died: 11/19
Mother: Laura King

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

Scott Koller
Born: 10/83 Died: 3/15
Mother: Betty Benson

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

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

Margareta Sol Kubitz
Born: 9/05 Died: 9/09
Parents: Maria & Bill Kubitz

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

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

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

Emma Nicole Lerner
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06
Mother: Nancy Lerner

Kevin Le Nguyen Born: 5/88 Died: 6/14 Mother: Tracy Le Nguyen

Joseph Licciardone
Born: 4/94 Died: 3/16
Parents: Connie & Leo Licciardone

Gaby Lindeman
Born: 7/64 Died:9/12
Parents: Gilberto & Graciela Rodriguez

Joshua Lozon
Born: 6/91 Died: 6/21
Mother: Tracey Gentile

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




Our Children Remembered




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

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

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

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

Jesse Robert Martinez
Born: 1/89 Died: 9/21
Father: Harry Martinez

Travis Frederick Marton
Born: 10/91 Died: 1/15
Mother: Ricki Marton

Matthew "Matty" Louis Matich
Born: 5/02 Died: 7/18
Parents: Mike & Shirley Matich, Grandmother: Dorothy Matich

Max McCardy
Born: 4/05 Died 8/15
Parents: Derk & Akemi McCardy

Joseph Mc Coy
Born: 9/11 Died: 11/14
Mother: Amy McCoy

Sarah Mc Donald
Born: 10/00 Died: 6/17
Parents: Tom & Shideh Mc Donald

John Paul Mc Nicholas
Born: 12/89 Died: 11/20
Parents: John & Leean Mc Nicholas

Kirk Nicholas Mc Nulty
Born:7/84 Died: 2/14
Mother: Elaine Mc Nulty

Jeremy Stewert Mead
Born: 10/61 Died: 11/14
Mother: Carol Mead

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

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

Christopher Metsker
Born: 11/94 Died: 3/18
Parents: Justin & Tara Metsker

Blanca Isabel Meza
Born: 9/21 Died: 9/21
Mother: Angela Azurdin-Meza

Mathew Scott Mikelson
Born: 4/77 Died: 4/20
Mother: Dorthy Mikelson

Keith Moilanen
Born: 10/80 Died: 5/19
Mother: Jill Moilanen

Reyna Joanne Monje
Born 9/98 Died: 4/21
Mother: Debbie Trutanich

Jacki Montoya
Born: 10/89 Died: 6/15
Mother: Theresa Montoya

Joshua Montoya Born: 4/15 Died: 6/15
Grandmother: Theresa Montoya

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

Danielle Murillo
Born: 5/96 Died: 4/14
Parents: Cheryl Outlaw & Manuel Murillo

Christopher Murphy
Born: 11/92 Died: 4/18
Mother: Deborah Murphy

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

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

Lisa Nakamaru Born: 12/93 Died: 10/14 Mother: Grace Nakamaru

Natalie Rose Nevarez
Born: 5/90 Died: 11/14
Parents: Gregg and Alison Nevarez

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

Stephanie Sue Newkirk
Born: 12/67 Died: 10/15
Mother: Cindy McCoy

Trevor Mitchell Nicholson
Born: 7/99 Died: 1/18
Parents: Brad & Kendra Nicholson

Steven Scott Nussbaum
Born: 5/61 Died: 11/15
Parents: Will & Gloria Nussbaum

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

Isabella Ofsanko
Born: 6/97 Died: 10/15
Mother: Desireé Palmer

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

Steven Thomas Pack
Born: 8/91 Died: 3/20
Parents: Tom & Lisa Pack

Lilly Parker
Born: 12/15 Died: 1/17
Mother: Nicole Kawagish
Father: J.D. Parker

Jessica Perez
Born: 5/89 Died: 10/03
Sister: Monica Perez

Andrew Periaswamy
Born: 5/97 Died: 10/16
Parents: Megala & Xavier Periaswamy

Dominic Pennington Roque
Born: 8/02 Died: 9/09
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

Lindsay Nicole Pollack
Born: 6/94 Died: 11/23
Mother: Daphne Carroll Pollack

Donnie Vincent Puliselich
Born: 1/75 Died:1/18
Mother: Maria Puliselich
Sister: Michelle Pulislich

Our Children Remembered

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

Dax Jordan Quintana Dantas De Oliveria
Born: 6/17 Died: 8/17
Parents: Alexandar & Sanderson Quintana Dantas De Oliveria

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

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

Cindy Ranft
Born: 8/68 Died: 7/97
Parents: Pat & Bob Ranftl

David Reade
Born: 4/72 Died: 9/23
Brother of Bobby Reade

Ronald Reade lI
Born: 9/69 to 8/23
Brother of Bobby Reade

Sarah Lynne Redding
Born: 12/80 Died: 12/05
Mother: Linda Redding

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

Geffrey Robinson
Born: 9/85 Died: 7/19Parents: Doug & Mary Robinson

Dominic Pennington Roque
Born: 8/02 Died: 9/09Parents: Kerrie & Ren

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

Danny Ryan
Born: 07/79 Died: 10/15
Parents: Mike & Andrea Ryan

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

Daniela Mora Saldana
Born: 3/17 Died: 3/17
Mother: Rosa Saldana

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

Phillip Ruben Sandoval
Born: 7/84 - Died: 6/16
Parents: Valerie & Joe Desjardin

Andrew Sankus
Born: 4/71 Died: 8/15
Mother: Mary Sankus

Christian Saylor
Born: 10/90 Died: 10/24
Parents: Jeff & Coco Saylor

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

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

Nicholas M Sinclaair
Born: 1/80 Died: 2/22
Mother: Suzanne Sinclaair

Paul Slater
Born: 10/71 Died: 11/16
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Dale Lee Soto
Born: 7/94 Died: 5/11
Mother: Monique Soto

Patrik Stezinger
Born: 1/89 Died: 8/17
Parents: Paul & Rosemary Mosher

Brittany Anne Suggs
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/16
Mother Camille Suggs

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

Kenneth Tahan
Born: 2/66 Died: 7/16
Parents: Shirley & Joseph Tahan

Anthony Tanori Born: 8/82 Died: 8/12 Parents: Chuck & Sylvia Tanori

Jamie Taus
Born: 5/85 Died: 5/21
Sister: Jackie Taus
Mother: Susan Taus

Jacqueline Marie Taylor
Born: 1/83 Died: 7/11
Mother Jennifer Flynn

Julie Catherine Thomas
Born:1/80 Died:9/2023
Mother: Mary Thomas

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

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

Catarina Sol Torres
Born: 12/16 Died: 12/16
Parents: Marcus & Vanessa Torres

Carlos Valdez
Born: 10/90 Died: 1/12
Parents: Antonia & Refugio Valdez

Vance C. Valdez
Born: 10/90 Died: 3/12
Parents: Carlos & Maria Valdez

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

Manuel Vargas lil
Born: 3/95 - Died: 5/15
Father: Manuel Vargas

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

David Michael Villarreal
Born: 11/90 Died: 2/18
Parents: David & Barbara Villarreal

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

Adam Michael Wechsler
Born:3/2003 Died:11/23
Father: Zach Wechsler

Matthew L. Weiss
Born: 9/96 Died: 8/18
Mother: Natalie Narumoto



Rennie S. Wible
Born: 8/66 Died: 1/18 Mother: Jinx Wible

Dovan Vincent Wing
Born: 6/83 Died: 9/17 Mother: Becky Wing

Aaron Young
Born: 9/74 Died: 6/15 Mother: Sheila Young

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

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

Ryann Yorty
Born: 4/81 Died: 5/84
Mother: Denise Gonzales

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

Michael Jordan Zareski
Born: 5/71 Died: 12/17
Parents: Susan & Norm Zareski

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

Christopher Zuchero
Born: 5/85 - Died: 5/22
Parents: Mike & Shelly Rudeen

Vincent Zuniga
Born: 1/99 - Died: 10/24
Parents: Shonnie Allen & Eddie Zungia

* For corrections or to add your child to the Our Children Remembered section of the newsletter,
call Lynn at (310) 963-4646 and leave a message.

Birthday/Anniversary Tributes... If it's your child's birthday month, we invite you to join our monthly meeting and share their story! Birthdays hold treasured memories and are especially difficult for surviving parents and siblings. TCF offers a wonderful venue to honor and celebrate the precious life of your loved one by sharing their story. Taking a few minutes to share a picture, memento, award, or even their favorite toy is a gentle reminder to all that our love continues.

In honor of your child's birthday or anniversary, we welcome you to submit a tribute. Birthday and anniversary tributes show how important our children still are to all of us. Though your child is no longer here to buy a present for, think of this as a present about your child. This tribute is an opportunity to share your child with us all. (We thank you for any birthday or anniversary donations that help offset chapter expenses.)

Birthday Tributes

Sorry, no tributes were submitted this month.

By Siblings...

When the Holiday Season Makes You Angry

When friends and relatives expect you to feel the joy and excitement of the holidays and don't understand how much you are hurting, some grieving siblings get really mad! Do you? Anger is a normal part of grief. It is OK to be mad and angry.

Here's what some siblings say:

* I get mad at almost anything now. People say I have a bad attitude and that makes me even madder. They just don't understand.

* I get really angry when I think about the drunk driver who killed my sister on New Year's Eve.

* How could God let her die? I hate God.

* At school now when I get bad grades, I just get furious.

* The thing that makes me mad enough to fight is when kids at school say something bad about my brother who died. * I just want to punch the person who killed my brother in the face!

If you can say aloud what makes you mad, that is an excellent way to get your anger out. Find a good listener and tell him or her how you feel. If you keep your anger tight inside yourself, it will end up hurting more and more. You might start to feel sick or have headaches. You might not be able to feel happy or have much fun. Your anger might burst out suddenly and cause you to hurt someone else or yourself. You might start to lose your friends. Your anger could get you into lots of trouble. If it's too hard to talk about your anger right now, you could try some other things:

* Get physical! Exercise… kick a ball… swing a bat… play sports… dance…run…jump…

* Make noise! Yell… scream… play a drum… crank up your music… bang pots and pans… * Calm yourself… listen to music… take a walk… get close to nature… draw… pray… do something you enjoy…

* Take your anger out on things. Punch your pillow… hammer some nails… break sticks…

pop bubbles in packing sheets… kick a ball… crush cans… pull weeds…

* Write it down. Write your angry thoughts in a journal or notebook, take a piece of paper and write a letter to the person… type your anger into a secret computer journal…

* Make a difference. Turn your energy into something good… organize your class to protest drunk driving… learn about the disease that killed your sibling… volunteer to help others.

… Anger can make you the kind of person you don't want to be if you don't get it out in a safe way. Let it go!

-- Barb Coe, editor of "Inside Fernside," Bereaved Parents of the USA & TCF Chapter, Anne Arundel

County, Annapolis, Maryland

For Grandparents…

Sandy Hook Grandparents Share Stories

Losing a grandchild is tragic under any circumstance. But when the loss is born of an act as unspeakable as the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School last Dec. 14, the anguish can barely be comprehended.

How do grandparents cope when their grandchild is taken from them in such a brutal and public way? How do they begin to console a son or daughter drowning in grief, even as they struggle with their own? On the first anniversary of an atrocity that shocked the nation, AARP The Magazine visited grandparents of four of the children murdered at their Newtown, Conn., school. With generosity and grace, eight men and women told us how they have endured these last fitful months — through birthdays, holidays, never-ending tributes and commemorations, political windstorms, media invasions, and countless everyday moments that remind them of the bloody day that reshaped their lives.

Terry & Henry Moretti, Cranston, R.I., grandparents of Dylan Hockley, age 6: "I'd been out doing some Christmas shopping, mostly presents for our grandkids," says Terry, 66. "When I came home, there was a garbled phone message from our daughter, Nicole. I knew something was wrong and assumed something had happened with the school bus. I called her immediately. 'Mommy, there was a shooting at the Sandy Hook school,' she told me. 'You have to be kidding,' I said. 'It only goes to the fourth grade.' She couldn't really talk. She just said, 'Jake' — our older grandchild — 'is OK, but we are still waiting to hear about Dylan.'

"We turned on the television, and the story was all over the news. Our son-in-law, Ian, called at about 1:30. They still hadn't heard anything about Dylan. We were all hoping that maybe he ran into the woods when he heard gunshots. 'It's been a lot of hours,' I told my husband. 'I'm not feeling good about this.' At 3:30 p.m., Ian called again. All he could say was, 'Dylan is dead.' I couldn't speak. He couldn't speak. I know I talked to my daughter after that, but I don't recall what we said.

"Dylan was autistic but very high-functioning. He had a special education aide, Anne Marie Murphy, age 52, who adored him, and he adored her. When the shooting started, she threw her body over Dylan's to protect him. Her arms were wrapped around him when they found them. It was an enormous comfort to us that Dylan was with someone who loved him and whom he loved in return in those final seconds. Mrs. Murphy had children of her own. I never met her, but I pray for her every night.

"Our grandson was absolutely the sweetest boy you'd ever want to meet. Every night, Nicole and Ian read the kids to sleep. When I was with them, I would do the same and tuck them in. I visited them a week before Dylan was killed. We were reading Going to the Sea Park by Mercer Mayer. Before Dylan went to sleep, I asked him what the best part of the story was. 'The sharks,' he replied. I can still see him and hear him say that. When I went back to the house after the shootings, that book was still on his bed. Now every night I read it to Dylan. I think he hears me. I will read it every day until I see him again.

"It's hard to cope with your own pain when your child is so shattered. My daughter is my flesh and blood, but there is nothing I can say that can help her feel better. The first year is the worst — the birthdays, the holidays. Dylan's birthday was last March; he would have been seven. Now he'll be forever six.

"I don't think any of us will get over this. When my daughter visits us now, I hear only three car doors open instead of four. When they leave, I have a good hard cry. I still have the pictures Dylan drew for me. And the letter he wrote to me from school is on the fridge. 'Dear grandma, will you play with me, love Dylan.' He loved the trampoline in the yard. He'd push back against the net and say, 'Push me, Grandma, push me.' Being autistic, he liked repetitive things. I would push him until I thought my arms would fall off. He'd laugh and laugh.

"One of the things that's really helped is advice my daughter got from Vice President Joe Biden, who lost his wife and infant daughter in a car accident in 1972. When Biden met Nicole after the shooting, he told her to rate each day from 1 to 10 — and you may never get to 10. He said, 'Nicole, if you make it to a 4 one day, at least you know you made it to a 4. And then you know you can do it again.'

"I've adopted that approach into my life since Dylan died. I rate every day. So far I've had one day that was a 5. I got there, so I think I can do it again. It helps." — By Jan Goodwin, AARP The Magazine. For the full article with the remaining interviews: https://www.aarp.org/home-family/friendsfamily/info 12-2013/newtown-grandparents-grieveloss.html Published December 2013. Used with the author's permission.

A Letter to Anyone Grieving

I know you feel broken even when you try to be strong. I know your world has shattered, yet somehow you're still moving on. You may not feel like it, or even want it, but you, my dear, are healing.

It's not always going to be pretty. It's not always going to feel peaceful. But next time you look at yourself in the mirror, please remember: you've kept going! Whether that's because you're living in honor of their memory or living a life they'd be proud to see, or maybe because you simply have no other choice... you're doing it.

I hope some part of you recognizes your own resiliency in all this grief. —@GlitterAndGrief, Hopeforbereaved.com



Flash Zoom Meetings... are called on short notice and are of shorter duration than in-person meetings. The intent is to check in on each other and share, nothing more. The goal is to meet weekly, but if we meet every other week, that's OK. To participate in our Zoom meetings, contact Leo at (310) 283-6739 or Liccia79@gmail.com for the link.

Birthday Table... In the month of your child's birthday, a Birthday Table is provided where you can share photos, mementos, your child's favorite snack, a birthday cake, a bouquet of flowers, or anything you'd like to bring to share. We want to know your child better, so please take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful day of your child's birth. This is your chance to tell us a favorite story, or whatever remembrance you choose, in memory of your child. Our child's, grandchild's, or sibling's birthday will forever be a very special day, and we at TCF know how important that day is and how helpful and healing it can be to share with others. Please plan on attending the meeting of your child's birthday month and filling our Birthday Table with pictures and/or mementos.

Newsletter Birthday & Anniversary Tributes ...

During your child's birthday month, you may place a picture and 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.) You can mail them to the P.O. Box or send them by e-mail to Lynntcf@aol.com. **To meet the publishing deadline, tributes must be sent to the newsletter editor by the 1st of the month before your child's birthday month**. (Example: August 1 for September birthdays.) If you miss the deadline, call Lynn at (310) 963-4646 and let me know. I will try to fit them in.

Otherwise, they will appear in the following month's issue.

Get Your Photo Buttons... Photo buttons are a perfect way to share your child, grandchild, or sibling with others at our monthly meetings. If you would like to have some made, call Connie at (310) 292-5381. You can mail her a photo for each button you would like (color photocopies work great) and she can make them for you. There is no cost, but donations are welcomed. Keep in mind that the button is about 3" in diameter, so the picture needs to fit inside that area and the actual photo is used, so make sure it's one we can cut.

Memory Book... Our chapter has an ongoing Memory Book. Contact us for details on adding your loved one to the book

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 Lori know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

We also welcome "book reviews." If you have read a book which was helpful on your grief journey, please let us know. Send book reviews and other articles or poems for submission to the newsletter to Lynntcf@aol.com. Also, a friendly reminder: if you have books at home you have checked out and are finished reading them, please remember to return them to our library.

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, it is only your donations that keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help. A receipt will be emailed to you for tax purposes if you include your name. Please let us know if you want the tribute published in the next newsletter.

Our Website... Leo Licciardone is hosting the website and updating it with the current newsletter and chapter information. Thank you to those who are willing to get your newsletter online. Please provide your email address to do so. Call Lynn at (310) 963-4646 to update by phone. e-mail Lynntcf@aol.com. Thank-you for your understanding and help. TCF South Bay/LA

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

Leo & Connie Licciardone (chap leads): (310) 292-5381
Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla (chapter lead): (310) 530-8489
Lori Galloway: (760) 521-0096
Linda Zelik: (310) 648-4878

Local TCF Chapters:
Beach Cities/L.A. (Manhattan Bch): (970) 213-6293 Third Tue.
Los Angeles: (310) 474-3407 1st Thurs.
Newport Beach (917) 703-3414 3rd Wed.
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) 236-3635, 4th Thurs

Local Support Groups...
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 of Suicide: Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Rick Mogil (310) 895-2326 or 24 hrs: (310) 391-1253
Our House/Bereavement House: Support groups in LA & So. Bay (310) 475-0299 Also Spanish Support Group, Loren Delgado 310-231-3196.
Pathways Hospice: Bereavement support and sibling group. Bill Hoy (562) 531-3031

New Hope Grief Support : Grief support for adults and children. 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. (310) 546-6407
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: (800) 821-6819
Walk with Sally: Cancer loss bereavement & art therapy for children. (310) 378-5843
Camp Comfort Zone: Year round Bereavement Camp for Children www.comfortzonecamp.org (310) 483-8313.

Other Grief Support Websites...
thetearsfoundation.org
goodgriefresources.com
bereavedparentsusa.org
healingafterloss.org
survivorsofsuicide.com
taps.org (military death)
childloss.com
griefwatch.dom
opentohope.com
webhealing.com
alivealone.org
angelmoms.com
save.org (suicide/depression)
pomc.com (families of murder victims)
grasphelp.org (substance abuse deaths)
www.facebook.com/TheUglyShoesClub (Suicide)
Griefwords.com (for grandparents

A SPECIAL THANKS TO:
Staples 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 CO-LEADERS: Leo & Connie Licciardone and Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla
CHAPTER ZOOM HOSTS: Connie & Leo Licciardone
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines
PROOFREADER: Sandra Myricks
TREASURER: Kristy Konopasek
WEBSITE: Leo Licciardone

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Linda & Joe Zelik	Marilyn Nemeth
Bill Matasso	Nancy Lerner
Crystal Henning	Connie & Leo Licciardone
Lori Galloway	Sandra & Eddie Myricks
Kitty Edler	Kristy Mueller
Susan Kass	Jarmo & Bonnie Mantyla
Lynn Vines	

National Office Information:
Compassionate Friends E-Newsletter: TCF National Office publishes a monthly e-newsletter designed to keep you up-to-date on what's going on with the organization and its chapters. We encourage everyone use the valuable information there to help in your grief.

To receive TCF's e-newsletter, sign up for it online by visiting TCF national website at http://compassionatefriends.org. and filling out the request to sign-up at the bottom of the page. .

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. There is also a closed group chat room for specific topics that you need to register for.

Online Support (Live Chat) TCF offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. The friendly atmosphere encourages conversation among friends; friends who understand the emotions you're experiencing. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions. Please Note: Times posted on the schedule are based on Pacific Time. Select "enter room" under the chat room you would like to participate in and you will be prompted to register. Once registered you will be able to log-in with your username and password that you have set up. You can keep abreast of any changes by going to: www.compassionatefriends.org/find support/online-communities/online-support



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



The Compassionate Friends is a totally self-supporting organization. Our chapter is run entirely by volunteers, but we do have operating costs. Your tax deductible donation is what keeps our chapter going. When making a donation, please make checks payable to The South Bay/L.A. chapter.

Mail to: The South Bay/LA chapter of Compassionate Friends
P.O. Box 11171 Torrance CA 90510

In loving memory of Dominique Oliver, May 1985 - March 2002 and Brandon Armstrong, July 1995 - July 1995.

Love 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 _____ From _____

Tribute _____

_____

_____

_____

We are always working a month in advance...To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month, other wise it will appear in the following issue.

Four Options To Give:

QR code on cell phones.
Online at tcfsbla.org/donate-now/
Cash/checks: Donation box at in-person meetings.
Checks: Mail to PO Box 11171 Torrance CA 90503

SCAN ME

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. ©2022 THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS -- SOUTH BAY/L.A., CA CHAPTER

If you no longer wish to receive this mailing, need corrections, or have a new address, please contact us