

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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Nashville Website: www.tcfnashville.org



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The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

Welcome: The Nashville chapter meets at 3:00 P.M. on the second Sunday of each month in the American Builders & Contractors (ABC) Building, 1604 Elm Hill Pike, Nashville, TN 37210. (See Mailing address above.) Park and enter at the rear of the building. We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.

April 11th Meeting:

For the health and safety of our members, we will gather for our **April 11 meeting** using “Zoom” virtual meeting platform again. Our virtual meeting will begin at 3:00 PM, and run till about 4:30.

If you are interested in participating, send an email to TCFNashville@yahoo.com. Title the email “Zoom”. We will reply with a link to the meeting and some general instructions on how it works.

Our virtual meeting will begin with sharing our April birthdays. Depending upon the number of attendees, we will move folks to private sharing groups of less than 8 people where we can talk.

Ongoing online support is available at our national website: Compassionatefriends.org and you can connect via Facebook with our local chapter members at The Compassionate Friends, Nashville, TN and with other parents and families at The Compassionate Friends/USA, both private groups.

Check our chapter website for the status of future meetings, including the possibility of in-person meetings, please watch our Facebook page and our website: www.tcfnashville.org.

Phone Friends

We have all experienced the pain of losing a child. We understand and would like to listen.
If you can't reach one of us, feel free to call another person on this list.

Accidental Death ...Mike and Paula Childers 615-646-1333	SIDS ...Kris Thompson 931-486-9088
Suicide ...Ron Henson 615-789-3613	AIDS ... Joyce Soward 615-754-5210
Alcohol/Drug Overdose ...Ed Pyle 615-712-3245	Illness ...David and Peggy Gibson 615-356-1351
Infant ...Jayne Head 615-264-8184	

A Note from Co-Chapter Leader, Kris Foust:

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to Barb Davies, my co-leader, for keeping the in-person TCF meetings going throughout this year of pandemic challenges. There were many of us in the TCF leadership, for a variety of reasons, not able to gather and do the work it takes to have a safe meeting for the newly bereaved. She and Roy have worked hard to make our meetings safe and within compliance of all the guidelines. My hat is off to her, and Roy, and I encourage you to thank them both when your opportunity arises.

*We remember our children with love and gratitude. We miss their faces,
their voices and their smiles. And we do not forget--*

In the month of their births—

James Michael Bolton (Mikey)
April 9
Son of Jim and Loretta Bolton

Mark Joseph Dinkel
April 27
Son of
Richard and Kathleen Dinkel
Brother of Amy

Kenneth Elberson
April 17
Son of
Harry and Winnie Elberson

Aaron Garner
April 30
Son of Don and Vicki Garner

Sherry Hooten
April 15
Daughter of Ann Flatt

Michael Hunt
April 13
Son of Robin Hunt

Joseph Anthony Jones
April 28
Son of
Anthony and Theresa Jones

**Christopher Lincoln
Kingsborough**
April 21
Son of
Paul and Lydia Kingsborough

Stacy Leigh Kraft
April 10
Daughter of
Keith and Meryl Kraft
And Terry Kornman



David Benton Lowe
April 26
Son of
Charles and Teresa Lowe

Andrew Mason Sherrill
April 28
Son of
Chuck Sherrill and Jennie Sherrill

Daniel Wayne Vick
April 5
Son of
Wayne and Marsha Vick

Andrew Washam (Seth)
April 16
Son of
Shannon and Jean-Ann Washam



Janessa Dian Wellman
April 24
Daughter of
Timothy Pharris and
Debra Wellman
Granddaughter of
Glen and Dian Wellman

Abigail Wilson (Abby)
April 13
Daughter of
Danny and Amy Wilson

Don Bruce Winters
April 16
Son of
Jerry and Loretta Winters

Ryan Lee Wiseman
April 18
Son of
Roger and Deborah Wiseman

And in the month of their deaths

Josh Baskin
April 6
Son of Carol Bayliss

Ansel Jovi Beck (A.J.)
April 13
Son of
Charles and Gail Beck

Christopher Jay Bradley
April 20
Son of
Lamar and Joy Bradley

Taylor Martin Davies
April 16
Son of Roy and Barbara Davies

Joshua Lynn Finch
April 17
Son of Debbie Smith
Brother of Jason Finch

Chad Flatt
April 18
Son of Ann Flatt

Aaron Thomas Gillespie
April 14
Son of
Donna Gillespie

Joshua Hovies
April 19
Son of Alicia Hovies

Michael Hunt
April 21
Son of Robin Hunt

Crystal Dawn Lane
April 25
Daughter of
Dorothy Lowe

Kevin Moncrief
April 5
Son of Sandra Merkel

Robert D. Neese (Bobby)
April 9
Son of Helen Neese

Gavin Ray Oliver
April 27
Son of
Jerry and Denise Oliver

Andrew Morris Pack
April 19
Son of
Wayne and Cassandra Pack

Brandon Allen Payne
April 10
Son of
Terry and Kimberly Payne

Bert Rich
April 7
Son of Shirley Rich-Brinegar

**Kenna Brooke Gupton
Robards**
April 14
Daughter of
Ken and Beth Gupton and
Jackie Gupton

Laurie Lynn Shriver Robert
April 21
Daughter of Warren and Donna
Jones and George Shriver
Sister of
David, Bekki, and Bonnie

Abigail Wilson (Abby)
April 17
Daughter of
Danny and Amy Wilson

GIFTS OF LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE

We are deeply grateful for the voluntary gifts of love that make it possible for The Compassionate Friends to offer comfort to those families who do not know today that they will need us tomorrow.

*Jesse and Kimberly Alvarez
In loving memory of
their son,
Alexander Alvarez*

*William M. Brooks
In loving memory of
Matthew Johnson Brooks,
Son of
Mike and Sherry Brooks*

*Barbara Davies
Through Nationwide
Workplace Giving Program
In loving memory of
her stepsons,
Roy James Davies and
Taylor Davies
Sons of Roy Davies*



*Don and Sherry Eakes
In loving memory of
their grandson,
Taylor Christian Brewer
Son of
Justin and Tracy Brewer*

*Don and Joan Johnson
In loving memory of
their son,
Shane Tanner Scruggs*

*Tom and Margaret Loose
In loving memory of
their daughter,
Heather Ann Willis*

*David and Barbara Morgan
In loving memory of
their son,
Wade Hampton Morgan*



*Gust and Jane Pappas
In loving memory of
Their son,
Adam Nicolas Pappas*

*Shirley Rich
In loving memory of
her son,
Bert Rich*

*Wayne and Marsha Vick
In loving memory of
their son,
Daniel Wayne Vick*

*Jerry and Loretta Winters
In loving memory of
their son,
Don Bruce Winters*

**LOVE IS IMMORTAL**

Many of us will resent the lengthening of time between our child's life and our own present. Others may welcome the increasing distance in the hope that time itself will be a balm to pain. Yet, all of us perceive, beyond all the hype and expectations, that new years and seasons are merely calendar events.

Whatever problems we have had in the past will follow us into the present. There is no inner demarcation with hurting behind and joy ahead. Each of us has the same opportunities now as we had before. We can permit time to simply pass, or we can work to mold its passage into constructive growth. In the deaths of our children we have discovered with certainty that we lack the means to control the most cherished elements of our lives. But we also know that within each of us is the potential to rise above the debilitating anguish we have experienced.

Time continues to move forward and most of us have been too damaged to even play the games of resolutions and dance the rites of spring. We are beyond the futility of such exercises. But, let us each confront this moment and time with an inward commitment to recovery, to living the hours which comprise our existence with the fullness and love of which we are capable.

Hurting will ultimately lessen. Pain will slowly become more bearable. Fears and guilt will gradually pass away. But love, that inner dance of the heart which leaps to our child's name or the memory of an especially close experience that bears only the mantle of endless joy, will not pass away. All else, fame, fortune, distress and dismay, wealth and power, even ourselves, will at last be done.

But love...Love is immortal...May the immortality of love grow secure and healthy again within each of us.

Don Hackett,
TCF, Plymouth, MA
From *ALIVE ALONE*

A Love Letter to My Children

You are great kids. You have always been great kids, although I haven't always been a great mom. After your brother died, I was hardly any kind of mom at all. I was so lost in my own grief that I wasn't there for you. You were bewildered, scared and hurt, but I couldn't seem to reach out to you beyond my own pain. I was like a day-old helium balloon drifting along, not sure whether my place was with you or with your brother.

I didn't drift for long. You grabbed my string and yanked me back! The yowls and shrieks still ring in my ears: "mom, all my underwear is dirty!" or "Mom, I'm starved!" or "Mom, he punched me!" Your brother was being cared for by his heavenly Father, but you needed your earthly mother. It was your need for me that saved my life.

I'm sorry that your brother's death robbed you of your childhood. While other kids fretted about what to wear or which movie to see, you wondered when the tears and sadness would ever end and if we would be a family again. If I could have shielded you from such great sorrow, I would have; but I couldn't.

Your lives were changed forever, and the future was uncertain, but you kept going. You supported and inspired me as we traveled that rocky road of grief together. You talked about your brother when no one else would say his name. You kept his picture in your rooms and proudly pointed out to friends, "This is my brother." You used his things, but gently. You reminded me of the cute, funny things he said and did. You included him in your bedtime prayers. You still do. Someday I believe you will tell your own children about your brother. Thank you for keeping his memory alive.

Because of the tragedy you experienced, you are more mature than other kids your age. You possess strength and courage beyond your years. You are resilient; little things don't get you down. Best of all, you are kind, sensitive, and compassionate to others. I adore you. You are my life.

Pat Dyson
TCF, Beaumont, TX

Choices

*The issue, finally distilled to its essence,
is revealed as not so much who you were
as who your example inspired us to be.*

*Because we walked beside you in life,
we grew strong enough to handle grief,
determined enough to endure emptiness,
wise enough to cry when hurting,
brave enough to start over every day.*

*We are different people from the ones
who accompanied you on your journey.
We don't think the same or look the same
and we certainly don't feel the same.
Every event plowed and furrowed our souls
shaping us into fields of unconditional love
capable of bearing an inexhaustible harvest
that will always and forever exceed our need.*

*Our choices in the new world thrust upon us
are whether we shall limit our experience
to daily memories of grief, pain and sorrow,
or opt for deliberate expansion of heart and mind.
Whether we shall define your passing as the ending
of all we cherished and sought and dreamed,
or lean into the loss to reveal an opening
we never thought possible or let ourselves see.*

*As opening that beckons and promises
a transcending, a separation from the grief
everywhere present like the fine dust of an explosion.
A hidden place where tears give way to freedom,
hearts recover and songs begin to play again.
A shelter where legacy of victory heals,
revealing the power of seeking joy in sorrow
and the bliss of finding peace in what is.*

Copyright Harold G. Hopkins, May 2001
TCF, Lawrenceville, GA

*Bereavement is a darkness
impenetrable to the imagination of the unbereaved.*

Iris Murdoch

Gardens of the Heart

*How comforting are our memories
They sustain us in our sorrow
And give us reassurance
As we face a new tomorrow.*

*And though the world seems barren
When our loved ones depart
Their memory blooms forever
In the gardens of the heart.*

TCF, Houston, TX



Three Secrets

*The secrets of healing from grief
are love (as in friend-ness),
patience (as in waiting gently),
and honesty (as in not covering up).*

*Try to learn finding these,
with love, patience and honesty.*

Sascha

A Jumble of Thoughts on How I Am Today

How do you explain the constant physical ache of loss to someone who has not experienced a significant loss? It's been almost ten months, and I still feel Tom's absence in our home and in our lives. This gnawing darkness in my chest will not go away. It is impossible to move on when your body and heart are still searching for him here on earth.

I am a different person now. I feel more grounded in some ways. Closer somehow to the universe and its plan for me. But I feel chaotic, too. Unable to focus and drifting. There are moments when I am absolutely struck all over again with the knowledge my son is gone. And yet I have not forgotten it either. Grief is such a paradox.

Something funny happened in class today which Tom would have appreciated. I wanted so much to share it with him. I can see him rolling his eyes and shaking his head along with me. I miss him so much. There are not words to describe how I yearn for him.

This is the hardest thing. Ever.

Kimberly Starr
TCF Facebook Loss to Suicide Group

Getting Better

*My tears feel warm on my cheeks now—
Not burning hot.
Is this a sign I'm "getting better"?
When I cry now I am almost often alone.
In the car, in the shower,
Or sometimes taking a walk.
I do not cry in public or feel as much panic.
Is this a sign I'm "getting better"?
I sleep the night through sometimes
And awaken without tears—for awhile.
They come now while I'm brushing my teeth,
Or making coffee.
And are always gone before I say "Good morning."
Is this a sign "I'm getting better"?
Yes, I think so—but when does the pain end?
Perhaps when I no longer ask
Is this a sign I'm "getting better"?*

Shirley Blakely Curle
TCF Central Arkansas

I Remember

*Dear one,
I greet you every morning
As I arise and look at your picture,
. . . and remember.
I see you every day
As I look at the field we walked,
. . . and remember.
I hold you every year
In my heart on your birthday
. . . and remember.
I grieve for you always
As the years come and go,
. . . and remember.
I hope to be with you again
As I pass into eternity,
. . . and rejoice.*

Jean Fisk
TCF, Contra Costa County, CA

A Native American Lesson in Grief

One of the most common questions that family and friends ask is how long does it take to “get over” the death of a loved one. Native American culture holds many lessons about grief and its duration. The Native American legend of the Caterpillar people holds lessons for us all in grief. This legend is traditionally told during funeral services of the Shoshone.

"Long ago, there were two caterpillar people who loved each other very much. When the caterpillar man died the caterpillar woman was overcome by her grief. In her remorse she withdrew into herself and pulled her sorrow around her like a shawl. She walked and mourned for a year and because the world is a circle she ended up where she had started. The Creator looked down upon her and told her that she had suffered too long. 'Now,' he told her, 'is the time for you to step into a new world of beauty.' He clapped his hands and the caterpillar woman burst forth as a butterfly. Her world was now full of beauty and color." *

Many Native American tribes see the butterfly as a symbol of everlasting life. The Wilik-wilik waashaashut or the Butterfly Dance enacts this legend. Young women line up single file

and pull their shawls over their heads to cover them. This represents the caterpillar in the cocoon. The drummers sing and drum sadly. After the head dancer returns where she begun the dancers open their arms and display the brightly colored shawls. The song becomes more upbeat and the women dance to represent the fluttering of the wings.

Another saying of the Warm Spring Native American tribe is to compare the death of a loved one to a landslide. "When your road is blocked by a landslide, you clear it by taking away one rock at a time." In a time, when we want definite answers or a quick fix we should heed the wisdom these legends impart and let us work through grief at our own pace.

Trudy Weathersby, RN, M.Ed.

Trudy Weathersby, RN, M.Ed. is an active licensed Registered Nurse and the Death and Dying Online Guide for about.com at <http://dying.about.com/health/dying/mbody.htm>

* Reference: Tafoya, Terry, "The Widow as Butterfly, Innovative Approaches for Bereavement Based on Native American Tradition," *The Director*, February, 1998.



The Butterfly

The butterfly has long symbolized a renewal of life. The caterpillar signifies life here on earth; the cocoon signifies death; and the butterfly signifies the emergence of the dead into a new, beautiful and more free existence. Frequently, the butterfly is seen with the word “Nika,” which means victory. Elizabeth Kubler-Ross movingly tells of seeing butterflies drawn all over the walls of the children’s dormitories in the World War II concentration camps. Since children are intuitive, she concludes that these children knew their fate and were leaving a message. The Compassionate Friends adopted the butterfly as a symbol of hope that our children are living in another dimension with greater beauty and freedom, which is a comforting thought to many of us.

Revised by Bonnie Rodgers-Ingram
TCF, Nashville, TN

Spring Comes

*The spring came and went
Summer lasted only so long
The fall visited briefly
And soon winter too was gone*

*Then we were back at start
A year already gone by
How quickly months pass us
How fast time can fly*

*You were here
I remember, I know
Hugging me goodbye
Not so long ago*

*The flowers came
The daffodils bloomed
The world was alive
Except for you*

*Empty skies
Watching over empty hearts
As spring comes
And we're re-winded back to start*

Alex Bloom
sibling of Jessica Bloom
TCF Nashville, TN



CHAPTER INFORMATION

Are you Moving?

Each time a newsletter is returned to us with an incorrect address, we pay to retrieve it in order to find out where you've moved; then we pay again to mail it back to you. This is in addition to the original bulk mail cost. It would help a great deal in both time and money if you would notify us immediately of any address change so your newsletter can reach you right away. You may call, write or email the chapter leaders or the newsletter editor. Thanks for your help.

The “Children Remembered” Listings

If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed on pages 2 and 3 in The Children Remembered list, please let us know, printing the exact way you'd like the child's name to appear, the child's birth and death dates, and the parents' names as they should be listed. Drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205. We'll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once, unless any of your information changes.

We Need Your Help

If you know a family outside the immediate Nashville area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you have access to the address (and phone number) of the parents, it would be most helpful if you would call us with that information. Our mission is to reach every bereaved family in Middle Tennessee, but we have to know about them in order to give them the support we ourselves have received. If you know the child's name, birth date, date of death and cause of death, so much the better. Our outreach chairperson will send a warm letter of sympathy and information about TCF along with appropriate brochures and articles. There will be no harassment, no phone calls, and no demands made upon the parents, and the information you provide is strictly confidential.

The Birthday Table

In the month of your child's birthday, a table will be provided at our meeting where you can share photographs, mementos, your child's favorite snack or a birthday cake, a bouquet of flowers—anything you'd like to bring. We want to know your child better, so please take advantage of this opportunity to celebrate the wonderful day of your child's birth and for us to become better acquainted.



BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents

For general information about grief support services and groups at Alive, please call the Grief Line at: 615-963-4732 or email griefsupport@alivehospice.org. They offer eight-week groups, ongoing monthly groups, family group and Little Hearts Club for children who have experienced the death of a sibling. Services are in Franklin, Nashville, Hendersonville, Lebanon, and Murfreesboro.

Sharing

SHARING is a community organization for parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of an infant. The website is sharingmiddletn.org.

Survivors of Suicide

There is a caring SOS group in Nashville. For information about meetings, you may call 615 244-7444, or go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at TSPN.org, and you will find a list of all Tennessee SOS locations.

TCF Website —A Treasure for You

When you log onto the TCF Website at www.compassionatefriends.org you will find a wealth of information about TCF and grief—poetry and articles, chat rooms, grief in the news, other chapter Web sites and numerous other resources. Check it out.

The Compassionate Friends

**P.O. BOX 50833
Nashville, TN
37205**

**Return Service
Requested**



April 2021

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For My Compassionate Friends

*How is it that I know you?
How'd you get into my life?
Sometimes when I look at you,
It cuts me like a knife.*

*I do not want to know you,
I don't want to cross that line.
Let's both go back into the past,
When everything was fine.*

*You've held me and you've hugged me,
And dried a tear or two,
Yet, you're practically a stranger,
Why do you do the things you do?*

*Of course, I know the reason,
We are in this Club we're in,
And why we hold on to each other
Like we are long-lost kin.*

*For us to know each other,
We had to lose a kid,
I wish I'd never met you,
But, I'm so thankful that I did.*

Marilyn Rollins
TCF Lake/Porter Counties, IN



