

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.

February 9 Meeting: Mementos of our Children

We all have things that are precious to us, that either belonged to or remind us of our beloved children. At this month’s meeting, we invite you to bring any one thing that can be shared very briefly with the rest of the group. This memento can be something that your child treasured, or something that simply reminds you that your child lived and was loved, even if life was very short (a footprint, baby blanket, hospital bracelet, etc.)

Please join us February 9 as we share sweet remembrances of our dear children. Of course, we encourage grandparents and siblings to participate as well.

Small sharing groups will follow this program.



Someone has said that it is in the winter—then the trees have dropped their leaves, “revealing the diversity and uniqueness of each ridge and valley,” when the hills bare their innermost selves—that we get to know them—what is really out there. And so it is with people. Most of the time we wear our masks. But it is during the difficult times, during the winters of our lives, that there is the strong need to shed our masks and be able to reveal the hurting and turmoil that is really there.

It is in these moments that friendships are formed and we experience one another as few others ever will. So it is among The Compassionate Friends. WE CARE!

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

Mary Wildman
TCF, Madison, IL

*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—

Brock Wyatt Blick February 8 Son of Mark and Jeri Kay Blick Grandson of Jerry and Bonnie Buckner	Elizabeth Osborn Cheek February 8 Daughter of Ross and Libby Cheek	Lee Edward Halker February 19 Son of Joe and Janene Halker	Tony Scott February 18 Son of Eldon and Margi Scott
Marcus Dean Lynn Brown February 27 Son of Ricky Brown and Deanna Brown	Buck Allen Dawson February 6 Son of Bob and Genevia Graham	Ryan Michael Laterza February 3 Son of Carl and Jo Ann Laterza Brother of Kevin	Audrey Grace Williams February 27 Daughter of Eric and Mary Ann Williams Granddaughter of Dick and Sally Williams
Logan Stratton Brumit February 24 Son of Charles and Kathy Brumit	Edward Elberson February 28 Son of Harry and Winnie Elberson	Abigail Rhea Little (Abbie) February 12 Daughter of Rhea and Marie Little	Heather Ann Willis February 26 Daughter of Tom and Margaret Loose
	Austin Chadwell Fitzhugh February 28 Son of Chad and Gina Fitzhugh	Brandy Nichole Rhoton February 20 Daughter of Judy Townsend Granddaughter of Gerald and Jackie Townsend	

And in the month of their deaths

Glenn Thomas Allen, Jr. (Tommy) February 7 Son of Ann McKee and Stepson of Wilson McKee	Charles Michael Brown (Charlie) February 7 Son of Dan and June Brown Brother of Katherine	Geoffrey Edward deZevallos February 17 Son of George and Anne deZevallos	Waylyn Cole McRae February 23 Son of Kelli Holst
Bonnie Elizabeth Brandon February 10 Daughter of Ricky and Lisa Wales	Marcus Dean Lynn Brown February 27 Son of Ricky Brown and Deanna Brown	Edward Elberson February 28 Son of Harry and Winnie Elberson	Arianna Marie Mitchell February 19 Daughter of Christopher Mitchell and Heather Evans Granddaughter of Frank and Brenda Nelson
Taylor Christian Brewer February 11 Son of Justin and Tracy Brewer Grandson of Don and Sherry Eakes and Penny Waters	Kelsee Nicole Corbitt (Princess) February 7 Granddaughter of Cheryl Carney	Austin Chadwell Fitzhugh February 13 Son of Chad and Gina Fitzhugh	Joseph Tanner Wray February 23 Son of Bob and Amy Schisler and Keith Wray
	Paula Lynn Cooper February 15 Daughter of Jim and Sue Cooper	Raejon Givens February 24 Son of Tanisha Givens	

*There is a sacredness in tears. They are not the mark of weakness, but of power.
They speak more eloquently than 10,000 tongues.
They are the messengers of overwhelming grief, of deep contrition, and of unspeakable love.*

--Washington Irving

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.

*Jerry and Bonnie Buckner
In loving memory of
their grandson,
Brock Wyatt Blick
Clarksville, TN 37043*



*Ross and Libby Cheek
In loving memory of
their daughter,
Elizabeth Osborn Cheek*

*Mike and Paula Childers
In loving memory of their daughter,
Emily Michelle Childers
And
Heidi Kathleen Hedstrom,
Daughter of
Charlie and Kris Foust*

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

*Tom and Kathy Cheek McCarthrey
In loving memory of their son,
Andrew Graham Cheek McCarthrey*

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

*Received from the Kroger Plus
Community Rewards Program
\$109.80 12/17/19**

Each month, Allegra Print & Imaging, 601 Grassmere Park, donates the printing of this newsletter as a gift to the families of TCF. Deanna Brown and her family assemble, label, sort and mail the newsletter in loving memory of her son, Marcus Dean Brown. We appreciate so much these people and their generosity to all of us.

**To benefit TCF, go to the Kroger website and click on "Community Rewards"; then follow the instructions on that page. After that, when you shop at Kroger, swipe your Plus Card or key in your phone number when you check out, and Kroger will donate dollars to TCF. It's a free and easy way to support your chapter.*

Love's Lasting Touch

*Don't weep for me when I'm gone,
Because I'll always be there.
My spirit will exist in all the earth,
In the water, trees, and air.*

*You'll hear me say, "I love you",
In the whisper of a breeze.
You'll know that I'm beside you,
With the rustling of the leaves.*

*You'll feel my arms caress you,
In the warmth of each sunrise.*

*The moon will be my goodnight kiss,
The stars my watchful eyes.*

*Your life will be my legacy,
Your memories my epitaph.
These ties will bind us together,
Till we meet on heaven's path.*

*I'll not ever desert you,
We'll never be far apart.
I'll live within you always,
Nestled deep inside your heart.*

20 Questions

*It is smaller than a breadbox. It is larger than a car.
It is rain bowed, striped, and polka-dotted
but colorless by far.*

*Its memory's like an elephant. It's forgetful as a fish.
It's emotional as a postcard
and hopeful as a wish.*

*It is busy as an ant. It is lazy as a bee.
It is weak as flavored gelatin
but hardy as a snow-pea.*



*It's hated as a jelly fish. It's loved as family.
It's plain as a doughnut
yet hidden as your keys.*

*It is ordinary as paper. It is creative as a kid.
It is loose as a shoe
and stuck as a lid.*

*It is Grief.
It is Love.
It is Hope.*

Jacqui McPeck
TCF of Spokane, WA
In Memory of my brother Zachary Ian McPeck

Walking In The Shadow Of My Child

Wherever I go, I walk with his shadow on my being. I am clothed in coloration not visible to the naked eye. It casts an unexpected influence on how I carry myself as I journey through life. It clouds my way of looking at things; forces perspectives which I didn't know were part of my psyche. The shade of grayness through which I now view things absorbs some of the radiances which I experience. Yet my shadow comes not from the valley of death, but from my child being closer to the light.

Ed Kuzela
TCF Atlanta, GA

Breath of Winter

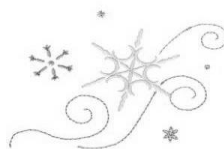
*The breath of winter
Painted fragile stars
On all the windows
Of my quiet house.
And there I found*

*Your face,
More fragile even
Than the season's art,
A wonder to my eyes.*

*How can it be
The winter paints
Such secret things
In white and silver sheen*

*For those who cry alone
At frosted windows?*

Sascha Wagner



Goodbye

*As the stars rise above, I see your beautiful face.
In that very moment, I remember our special place.
When you were born my heart sang out with joy,
A warm body with curly hair,
Not some little toy.
Little darling with big brown eyes just for me
My baby girl's finally here for the world to see.
Then you left me way too soon.
Now I always cry.
My reason is I miss you so and I don't want this
Goodbye!!*

Michelle Sonderleiter
TCF Winnipeg, Canada

The Image of Winter

When February comes there is finally an end in sight to the long winter. Sometimes, melting snow reveals the green tips of an early crocus or even the exquisite blossom itself, soft flower of hope invading a harsh landscape of graying snow and biting wind and ominous sky—a small promise of new life to come. My heart, grieving for my son who died, was like that image of winter. For somehow, even during the darkest, coldest moments, an unexpected sign of hope would intrude. And as the hours and days and months dragged on, my heart finally learned, once again, to be open to the promise of new life. Painful memories melted into loving ones. Life that seemed forever dormant once again sprang forth from my heart. In living hopefully and lovingly, the seasons of the heart can change. The loving memories of your special child, like the flower in the snow, can be the beginning of the end of winter.

Maryann Kramer
TCF, Arlington Heights, IL

Sex and Bereavement

Sex and how it is affected by our grief is rarely discussed at meetings. Yet it is a problem with many. Perhaps this information taken from the book, *Help for the Bereaved Parents*, by Mildred Tengbom, will be of some help to those who have concerns.

All the men questioned expressed that they felt the need for sexual relations to continue. “But it was different,” one of the men said thoughtfully. “It wasn’t as much of a physical drive or urge as before. Rather I was hoping to find some way to tell my wife how much I loved her and how much I cared and it seemed to me that this was the most meaningful way I could do so.”

Most wives had misinterpreted their husband’s motives. “I felt used,” one said. “It was completely, absolutely, entirely without feeling of any kind,” another remarked. “How can you respond when you don’t have any feelings? I was too tired, absolutely worn out as it was,” a third woman stated. “To me, it seemed that my husband was trying to pretend that life should continue as it had before, and how could it? I felt my whole life had been wrecked and I hated him doing what I thought was playing pretend,” stated another woman.

“We all need to be needed,” one man explained. “A husband has a profound need to feel needed at a time of great crisis. When your wife doesn’t want to have sex, you feel rejected and not needed.”

“I actually told my husband I didn’t need him in that way right now,” one of the wives remembered. “His face looked as if I had slapped him. I realized—but not clearly enough—that I had dealt a stinging blow to his self-esteem.”

The following are some points made on a TCF tape, *The Sexual Adjustment of a Bereaved Couple*, by Clare Schultz:

1. Death and sex are both taboo subjects and it is difficult for some to admit that sex is altered by grief.
2. Grief is stressful so it can affect sexual feelings, thus causing a marital problem.
3. It can be more of a problem if it only affects one in the couple.
4. Sometimes a partner says that he/she wants sex but gets no satisfaction from it. This can be confusing.
5. A person needs to “let go” for sex and this is difficult when grieving.
6. Some feel the deceased can “see.” Others feel they should not experience joy—that it diminishes the relationship with their child.
7. Reactions can differ if there is no sex, and often a couple will stop trying, and touching is avoided.
8. It is suggested that couples try to verbalize sexual desires.
9. An orgasm is often felt to be paramount and that intimacy without it has no value—but cuddling and holding *are* necessary as the need for touch is increased with grief. (This need for touch is emphasized throughout the tape.)
10. The skin is the largest sense organ and the hands the chief pleasuring organ, so there are many possibilities for comfort-giving.
11. Although some do not plan a date and time to be intimate, it is suggested this may be helpful if spontaneity is not occurring. Each is able to prepare mentally.

TCF Winnipeg, Canada

One evening at a gathering of men, Sir Harry Lauder was speaking of the influence of a human life. He told of his boyhood memories of the lamplighter in London who moved down his street each night with a long taper. “I could not see the old man himself; it was entirely dark at the foot of the lamp posts; but I knew where he was by the row of lights he left behind him. In their own way, each child leaves behind a light to shine, although we can see them no more....”



TCF, Abilene TX



Measuring Loss Comes Up Short



“Your child chose to die, mine didn’t.”

“Your child was just an infant, you didn’t have as much time invested in him as I did in mine.
You shouldn’t need meetings as much as I do.”

“My child died suddenly, at least you got to say goodbye.”

“The way my child died is the worst.”

Sadly, these are actual statements made by bereaved parents. Since we have lost a child, we often assume that we know exactly what another person is experiencing and there is a strong temptation to measure another’s grief against our own. Perhaps we forget that in making a comparison, we may be diminishing the other person’s loss. To say that one child’s death is worse because of all their goodness implies a lesser worth of the child who may not have had such a successful life (but who was not less loved by his parents). Also weighing one age or one cause of death against another is not valid, for the final outcome is the same. A child has died. To suggest that one loss is greater than another automatically places less value on the other child’s life. This is hurtful to parents and can compound their distress. Usually when we hear a comment of this kind, it is best to overlook it. The parent who makes it is probably so absorbed in the initial agony of his or her own loss that he simply does not understand what he is doing. To become aware of the damaging effects of such remarks and refrain from making them shows loving consideration for others. Having experienced great pain, most bereaved parents are sensitive to the pain of others; nevertheless, even in the mind-numbing state called grief, learning continues, and compassion must guide us to take extra care with each other’s feelings.

Peggy Gibson
TCF Nashville, TN

Finding Hope

Grief: diverse, inclusive, specific.
Grief: makes an introduction in unimaginable ways and at unforgiving times.

Grief: blindsides the traveler whether in foggy rough terrain, smooth quiet paths, or calm unassuming detours.

Grief: pierces the heart. To find hope will take effort, energy, work and collective community.

Grief: is slippery like black ice. The stretch of highway is dangerous, unpredictable, and can be one of the most isolated roads to navigate. But there is a road called **Hope**.

How we respond, who we study alongside, what library of resources we seek out, where we connect with additional travelling companions, will greatly impact our healing, our future and how we remember and treasure our past.

Together may we travel, study and learn to find **hope**.

Pamela Hagens
TCF Nashville, TN



A Cure for Sorrow

There is an old Chinese tale about the woman whose only son died. In her grief, she went to the holy man and said, “What prayers, what magical incantations do you have to bring my son back to life?” Instead of sending her away or reasoning with her, he said to her, “Fetch me a mustard seed from a home that has never known sorrow. We will use it to drive the sorrow out of your life.”

The woman set off at once in search of that magical seed. She came first to a splendid mansion, knocked at the door and said, “I am looking for a home that has never known sorrow. Is this such a place? It is very important to me.” They told her, “You’ve certainly come to the wrong place,” and began to describe the tragic things that had recently befallen them.

The woman said to herself, “Who is better able to help these poor, unfortunate people than I, who have had a misfortune of my own?” She stayed to comfort them and then went on in search for a home that had never known sorrow. But wherever she turned, in hovels and in palaces she found one tale after another of sadness and misfortune. Ultimately, she became so involved in ministering to other people’s grief that she forgot about her quest for the magical mustard seed, never realizing that it had in fact driven the sorrow out of her life. Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.

George Baldwin
TCF, Alva, OK

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

At your first TCF meeting you are asked to sign a registration card that gives us permission to add your child to the We Remember Them list on pages 2 and 3 in the monthly newsletter. If you are unable to attend TCF meetings and would like for your child to be listed, 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. You may call the TCF chapter phone number: 615 356-4TCF (4823) and leave a message; or drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205; or email us at davidg14@bellsouth.net, 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 Hospice, please call the main number: [615 963-4732](tel:6159634732) or email GriefSupportIntake@alivehospice.org. Katherine Reynolds is a grief counselor for children and their families.

Sharing

SHARING is a community organization for parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. They meet at 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Thursday of the month in the Administrative Board Room on the first floor at Tri-Star Centennial Women's and Children's Hospital, 2221 Murphy Avenue in Nashville. The meetings are “open” and free. You can drop by as often as you like. The website is sharingmiddletn.org. Their informative brochure is found under “Contact Us.”

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 Web site 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

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February 2020

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Our Valentine Cookies

*The Valentine's Day Cookies
won't taste so good this year.
I stirred in the sugar, but you were not here.
Frosting – pink on the tip of your nose.
Days spun too swiftly – my biggest woe!*

*Did the time have to come so very soon
When you weren't here to lick the spoon?
My heart would dance and I would sing
To feel you tug at my apron strings.*

*But instead I'll toil with the rolling pin,
And rely on mind's eye for your silly grin.
When the heart shapes are baked, mine will still ache.
But I'll always love you, for goodness sake!*

Kathy Slief
TCF, Tulsa, OK

Spring Will Return

*Cold winds blow across frozen ponds.
Snow lies deep upon the fields.
But the change has begun.
Daylight hours increase slowly.
With each passing day later
sunsets are more apparent.
Winter is ending.*

*For bereaved parents,
The change is painfully slow,
The progress not always apparent,
But the promise is the same.*

*Winter will end.
Spring will return.*

Betty Stevens
TCF, Baltimore, MD



Attending your first TCF meeting can be difficult. Feelings can be overwhelming. We have all experienced them and know how important it is to take that first step. Please attend two or three meetings before deciding if TCF is right for you. There are no dues or fees. If you choose, you need not speak a word at a meeting. We are an international, non-denominational group, offering support and information to bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents. We need not walk alone.