

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

• NEW MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. Box 8283 • Hermitage, TN 37076 • (615) 356-4TCF(4823) •
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 at the ABC (Associated Builders and Contractors of Greater Tennessee) Building, 560 Royal Parkway, Nashville, TN 37214 (SEE NEW MAILING ADDRESS ABOVE). We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.

January 14th Meeting:

Preserving Tangible Connections to Our Children

For our January program, April Ellis will bring us many ideas on Preserving Memories such as photos and tangible objects. These treasured connections to our children can never be replaced and help keep the memory of our children, grandchildren and siblings alike. This program will present information on how to preserve these precious mementos and share them with others, such as creating a scrapbook (electronically or old fashioned) and will provide tips on writing about photos. She will bring us ideas of what to do with personal items and bring several examples including collages, a page of her son’s signatures, and both digital and standard scrapbooks. April’s presentation goal is to inspire us to create lasting formats for our treasures.

April asks that each person bring a photo taken of their child (not a school picture). She will engage us in a short exercise using our photos.

Bring your questions on this topic too. Our regular sharing groups will follow the program. Come join us and support one another on this long journey.



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.

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
	615-294-4959
AIDS	Joyce Soward
	615-754-5210
Illness	David and Peggy Gibson
	615-308-2520 or 615-504-4307
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

Shared Joy is double joy.

Shared sorrow is half sorrow.

Swedish Proverb

ALWAYS WITH LOVE, WE REMEMBER THEM--**In the month of their births**

Lisa Allgood
January 14
Daughter of
Harold and Betty Allgood

Misty Whitney Ambrose
January 14
Daughter of
Michael and Treva Ambrose

Evangeline Anacker
January 21
Daughter of
Brooks and Griselle
Anacker

Ashleigh Nicole Blough
January 20
Daughter of
Deana Malone

Matthew Johnson Brooks
January 14
Son of
Mike and Sherry Brooks

Pamela Sue Chaiken
January 17
Daughter of
Lionel and Sandra Chaiken
Sister of Stephanie

Jeremy Wilson Christy
January 20
Son of
Wilson and Jenny Christy

Cedric Lamar Collier
January 13
Son of
Greg Collier

Jonathan Lee Collins
January 12
Son of
Charity Collins
Grandson of Jennie Reeves
Nephew of
Kristanna

Kaitlyn Kimberly Cook
January 30
Daughter of
Jim Cook and Sylvia Bosma
Sister of
Aaron and Zander

John Calister Davidson
(Buddy)
January 4
Son of
Steve and Telese Davidson

James Wesley Evans
(Snowman)
January 31
Son of
Brenda L. Nelson
Brother of
Heather Evans

Robert Black Faison, Jr.
(Pete)
January 15
Son of
Robert Faison and
Kimberlee Daus

Samuel Christopher Hagens
January 14
Son of
Christopher and Pamela
Hagens
Brother of
Luke and Caleb

Matthew Kent Hensley
January 13
Son of
Kenneth and Kathy
Hensley

Justin Bruce Hensley
January 13
Son of
Denise Jones



James Edwin Hinesley
January 7
Son of
Steven and Sue Hinesley

Mary Grace Hodsdon
January 14
Daughter of
John and Mary Hodsdon

Cam Mantle
January 9
Daughter of
Jack Mantle and Vicki
Little

Shawn Patrick Martin
January 4
Son of
Annie and Michael
Martin
Brother of Austin

Lauren Kristina O'Saile
January 23
Daughter of
Don Davenport
Granddaughter of
Martha Davenport

Matthew Douglas Pate
January 10
Son of
Melanie Pate

Carmen Davisson Provost
January 17
Daughter of
Donald and Jennifer
Davisson

Travis David Pate
January 9
Son of
Melanie Pate

Laurie Lynn Shriver
Robert
January 15
Daughter of
Warren and Donna Jones
and George Shriver
Sister of
David, Bekki, and Bonnie

Gregg Alan Swayze
January 18
Son of
Michael and Carole Swayze

Tristan Walker
January 23
Son of
Tamara Brown

Shelby Noelle White
January 10
Daughter of
John and Wendy White



And in the month of their deaths



Brock Wyatt Blick January 8 Son of Mark and Jeri Blick Grandson of Jerry & Bonnie Buckner	Patrick Jonathan Bruce, Jr. (Jon) January 7 Son of Patrick and Pam Bruce	Matthew Lance Chitwood January 1 Son of Jim and Connie Chitwood Grandson of Margaret Chitwood-Watkins Brother of Clayton	Jeremy Wilson Christy January 4 Son of Wilson and Jenny Christy
Cedric Lamar Collier January 21 Son of Greg Collier	Roy James Davies January 13 Son of Roy and Barbara Davies	Susan Edwards January 21 Daughter-in-Law of Charles and Ruth Edwards	LaTorra Fayne January 12 Daughter of Helen Fayne
Kamden Joseph Hayes January 30 Grandson of Laura Buchanan	Cam Mantle January 25 Daughter of Jack Mantle and Vicki Little	Heather Marie Robinson January 14 Daughter of Carol Green	Megan Emily Rotella January 4 Daughter of Patti Kelly
Shane Tanner Scruggs January 22 Son of Don and Joan Johnson; James and Lisa Scruggs	Trinity Rhodes Steagall January 1 Son of Rose Steagall	Kevin Tolentino January 28 Son of Sarah Tolentino	Gregory Allen Totty, Jr. January 19 Son of Janie Totty



Joe Vick (Joey)
January 10
Son of
Kay Bogle
Brother of
Angie Hoffman

Shelby Noelle White
January 24
Daughter of
John and Wendy White



Helpful Hint...

In one sense there is no death. The life of a soul on earth lasts beyond their departure. You will always feel that life touching yours, that voice speaking to you, that spirit looking out of others' eyes, talking to you in the familiar things they touched, worked with, loved as familiar friends. They live on in your life and in the lives of all others that knew them.

Angelo Patri
TCF, Putnam County, OH



Those That Are Gone

*They shall not grow old:
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun
and in the morning
we will remember them.*

Laurence Binyon
Poems for the Fallen

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.

*John and Mary Hodsdon
in Loving Memory
of their daughter
Mary Grace Hodsdon*

*Martha Davenport
in Loving Memory
of her granddaughter,
Lauren Kristina O'Saile*

*Keith and Meryl Kraft
in Loving Memory
of their daughter,
Stacy Leigh Kraft*



*Don and Sherry Eakes
in Loving Memory
of their grandson,
Taylor Christian Brewer,
Son of
Justin and Tracy Brewer*



At New Years' Time

*Time does not touch
The firmament of stars
With the simplicity
Of days and nights and years.
The rhythm of the smallness
We call earth
Is only a whisper among galaxies.*

*Beyond the measured years
Which rise and fall,
Beyond the calendars
Of human time and place,
The meaning of this smallness
We call life
Will find us somewhere
In eternity.*

Sascha

Our December Memorial

Nashville Compassionate Friends' families came together Sunday, December 10, for another beautiful Candlelight Service to remember our beloved children. As 60 beautiful faces were shown on the big screen one by one in the solemn atmosphere of Citipointe Church auditorium, and candles were placed before their framed photos, hurting hearts were opened to some healing.

Our candles were lit for the children named aloud and for all the children remembered by Nashville's TCF families throughout the years. The little flames shone brightly with the love we will always have for these precious ones. They will never be forgotten. We also remembered the losses sustained by the families affected by the tornadoes of the previous day and affirmed welcoming them when they are ready.

After the service, the cafeteria was filled with the fellowship of all young and old travelling the path of grief. With understanding words and hugs, these fellow travelers forged and strengthened friendships to help each other find some peace in the New Year. It was a lovely gathering. If you were unable to attend, we hope you can be with us next year.

Our hearts are grateful for all the dedicated TCF Nashville volunteers who provided this healing experience.



“Getting on With Life”—What Does It Mean?

Of all the statements and spiritual platitudes quoted to me since my son Daniel’s death, the phrase that I hear most frequently makes me squirm the most. “You have got to get on with your life.” Recently I quit squirming long enough to ponder the meaning behind this phrase that is usually said to the bereaved in the form of a command. Exactly what does this phrase mean? What are people implying when they say it?

I was pregnant when Daniel died, and three months later I gave birth to a baby girl. Wasn’t that getting on with life? I nurtured my three children, took them to school, the park and birthday parties. Now, wasn’t that going on with life? I even cooked dinner at least four times a week!

At first after Daniel’s death, I would have liked to literally stop my life and be buried next to my son, but I kept existing. Like a plastic bag tossed about by the wind, I was fluttering, being carried by the events of life. Seasons came and went. In the spring, I planted marigolds and tomato vines. In the autumn, I jumped in fallen leaves with my children. I continued; I am still continuing to live.

Now I may be bereaved, but I am by no means a fool. As I ponder the meaning behind “getting on with life,” I know exactly what those who say this have in mind. “Forget your dead child. Quit grieving. You make me uncomfortable!”

Getting on with life means don’t acknowledge August 25, Daniel’s birthday, any more. Forget how he slid down the snowy bank in the recycle bin, sang in the van and ate

Gummy Bears. Forget he had cancer, suffered and died at only age four. Don’t see the empty chair at the dinner table, don’t cry, just live!

Some who are more “religious” would like to believe that a bereaved parent can claim, “My child is safe and happy in heaven. Therefore, why should I yearn for him?” Perhaps I pose a threat to certain types because I have let it be known I question God. I weep. I have been angry. I miss my Daniel. Maybe old friends feel if they hang around me too long, I might convince them that a few of their illusions about life are just that, illusions. As my cries of anguish are heard, there are those who can only think how to make me be quiet. To stop my heartfelt yearnings, they say quite sternly, “You must get on with your life.”

I am living. I do move on with life with Daniel in my mind and in my heart, although he is not physically here as I continue to live and to love. To sever his memory totally from my life would cause destruction and damage that would ruin me. To push Daniel out of my life and not be able to freely mention his name or write and speak about who he was on earth would only bring more pain to my life. I’d shrivel up. Comfort for me comes in remembering with smiles how he drew with a blue marker on his sister’s wall, ran outside naked and picked green tomatoes. For the reality is, getting on with life means continuing to cherish Daniel.

Alice J. Wisler
Bereavement Magazine, Sept./Oct. 2000

Secret Eyes

*Icy day in the morning,
—you walk without thought,
when, for a moment,
you see him again,
the child you took to school
on other mornings.*

*And from that moment
there comes to you
a string of images—
one following the other
in a misty flow of recollection.*

*Icy day in the morning,
making you smile,
making you weep,
making you wonder
how you can go on
without the child
who lives in the secret eyes
of your mind....*

*but life carries you along
just the same.*

Sascha
From *Wintersun*



My Failure

*My child is dead.
I failed him.
I am FAILURE.*

*I realize
I have no power,
So, I have no hope.*

*I cannot do my will,
So, I have no will.
Still, I breathe.
Why?*

*I am impotent.
What I do is so small,
So much less than before.*

*With some self-pity,
A lot of humility,*



*And a bit of humor,
I accept my new place.*

*Past opportunities and responsibilities are gone.
Tiny, insignificant things begin my recovery.*

*Unrewarded, often unnoticed acts
Are my reason for being.
It is all that I have.*

*I plant a flower, pull a weed,
Cook a meal, feed my children, clean a sink.
That is all I can do.*

*As I do these things,
I begin to believe in me again.
So, I embrace it.*

Jeannie Sevier
TCF Nashville, TN

Rooms and Things

How many people have suggested to you in subtle and not so subtle ways that you'd be better off if you'd only go ahead and get rid of your child's things and redo the room? You see, they think that the holding on to these things is morbid. These people, who have never suffered the loss of one of their children, really do not understand that you have to do your grief work, and whether you do this sad task now or later really doesn't affect the length or depth of your pain.

Some parents need to make the changes and decisions about personal belongings as soon as possible after the death. Having the chore ahead of them is more painful than the doing. These parents are advised, however, to go slowly when disposing of belongings. It may seem to you, also, that not seeing or having anything around to remind you of your dead child will somehow make your pain less. Later, though, when your grief has softened, you may find you need that special something, but by then it's too late.

On the other hand, you may try to keep everything, and it may take many months and several acts of sorting through the belongings at intervals before you're able to decide on just the special things you want to keep as mementos. As time goes

by, you will be able to let go of the less important things without it ripping you to pieces. Not everything will forever have the same value for you.

Whether you've made changes or haven't been able to make changes, it's okay. There is no rule about when you do it, so don't let well-meaning friends or relatives make you feel guilty because your needs don't meet their timetables. What I would like to suggest to you is, though there is no rule about when you do it, that you do have as a goal eventually making the changes, otherwise the room and things become a shrine, and if you have a spouse, they may find it very difficult to live in this atmosphere forevermore.

I don't think I know of anyone who hasn't kept some belongings of their dead child, so that must be normal. What we learn after the death is that life is tenuous at best, and rather than hanging on to unchanged rooms, try to value the important people who are left in this life, be they family or friends, and savor them along with the memories of your dead child. For when all is said and done, those memories are truly the important part of what you have left of your child. That's a truth that doesn't need changing.

Mary Cleckley
TCF, Atlanta, GA

How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.

Winnie the Pooh
By A. A. Milne

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 8283, Hermitage, TN 37076. We'll be glad to include them. You need to contact us only once, unless any of your information changes.

Corporate Donations to TCF

To benefit TCF, go to the Kroger website and click on “Community Rewards”; then follow the instructions on that page and designate The Compassionate Friends Nashville Chapter. 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 our chapter.

How You Can Help

Most people who attend TCF meetings never heard of TCF before they lost a child, and many bereaved parents still have not heard that there is an organization that exists to help them navigate their grief journey. If you know a family in the middle Tennessee area who has experienced the death of a child, regardless of age or cause of death, and you think they would benefit from finding out about TCF and possibly attending a TCF meeting, we will be happy to send you some information that you may share with them about what TCF is and what we do to support bereaved parents. If you have attended a TCF meeting, it might be helpful if you would invite them to attend their first TCF meeting with you. We also have a monthly newsletter that they can receive free of charge simply by asking for it.



BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

Alive Alone

Alive Alone is an organization to benefit parents whose only child or all children have died. Visit their website at www.alivealone.org.

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.

The Compassionate Friends

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January 2024



New Year...New Beginnings...Healing...Growing

The Holidays are OVER, and for many it wasn't easy. But you handled it. For some it was easier than last year. May the year 2024 be filled with good health and HOPE for all of our Compassionate Friends.

Here are some special words – you might want to keep them on the refrigerator door as a daily reminder for help and encouragement:

May I have the strength to profit by my YESTERDAY.

The fortitude to live to the utmost of my TODAY.

And the wisdom to cope with my TOMORROW.

TCF, Baltimore, MD