

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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Nashville Website: www.tcfnashville.com



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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 MAILING ADDRESS ABOVE). We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.

January 12th Meeting:

Ask it Basket

Bereaved parents are often plagued with questions regarding their grief. If there is something bothering you, bring your questions for the basket. This meeting will provide an especially good opportunity for those of us who are farther along in our grief to give the benefit of our experience to those who are just beginning their sad journey by addressing the questions. We invite our old-timers to come and lend a hand. Together we can find the support we need. Our regular sharing sessions will follow this program.

Chapter Leadership Changes

The Nashville TCF chapter wants to thank Justin and Tracy Brewer for being our chapter leaders for the past two years. They've done an excellent job of seeing that the chapter runs smoothly. We deeply appreciate all of their work which they did in love and caring memory of their son, Taylor.

Starting this month, the new chapter leaders will be Ron Henson, father of Daniel, and Robin Hunt, mother of Michael. Both Ron and Robin have been active on the chapter steering committee for several years and they often facilitate sharing tables at the chapter meetings. We thank them for their willingness to serve the chapter in memory of their children.

A note from Ron Henson:

Our peers on the steering committee approved Robin Hunt and I as the next Nashville chapter leaders starting January 1. We will give our best as we face challenges and opportunities as a chapter. We are thankful for all we have learned from former chapter leaders and parents who have trusted us with their children's stories. May your grief come on gentle wings,

Ron

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
Illness	David and Peggy Gibson 615-308-2520 or 615-504-4307
Infant	Jayne Head 615-264-8184
Suicide	Ron Henson 615-789-3613
Alcohol/Drug Overdose	Ed Pyle 615-712-3245



<p>There will be a Steering Committee meeting following our January meeting, weather permitting.</p>

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	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	Matthew Kent Hensley January 13 Son of Kenneth and Kathy Hensley
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	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	Miles Kirkpatrick Henry January 5 Son of Oliver and Heather Henry	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	Travis David Pate January 9 Son of Melanie Pate	Carmen Davisson Provost January 17 Daughter of Donald and Jennifer Davisson
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, we remember them-



<p>Brittany Athey January 15 Daughter of Marcus and Tracy Cushman</p>	<p>Patrick Jonathan Bruce, Jr. (Jon) January 7 Son of Patrick and Pam Bruce</p>	<p>Gavin Bell January 31 Son of Jeniste Bell</p>	<p>Brock Wyatt Blick January 8 Son of Mark and Jeri Blick Grandson of Jerry & Bonnie Buckner</p>
<p>Jeremy Wilson Christy January 4 Son of Wilson and Jenny Christy</p>	<p>Matthew Lance Chitwood January 1 Son of Jim and Connie Chitwood Grandson of Margaret Chitwood-Watkins Brother of Clayton</p>	<p>Cedric Lamar Collier January 21 Son of Greg Collier</p>	<p>Roy James Davies January 13 Son of Roy and Barbara Davies</p>
<p>Susan Edwards January 21 Daughter-in-Law of Charles and Ruth Edwards</p>	<p>LaTorra Fayne January 12 Daughter of Helen Fayne</p>	<p>Kamden Joseph Hayes January 30 Grandson of Laura Buchanan</p>	<p>John Mallard, Jr. (Jay) January 26 Son of Mary Mallard</p>
<p>Cam Mantle January 25 Daughter of Jack Mantle and Vicki Little</p>	<p>Christopher Javon Patterson January 20 Son of Stacy Patterson</p>	<p>Heather Marie Robinson January 14 Daughter of Carol Green</p>	<p>Megan Emily Rotella January 4 Daughter of Patti Kelly</p>
<p>Shane Tanner Scruggs January 22 Son of Don and Joan Johnson; James and Lisa Scruggs</p>	<p>Trinity Rhodes Steagall January 1 Son of Rose Steagall</p>	<p>Kevin Tolentino January 28 Son of Sarah Tolentino Chavarria</p>	
<p>Joe Vick (Joey) January 10 Son of Kay Bogle Brother of Angie Hoffman</p>	<p>Gregory Allen Totty, Jr. January 19 Son of Janie Totty</p>	<p>Shelby Noelle White January 24 Daughter of John and Wendy White</p>	

*I find that it is not the circumstances
in which we are placed,
but the spirit in which we meet them
that constitutes our comfort.*

Elizabeth King



*I will always cry
Sometimes because I miss him.*

*I will always laugh
Sometimes because I knew him.*

TCF, Lexington, KY

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.

*Robert & Cynthia Daugherty
in Loving Memory
of their granddaughter,
Laura Abigail "Abby" Czirr,
daughter of
Steve and Paige Czirr*

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

*Helen Fayne
in Loving Memory
of her daughter,
LaTorra Fayne*

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

*Margaret Chitwood-Watkins
in Loving Memory
of her grandsons,
Clayton Lee Chitwood
And
Matthew Lance Chitwood,
Sons of
Jim and Connie Chitwood*

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



*Vicki Little
in Loving Memory
of her daughter,
Cam Mantle*



Each month, Price Printing, 615.360.3339, 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.

Snow

Every snowflake that falls is unique and has its own individual design. There are beautiful patterns in each snowflake and even the tiniest of flakes have their own markings. These patterns change again and again — even after the flake touches the ground. Each snowflake is a cause for wonder, each flake is one of a kind. No two are exactly alike.

Like the snowflake, our beautiful children were each unique and special; some we only dreamed about and some danced upon the earth. They filled our lives with wonder and transformed our world. We held them too briefly, but we will hold them in our hearts forever. We shall remember them always. At this time of remembering, it may help to reflect upon how our lives have been enriched by the love we have given and the love we have received from our children. Our children leave treasures behind that time can never take away.

Denise Falzone
TCF, Lake Area, MI

Listen

*The new year will arrive again at midnight.
Your mind is heavy with remembering.
Your heart must ache before another chance
to quarrel with the emptiness of time.*

*Yes, New Year will walk in again at midnight.
And can you hear it speak of comfort, waiting,
of open doors and brighter rooms to enter,
of deeper meaning and of greater hope?*

The new year will arrive and begs you:

LISTEN.

Sascha



Another Year

This is another year just beginning—afresh with new days, new opportunities and new challenges. It occurs to me, however, that it is a very difficult task to keep from concentrating on past years and the sadness we endure just because it is a new year and the calendar has flipped the page.

Moving on to a brighter tomorrow and letting go of the pain of yesterday is a gradual process. We cross that threshold one step at a time—a small one at first, faltering and stumbling—but somehow getting there. With patience, effort, and persistence, once again we will be able to celebrate life as the year stretches on before us, putting behind us our sadness, our guilt and failures, and our pain.

We will be able to smile again. We will be able to remember our precious children in life rather than death. We will recognize in our days many little blessings and will be able to share our joys with others.

Whenever that “New Year” begins for you, I celebrate with you that marvelous accomplishment, and wish you great peace, courage, and comfort. HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Alice Weening
TCF, Cincinnati, OH

Wish

*I wish you gentle days
and quiet nights.
I wish you memories
to keep you strong.*

*I wish you time to smile
and time for song.*

*And then I wish you friends
to give you love,
when you are hurt and lost
and life is blind.*

*I wish you friends and love
and peace of mind.*

Sascha



Personal Reflections

After the death of a child, how many of us, as bereaved parents, might say to ourselves, “How can I ever smile again?” I know I felt that way following the death of my son. I have heard bereaved parents, especially during the early days after the loss, say, “I suddenly found myself laughing at work. How could I have done that?”

After my son died, I went back to work one week after the funeral, and one of the first things I had to do was attend a department meeting. At one point, someone made a humorous remark. Everyone laughed, except me. One of my co-workers, seeing my poker face, called across the table, “Come on, don’t look so sad.” There were other times, too, when people thought I shouldn’t be so glum, that I should be smiling or laughing. Once, while riding in my carpool, the driver turned around to me after observing my mask-like expression in the rear-view mirror, and exclaimed, “Smile!” I remember retorting with some acerbity, “You smile.”

But in time I did smile. I did laugh. It must be the subconscious guilt within ourselves that denies us the right to smile or laugh. It happened—I don’t remember how long it was—at least several months, I think. I have seen parents at a TCF meeting, whose loss is recent, with tear-stained faces, smile when someone at the meeting says something that tickles the funny bone.

How many of us have heard our non-bereaved friends say to us, “How can you go to that support group? It’s all sadness and gloom.” *How wrong they are!* Of course, we cry at TCF, but there are moments of laughter, too. Crying and laughter, after all, are often interchangeable, such as crying at weddings or graduations and giggling inappropriately at the sight of someone taking an unceremonious pratfall on a slippery sidewalk.

Perhaps laughter is also the beginning of Nature’s way of mending, of healing us.

Dave Ziv
TCF, Bucks, Montana

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.

Thoughts from a Parent Who Lost an Older Child

Perhaps I had my child longer than you had yours, but thirty-eight years does not seem long. Perhaps there are more memories to hold in my heart, but I know yours are just as dear to you as mine are to me, even if your memories are memories of only one or two days. Your dreams for your child are gone. So are mine. Never did I imagine that I would have to deal with my child's death instead of him having to deal with mine. In thirty-eight years there was time to give me a legacy of three grandchildren. This is a very special blessing and one that I do not take for granted. My mission is to sustain the relationship with my three granddaughters who now live three thousand miles away from me.

My child died from a terminal illness that is not one of the "acceptable" diseases. My child died of alcohol and drug addiction. The tools for remission of this disease are placed in the hands of the person who has the disease. Even with the help of four treatment centers, the recovery was not to be. One day at a time, my recovery is taking place. The pain, after two and one-half years, has gone to a place where it can be tolerated.

My story and my age may be different from yours, but the bottom line is the same: my child has gone to a place where I cannot go, and I miss him so much. The pain of grief is still there, but I am living life one day at a time, enriched because my son came through my body into my life.

Helen Godwin
TCF/Orange Park-Jacksonville, FL

Beating the Winter Blahs

DIAGNOSIS: Grieving parents' depression seems aggravated by the cold weather and snow.

PRESCRIPTION: Force yourself to follow one or more of the suggestions listed below when the blahs strike.

WARNING: Don't expect a miracle but appreciate the little lift these things will give you.

Start a summer project—something for your yard from the woodshop, something to wear from your sewing machine, seedlings to transplant when the ground finally thaws—and challenge yourself to get it done in time to use it on the first warm day.

Make it seem like spring by treating yourself to fresh flowers. Buy a single carnation or mixed blooms. (Try the supermarket—they're usually cheaper there.)

Treat yourself to dinner at a restaurant as often as you can. And remember, you're worth it!

Try to make winter easier for the birds and squirrels in your yard and you'll feel better about yourself, too. They need water that isn't frozen as well as food.

If you have a fireplace, light a fire; fix a warm drink of some kind; wrap yourself in a comforter and snuggle with a good book (something funny or totally absorbing that you can get lost in.)

Bake some bread. The smell will make you feel good even if it flops (and no bread tastes bad hot!) Or, buy frozen bread and bake it—it smells fresh, too.

Take a long, hot bubble bath.

Brew a pot of smoky tea. The scent will remind you of the great outdoors in the summer time.

Close the blinds to hide the snow.

Tape some colored cellophane over the window you look out most so it looks brighter outside than it really is.

TCF, Carmel IN

Yesterday is experience.

Tomorrow is hope.

Today is getting from one to the other as best we can.

John M. Henry

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 2025

The Holidays are Behind Us

It is the new year. The holidays are behind us. We did with them what we could. Whether they were a time of sorrow, a time of joy, or a combination of each, they are now a part of our memories. In a strange way, as a memory in our hearts and in our minds, our child's place is there amongst all the other memories of the season. There is hurt along with the memory, but also a thankfulness for the memory.

Now we look out on a winter landscape. The earth is cold, the land sharply defined. Yet underneath the hard crust, the great energy and warmth of our earth is guarding and providing life to all that grows.

We may personally know the coldness and hardness of a grief so fresh that we feel numb; a grief so hurtful that our body feels physically hard; our throats tight from the muscles pulled by tears, shed or unshed; our chests banded tightly by the muscles of a mourning heart.

If we are not now experiencing this, our memories recollect so easily those early days. Yet, as we live these days, like the earth from which we receive our sustenance, we, too, in our searching, find places of warmth and change and love and growth, deep within.

Let our hearts and minds dwell in these places and be warmed and renewed by them, and let us have the courage and love to share them with our loved ones, to talk about even that first dim shape of new hope, or of new acceptance, or of new understanding, or of new love.

These are the new roots, born of our love of our child, that are forming and stirring within, gathering strength so that our lives, at the right time, can blossom once again and be fruitful in a new and deep way.

Marie Andrews
TCF, Southern Maryland

