

# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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Nashville Website: [www.tcfnashville.com](http://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.

## July 14th Meeting:

### Out of Order:

#### *Dealing with The Death of a Child*

Our July program offers viewing of the video, *Out of Order: Dealing with the Death of a Child*. We will see three couples whose children have died from different causes, including suicide, courageously share how they experienced their grief, what has helped them, and how they honor and keep connections to the memories of their children. From feeling they have no heart to live, to searching for and finding meaning and understanding, this video of Dave and Debbie, Bill and Chris and M.J. and John sharing their experiences can help us as we travel our own grief journeys.

Our regular sharing groups will follow the program.

We hope to see you there.



## Religion and TCF

Bereaved parents have a wide variety of attitudes toward religion. In addition to those who are members of one of the world's Eastern or Western institutional churches, there are humanists, agnostics, and atheists. All need the help that TCF can give. Some will credit a major share of their recovery to a deep, personal faith, but others have temporarily or permanently rejected the theological views they held before the death of their children.

Faced with this diversity of opinion and belief (sometimes even with husband and wife) and frequently accompanied by intense emotions, TCF has chosen to "espouse no specific religious or philosophical ideology" as an organization. Instead, it encourages its members to speak freely and openly about what helped or hindered them in coping with grief, but do so "with respect and consideration for those who may disagree with them."

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.	
<b>Accidental Death</b> .....	Mike and Paula Childers 615-294-4959
<b>Illness</b> .....	David and Peggy Gibson 615-308-2520 or 615-504-4307
<b>Infant</b> .....	Jayne Head 615-264-8184
<b>SIDS</b> .....	Kris Thompson 931-486-9088
<b>Suicide</b> .....	Ron Henson 615-789-3613
<b>Alcohol/Drug Overdose</b> .....	Ed Pyle 615-712-3245

TCF National Newsletter

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

**Daniel Matthew Bledsoe**  
(Matt)  
July 26  
Son of  
Dan and Barbara Bledsoe  
Brother of Jason and Kaci

**Kelsee Nicole Corbitt**  
(Princess Kelsee)  
July 26  
Granddaughter of  
Cheryl Carney

**Katara Dillard**  
July 18  
Granddaughter of  
Stacy Atkins

**Michael Dorman**  
(Mikey)  
July 8  
Son of  
Daniel and Michelle Clark

**Caroline Elizabeth**  
**Enright**  
July 26  
Daughter of  
Patrick and Stephanie  
Enright

**Stephen Christopher Gould**  
July 20  
Son of  
Herb and Susan Gould

**Heidi Kathleen**  
**Hedstrom**  
July 20  
Daughter of  
Charlie and Kris Foust

**Rylee Grace Honeycutt**  
(Ro)  
July 3  
Daughter of  
Anthony and Magen Honeycutt

**Michael Scott Jones**  
July 4  
Son of  
Warren and Donna Jones  
and  
Betty D. Jones  
Brother of  
David, Jennifer, and Becky

**Joshua Allen Kebert**  
July 7  
Son of  
Greg Kebert and Susan  
Whitaker

**Jaxon Leasure**  
July 14  
Son of  
Trip and Darcy Leasure

**David George Shriver**  
July 15  
Son of  
Warren and Donna Jones  
and George Shriver  
Brother of Bekki, Bonnie, and  
Laurie

**Robert Bryan Parrish**  
(Bryan)  
July 7  
Son of  
Marvin and Debbie  
Hampton

**Brandon Allen Payne**  
July 21  
Son of  
Terry and Kimberly Payne

**Lindsay Smith-Thistle**  
July 2  
Daughter of  
Wendy Smith  
and Greg Thistle

**Isaac Schujahn**  
July 15  
Son of  
Derek and Linda Schujahn

**Megan Emily Rotella**  
July 12  
Daughter of Patti Kelly

**Dwayne Moore**  
July 7  
Son of  
Clara McClain

**Matthew James Truman**  
July 7  
Son of  
Cheryl McMorrow

**Cody Turner**  
July 21  
Son of  
Teresa Crutcher



**Jonas Whitwell**  
July 1  
Son of  
Sandra Whitwell




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*When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth  
you are weeping  
for that which has been your delight.*

Kahlil Gibran

**A**ttending 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.

## And in the month of their deaths

**Christopher William Black**  
July 8  
Son of  
Ray and Linda Black

**Jonathan Lee Collins**  
July 31  
Son of  
Charity Collins  
Grandson of  
Jennie Reeves  
Nephew of Kristanna

**Cindy Marie Gabrysiak**  
July 28  
Daughter of  
Terri Holsapple

**Aaron Garner**  
July 30  
Son of  
Don and Vicki Garner

**Samuel Christopher Hagens**  
July 5  
Son of  
Christopher and Pamela Hagens  
Brother of  
Luke and Caleb Hagens

**Matthew Kent Hensley**  
July 15  
Son of  
Kenneth and Kathy Hensley

**Daniel Lee Henson**  
July 21  
Son of  
Ron and Darlene Henson

**James Thomas King  
(J.T.)**  
July 14  
Son of  
Tom and Jere King

**Shawn Patrick Martin**  
July 22  
Son of  
Annie and Michael Martin  
Brother of Austin

**Allen Glenn Mays**  
July 8  
Son-in-law of  
Roy and Carole Renfro

**Madison Allen Mays**  
July 8  
Son of  
Allen and Rachel Mays  
Grandson of  
Roy and Carole Renfro

**Jeremy Russell Powers**  
July 13  
Son of  
Phillip and Linda King

**Michael Reeves**  
July 6  
Son of  
Jennie Reeves  
Brother of  
Sheila, Michael, and Mark

**Mark William Ryman  
(Brutus)**  
July 24  
Son of  
Charlie and Gay Ryman

**Christian Thompson**  
July 14  
Son of Chris Thompson

**Alex Watson Tuttle**  
July 25  
Son of  
Ron & Betty Tuttle

**Jonas Whitwell**  
July 3  
Son of  
Sandra Whitwell



## *The Storm of Grief*

**I**t comes like a huge thunderbolt—shocking and deafening. Suddenly the world that has been so bright is black and desolate. There seems to be no hope. The tears come like torrential rains. The winds of reality come, and you are torn by the pains and fears caused by the storm. Even when the tears stop for a while, the dark clouds loom over you, threatening you with more tears and more pain.

Most passersby can't help you through the storm because they have never been caught in one like it—and some don't seem to care. There are a few who will reach out their hand to try to pull you from the storm, but the storm must be endured. And then there are the special ones—the ones who are willing to walk with you through the storm. Usually, these are people who have been there before and know that the storm can be

survived. After a time, the torrential rains turn to slow showers, and then the showers come less often. But the clouds don't go away. The sadness and pain remain but become more bearable.

Eventually, as the clouds begin to part, there may even be a rainbow—a sign of hope. And as the sun begins to shine a little more, flowers of memory will be enjoyed. I don't think the showers will ever end, but I believe that as they get farther apart the sky will get more blue. We will see more rainbows and the flowers will bloom more and more. Perhaps it's even good to have a shower now and then, to cleanse our souls and revive those special flowers of memory.



Mary Jo Pierce  
TCF Tuscaloosa, AL

## GIFTS OF LOVE AND REMEMBRANCE

<p><b>Robert and Cynthia Daugherty</b>  <i>in Loving Memory  of their granddaughter,  Laura Abigail "Abby" Czirr,  daughter of Steve and Paige Czirr</i></p>	<p><b>Don and Sherry Eakes</b>  <i>in Loving Memory  of their grandson,  Taylor Christian Brewer,  Son of Justin and Tracy Brewer</i></p>
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*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.*

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.

*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.*

### Yellow Gold

*The prettiest flowers I ever got  
Came not from a florist’s bouquet,  
But from the hands of a little tot  
On a mild summer’s day.  
They were only weeds from a pasture nearby,  
Held clutched in a tiny palm.  
Straggled and wilted and drooped they were  
From the long and weary trip home.  
But when I saw the shining face beaming up at  
me,  
So eager to please as he said, “Mommy, here!”  
They became more than weeds to me.  
The yellow petals seemed turned to gold  
As they glowed in the bright, shining sun.  
And of all the flowers I’ve gotten since then,  
I wouldn’t trade a one for the beautiful weeds  
I received that day, picked by my baby for me.  
They’re eternally wrapped and sealed with love,  
Preserved in my memory.*

Peggy Putnam  
TCF Hattiesburg, MS



### Mystery

*I bought toys for my baby after she died  
And I opened the cedar chest and put them inside  
And nobody ever knew but me  
The meaning of the mystery  
Of brand-new toys hidden here and there  
And not one baby anywhere.*

Andy Cipriano  
TCF Tallahassee, FL

### What is Loss?

**I** have a friend who never married; who never had a child. She never lost a husband as I did; She never lost a child as I did.

Last night... I wept for my friend...

Gwen Brown  
TCF, Winnepeg, Canada

*Like a bird singing in the rain,  
let grateful memories survive in time of sorrow.*

Robert Louis Stevenson

## *Amanda, It's Your Birthday*

*So many birthdays have come and gone,  
But I especially remember your very first one.  
There were friends and family, balloons and cake  
And, oh, so many pictures to take.  
Then before I knew it you were seventeen.  
Wow! What happened to all those years in between?  
Your seventeenth birthday was your last one here,  
But I still celebrated each one year after year.  
With flowers on your grave and balloons on your tree,  
Family and friends would gather with me.  
And although you're in Heaven my heart always knew  
All the angels there were celebrating them with you.*

*Happy Birthday, honey*

*Love, Momma*

Peggy Wood Nolan  
TCF, Nashville, TN

## *Summer's Dusk*

*Cicadas hum as twilight strikes  
Their cadence growing faster as light blends with night.  
Fireflies twinkle at the edge of the lawn  
Twirling through trees and low branches.  
The hot, heavy air of the day floats off with the light  
As laughter and whoops echo through the mist.  
Chubby bare legs encased in bright rubber boots clomp  
through the grass in cadence with crickets.  
While large plastic nets scoop through the air  
Spectacular in their miscalculation.  
Bright bare feet run through the moist grass.  
Laughter hangs in the air  
Twining with the firefly trails.  
It's a perfect summer dusk  
Except.  
One pair of boots sit,  
Kicked off at the edge of the deck  
Splattered with rain and mud  
Waiting for you  
In vain.*



Lynne Hudson  
Tributes-Issue Forty-One

## *Connections*

*Connections were so easy then,  
Little noticed as they slid by –  
A hug, a kiss, a call at school,  
A shopping trip, a lullaby,  
An evening walk, a family meal,  
A pat on your back for a job well done.  
We thought they'd last for all our days,  
Then in a blink, the connection's gone.  
Connections come much harder now,  
But we know they still occur –  
A presence sensed, a flower placed,  
Someone remembers who you were,  
A song we shared, a game we played,  
A candle lit—a message sent to you.  
To others, they seem strange indeed,  
These silly things we do.  
They hurt and yet they warm our hearts  
And make our spirits soar.  
Brief and tenuous though they may be  
For a moment we connect once more.  
They're fleeting as a butterfly,  
The connections that these bring.  
They come and go so rapidly –  
As fragile as a bouncing balloon,  
As slender as a string.*

Richard Dew  
TCF, Knoxville, TN

## *Never Forgotten*

*When the sun rises and the sun sets,  
There's not a day goes by that we will forget.  
Our loved ones meant so very much;  
We still remember the face and the slightest touch.*

*The gleam in their eyes we won't forget;  
Their leadership, we'll never regret.  
Through the darkest forest we won't be scared;  
We know they will always be there.*

*We can't wait for the day to come,  
When we meet again, they will show us the light from  
above,  
And take us to a place we have never been.  
But at least we know they will never leave us again.*

*We love you.*



Shawn's brother,  
Justin MacDonald  
TCF, Nashville, TN

## That First Summer Vacation

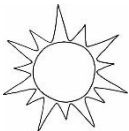
Summer time is quickly drawing near and with it you may be planning a vacation. If you have recently suffered the death of your child... that first vacation can be very difficult. I would like to share with you our experience the first time we took a vacation after our son, Paul, died. I have included some suggestions to help you through your first vacation and to help you plan around your grief. Our son, Paul, died in November from leukemia. He had been ill for 8 years. The last couple of years were very hard for us and we were not able to go on any vacations because of his illness. In August of the next year, we decided to go on a big trip to Hawaii like we had always wanted to do. We made our plans and we felt at the time that our grief was far enough along that we could enjoy ourselves. It was a very difficult vacation for our whole family. Each of us seemed unable to have a good time. We talked a lot about Paul. He was everywhere, in our thoughts and minds. We all knew how much he would have loved the beauty of Hawaii, the ocean with all its beautiful waves just right for surfing, and all of the sea life we saw when we went diving. It was very hard to have a good time and I soon realized we were all having problems coping with Paul's absence.

As I look back and remember our vacation some six years later I know that even though we did not have a great time, our vacation did serve a purpose in our grief. We were together as a family in strange surroundings and we were grieving. We started working hard on our grief during that vacation, and I know now it was a GOOD vacation. If you are planning a vacation, here are some suggestions that may help: Be gentle to yourself. Don't expect too much on your first vacation. Remember, as bereaved parents, the first time we do anything without our kids is tough, whether it be going to the movies, shopping, or on a vacation. Plan to do some grief work because you will, planned or not. Give yourself time enough on the trip. If you have a bad day, you can just do what you feel like doing. Know that your child will be on your mind day and night just as he or she is at home. Our grief goes with us. Plan a restful vacation. You need all the rest you can get at this time. Plan to do something your child would have loved to do, but did not get a chance to. Do this in his or her memory.

If you plan to visit relatives for the first time since your child's death, remember they mean well even if they seem insensitive with their remarks. They have not lost a child and can't see through your eyes. If you have other children, remember them. They are also having a hard time coping with this vacation. Plan some activities that will be especially for them. Be especially careful to communicate with your spouse. Plan a vacation that is suitable for both of your needs. Remember you are both grieving for the same child, but we all grieve differently and in our own way.

If you have been maintaining your child's grave site and feel guilty leaving it unattended, let a family member or friend see to it while you are away. You need not feel guilty and it could fill a need for one of your family members or friends, allowing them to help. You will have a memorable vacation even though it will be difficult. You will look back on it as I have done and see it as another growing experience as you find your way through the grief work of a bereaved family. I hope all of your vacations are nice this summer. Enjoy them for our kids.

Diana Hammock  
TCF, Central Coast, CA



## Be Good to Yourself this Summer

Summertime is a time to get away and renew yourself. When you are grieving, it is even more important to relax and take time to be good to yourself. Grief work takes physical, emotional and spiritual energy.

Here are some mini-vacations. Get outside as often as possible. The warmth of the sun and soft breezes help you to feel more alive. Exercise helps work off frustration, anger and depression. Search out local parks, nature trails, country roads—even a walk around your own block. Brisk walking, bike riding and swimming are good ways to reduce tension.

Try to visit places where there is water. Watching water and hearing it lap against the shore is soothing. As the waves recede, try to envision your grief receding; as the waves return, imagine them bringing peace and comfort.

Escape into another world through a good mystery or spy novel. Read a book you enjoy or go to the movies. Light reading or an entertaining movie helps to take your mind off your grief.

Don't push your grief down. Get it out into the open so you can deal with it and control it, or it will control you. Find and turn to a good listener. Attend a support group meeting. You will gain ideas on coping and meet those bereaved longer than you, who have survived their losses. The meetings can give you hope and knowledge that you are not alone. I hope "things" get easier for all of you. Please don't lose hope.

Adapted from HOPE Line, Buffalo, NY

## **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](http://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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://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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**July 2024**

## *A Friend*

*I need a friend to sit with me,  
To help me struggle through  
The sadness and the anger,  
The crying I will do.*

*I need a friend to sit with me,  
To help me work this out,  
The guilt and all the anguish,  
The times I'll want to shout.*

*I need a friend to sit with me,  
To help me through my pain,  
The longing and the emptiness,  
The need to speak his name.*

Lilly Barstow  
TCF, Abbotsford, BC, Canada



## **Hope as a Goal**

**H**ope for a healed future and a new normal life is difficult to see in the shadow of the loss of a child. Hope is always present in our lives but must be sought, perhaps as a goal. Don't ever give up hope that your pain will subside and that someday a peaceful feeling will take its place. This attainment of peace does not happen overnight, unfortunately.

Keep sight of your goal and someday it will be a reality.

Janet Sonnen  
TCF, Salem, OR

