

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.

For the health and safety of our members, we must cancel our June 14 meeting. Traditionally, we hold our annual Family Picnic/Balloon Release in June. We will assess our ability to hold the Picnic later in the year.

Meanwhile, we have found a way that we can still “gather” and share our children without actually being together in-person. We will try our first “Zoom” meeting on Sunday, June 14 at 3:00 PM.

Please don’t be scared off by the thought of a virtual meeting. We can do this!

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.

About 5 minutes before the meeting, go into your email and click on the link to the meeting. If you have a camera on your computer, be sure to enable your camera so we can see everyone.

You may also join by phone. A phone number will be provided with the email response.

Our virtual meeting will begin with a brief program. We will share April, May and June birthdays. Then, we will move to sharing sessions much like we do in our regular meetings. Depending upon the number of attendees, we will move folks to private sharing groups of less than 8 people where we can talk.

Please consider joining us for our first Virtual Meeting. We know there will be a few bumps in the road, but we believe this is our best option right now to keep in touch.

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.

We all look forward to the time our in-person meetings can resume. We need not walk alone.

Check the chapter website to see if future meetings are cancelled:

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	

*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—

Laura Abigail Czirr (Abby)
June 22
Daughter of Steve and Paige
Czirr
Granddaughter of
John and JoAnn Czirr
and
Robert and
Cynthia Daugherty

Stephen Joseph Donlon
June 16
Son of Pat and Ellen Donlon
Brother of Katy, David,
John and Elizabeth

Jeffrey Glenn Eakes
June 26
Son of Don and Sherry Eakes

Charles Courtney Edwards
June 14
Son of
Charles and Ruth Edwards

Stephen Joseph Fay
June 6
Son of Pennie Fay

Raejon Givens
June 3
Son of Tanisha Givens

Chase Lee Harris
June 27
Son of
Kirk and Shayne Harris
And
Paul and Stacey Fish
Grandson of Rose H. Bartlett

Christopher Miller Harris
June 19
Son of
Bill Harris and Judy Harris

Vontrekus Keon Lockett
June 28
Son of
Willie Sails and
Bernita Lockett

Allen Glenn Mays
June 3
Son-in-law of John and
Carole Renfro

Baby Nicholson
June 2012
Infant Daughter of
John and Suzanne Nicholson



Nigel Randolph Phill
June 26
Son of Jennifer Phill

Michael Shawn Strom, Jr.
June 29
Son of
Michael and Jessica Strom

Ryan James Tropauer
June 25
Son of
David and Debbie Topauer

And in the month of their deaths



Lisa Allgood
July 30
Daughter of
Harold and Betty Allgood

Misty Whitney Ambrose
June 18
Daughter of
Michael and Treva Ambrose

Curtis Patrick Baushke
June 16
Son of
Bill and Patti Baushke

Alexander Beatty (Alex)
June 11
Son of Yarnell and Liz Beatty

Eric Dewayne Brown
June 8
Son of Sharon Brown

Jamison Michael Duncan
June 13
Son of Mike and Kay Duncan
Brother of
Jon Ashley Duncan

Stephen Joseph Fay
June 5
Son of Pennie Fay

Jennifer Lee Friedmann
(Jena)
June 9
Daughter of
John and Mignon Friedmann

Cole Hansen Kilgore
June 5
Son of Henry and Kathy Beeler
Nephew of Kacey Gant

Briana Leigh Kulesza
June 19
Daughter of
Larry and Donna Kulesza

Ryan Michael Laterza
June 1
Son of
Carl and Jo Ann Laterza
Brother of Kevin J. Laterza



Baby Nicholson
June 2012
Daughter of
John and Suzanne Nicholson



Alexis Riner
June 8
Daughter of
P. J. and Tasha Ashford

Matthew James Truman
June 7
Son of Cathy McMorrow

Audrey Grace Williams
June 20
Daughter of
Eric and Mary Anne Williams

Nathan Young
June 22
Son of Dana Young

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 Mignon Friedmann
Dr. John Friedmann, Jr.
In loving memory of their
Daughter and sister,
Jennifer Lee Friedmann
 (Jena)



Ken and Beth Gupton
In loving memory of
their daughter,
Kenna Brooke Gupton Robards

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

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 6people and their generosity to all of us.

Some Special Ways to give

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.

If your employer supports the United Way, you might have the option to “designate” your donation. Every dollar you contribute through our payroll deductions goes to the organization you designate. TCF Nashville is an approved organization with the United Way. Please consider designating your United Way donation to TCF Nashville.

Beyond Surviving: “Twenty-Five Commandments”

Hundreds of books have been written about loss and grief. Few have addressed the aftermath of suicide for survivors. Here again, there are no answers; only suggestions from those who have lived through and beyond the event. I've compiled their thoughts.

1. Know you can survive. You may not think so, but you can.
2. Struggle with “why” it happened until you no longer need to know “why,” or until you are satisfied with partial answers.
3. Know you may feel overwhelmed by the intensity of your feelings, but all your feelings are normal.
4. Anger, guilt, confusion, forgetfulness are common responses. You are not crazy – you are in mourning.
5. Be aware you may feel appropriate anger at the person, at the world, at God, at yourself.
6. You may feel guilty for what you think you did or did not do.
7. Having suicidal thoughts is common. It does not mean that you will have to act on these thoughts.
8. Remember to take one day at a time.
9. Find a good listener with whom to share. Call someone if you need to talk.
10. Don't be afraid to cry. Tears are healing.
11. Give yourself time to heal.

12. Remember, the choice was not yours. No one is the sole influence in another's life.
13. Expect setbacks. Don't panic if emotions return like a tidal wave. You may only be experiencing a remnant of grief; an unfinished piece.
14. Try to put off major decisions.
15. Give yourself permission to get professional help.
16. Be aware of the pain of your family and friends.
17. Be patient with yourself and with others who may not understand.
18. Set your own limits and learn to say no.
19. Steer clear of people who want to tell you what or how to feel.
20. Know that there are support groups that can be helpful, such as The Compassionate Friends, or Survivors of Suicide groups. If not, ask a professional to help start one.
21. Call on your personal faith to help you through.
22. It is common to experience physical reactions to your grief, i.e., headaches, loss of appetite, inability to sleep, etc.
23. The willingness to laugh with others and at yourself is healing.
24. Wear out your questions, anger, guilt, or other feelings until you can let them go.
25. Know that you will never be the same again, but you can survive and go beyond just surviving.

Strength

*In the early days of my grief,
a tear would well up in my eyes,
a lump would form in my throat,
but you would not know—*

*I would hide it,
And I am strong*

*In the middle days of my grief,
I would look ahead and see that wall
that I had attempted to go around
as an ever-present reminder of
a wall yet unscaled.*

*Yet I did not attempt to scale it
for the strong will survive—
And I am strong.*

*In the later days of my grief,
I learned to climb over that wall
step by step—
remembering, crying, grieving
And the tears flowed steadily
As I painstakingly went over.
The way was long, but I did make it,
For I am strong.*

*Near the resolution of my grief,
a tear will well up in my eyes,
a lump will form in my throat,
but I will let that tear fall—
and you will see it.
Through it you will see
that I still hurt and I care,
For I am strong.*

Terry Jago
TCF, Regina, Canada



One of the many mixed feelings a father will have on Father's Day will be one of failure—failure as a protector of his child who has died. The roles of protector and father are synonymous. The father's duty is both to love and to protect that child from harm. A man may intellectually know he did his best, but the child, his charge, is still painfully absent on this Father's Day.

Dick Moen
TCF, Indianapolis, IN

A Father Returns to Work

After Kathy died, I, of course, went back to work. Some of my co-workers made the stop at my desk to express their sympathy. I know I turned them off, as my pain and my denial were so great. I could not talk about what had happened and how I felt. I thanked them. Although nobody ever talked to me about it, that was okay as my pain was such, I thought, I could not bear to talk. I threw myself into my work and on occasion was confused because I could not make the kind of decisions I had been making for years. I never made the connection that this inability to concentrate was part of my grief and was normal.

Lunch was the worst time. My habit was to eat with my associates, but often in the middle of the meal I would just have to get up and walk away. Although nobody ever said anything to me about this odd behavior, I do thank them at least for their tolerance. Slowly I readjusted (I thought) and in time (a long time) I was able to perform well again. But I never really grieved until I found THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS and it was here that people helped me to talk. It was almost twelve years before I found TCF as there was no such organization in 1967. My friends, let TCF help you...don't wait twelve years to talk!

Bill Ermatinger
TCF Baltimore, MD

Papa, Remember Yesterday?

*That's what he'd say to me
When a happy memory came to his mind.
Yesterday was anytime in the past...
A day, a week or a month behind.*

*It didn't matter to him; it was all yesterday.
Last night, last Easter, when Santa came.
A sweet rush of happy memories from better days.
For him they were all the same.*

*His concept of time was different than ours,
He wasn't here that long.
Just three years of changing seasons...
I know why his memories were strong.*

*Now it's my turn to remember the past,
To cherish the days gone by.
Like him—I will smile about yesterday.
For his sake and mine, I will try...
Papa, remember yesterday.*

Jim Beerman
TCF, Cincinnati, OH

*BE OPEN to small glimpses of progress,
tiny threads of hope.*

Pamela Hagens
TCF Nashville, TN

What Can a Father Tell his Son on Father's Day?

I lost Jacob on Nov. 30, 2019. He was twenty years old. I talk to him every day of course, because our relationship is ongoing. Here is our latest conversation.

“Jacob, yes, I’ve lost your physical company which I miss terribly. Especially when I read all your lovingly homemade Father’s Day cards you’ve given me over the years. But I keep reminding myself that now we have a spiritual relationship. I feel your spiritual love for me very strongly. And I know you feel my deep love for you as well. There is such peace for me in realizing this. The best part of our relationship, our mutual loving kindness, is still alive and well!

And it’s good to know, on Father’s Day, that you’re with my dad now, your grandfather Bell. The family in heaven is growing! And I take great comfort in knowing on each side of eternity we have a never-ending, ever-mending circle of love.”

Mike Bell
TCF, Nashville, TN



A Father's Grief

I never believed I would see another season change with gladness.
I never believed I would see the world again without the haze of tears.
I never expected to actually laugh again. I never felt my smile would return and feel natural on my face.
I never hoped for another day when I would not want to die.
I never envisioned a world that could again be bright and full of promise.
I believed that all that had passed from me the day he died and went away, never to return.

But I was wrong, and I know that in the fullness of your grieving, you, too, will come to understand that life goes on—that it can still have meaning—that even joy can touch your life once more.

Don Hackett
TCF, Hingham, MA

Cleaning Out Her Room



The other day we cleaned out our daughter’s room
Time had remained the same in this room for two and a half years.
All that we needed was for our 8-year-old Stephanie to come home! Come home to a room filled with games, books, toys—all the memories that today remind us of how special her life was.
We caressed lovingly the sailor cap she wore at her last dance recital.
Her first “wooby”—now scraps of cloth—but so soft and familiar, Stef refused to give it up until one day we hid it, told her it was lost, and replaced it with a new one. How soft it now felt in our hands.
Her “Skip-It,” purchased only a few days before she died. How excited she was! “Thank you mommy, thank you, thank you! I love you! I love you!” How long her mom had searched to find one for her. How short the time she was able to use it.
Her Rainbow Brite sleeping bag—given to her one Christmas Eve. She slept for weeks on the floor in that sleeping bag. How much it meant to her.
Her baton. Her Burger King watch. Her “Sweet Pea.” Her stuffed animals . . . They all screamed “*I was Stef’s!*”
Clothes were folded . . .
Tears flowed . . .
A new baby is coming to live in Stef’s room. We know Stef would approve.
If ever a guardian angel exists, we know it is Stef. She will watch over her little sister.
Her love remains to fill this room.
It will never be empty!

Wayne Loder
TCF Lakes Area Chapter, MI

Grieving Your Own Way

Each of us is an individual. Each of us grieves in his or her own way. With certain variations, there are generally two types of grieving: outward and inward.

The person who grieves outwardly will seek comfort through friends and relatives, books and articles and support groups such as The Compassionate Friends. The outward griever may feel the need to go over the events of the death again and again, or keep the child's memory alive in special ways. The inward griever reacts quite the opposite. He or she may refuse to discuss either the child or the death. This silence may be misconstrued as a form of denial or indifference.

Each of these grieving reactions is quite natural depending on the personality of the individual. The problems arise when spouses are at opposite ends of the scale. The father who is an inward griever may become angry when his wife introduces the name of the dead child into a conversation. The mother who is an outward griever may believe her husband didn't love the child as much as she did because he keeps his emotions in check.

The death of a child is a traumatic experience and we expect others to react in the same way we do. If our spouse's grieving pattern differs from our own, misunderstandings may arise causing anger and resentment.

The first way to ease the tensions that arise in a marriage when a child dies is to realize that husband and wife are each entitled to grieve in their own way. Simply understanding that your partner is reacting in a normal way for his or her own personality type will reduce your own anxiety. Grief is a burden enough without feeling guilty because your emotions differ.

The second step toward healing is to recognize your own personality type. Are you an outward or an inward griever? If you are an outward griever, do not hesitate to seek support from outside sources. If you want to talk about your grief and your spouse refuses to discuss it, find a friend or group that will allow you to express your feelings.

If you are an inward griever, do not feel ashamed or guilty because you cannot bear to discuss your child's death. If the subject comes up in a conversation and you don't want to participate, simply excuse yourself from the group and busy yourself with another task. If you do not mind listening but do not want to take part directly, then listen but brush aside direct questions.

The most important thing to remember is that you have to grieve in the way that is right for you. Grief over the death of a child can be likened to drowning in a swimming pool. Each of you is struggling to keep your head above water. To add to the dilemma, you are swimming in opposite directions. There is no way you can save each other. Attempting to do so will only drag you both under; you have to concentrate on saving yourself through whatever means possible.

The healing of grief is an individual process. Respecting the fact that your spouse's healing process differs from your own will reduce the strain on both of you. Treasure the moments when you are able to share your grief, but at the same time, allow each other the room to grieve individually, whether it is inwardly or outwardly.

Michele Aprias
TCF, Bay Area, TX



Where Do I Go?

Now that you're gone, where do I go

*to see your fair smile
to hear your tingling giggle
to smell your dank hair after a swim
to listen to your questions
to touch your gentle cheek
to feel your bear hug?*

Where do I go

*to share all my years of wisdom
to find someone who'll tell me truth
to answer the phone that won't ring
to tell you I'm sorry
to know that I am loved and
to pour out my love and my tears?*

I shall go

*to the pictures that hold you forever
to the books we shared
to the music you taught me to love
to the woods we explored as one
to the memories that never fail
to the innermost reaches of my heart*

to where we are always together.



Marcia Alig
TCF, Mercer Area Chapter, New Jersey

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 database manager at 615 308-2520, 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, please call the Grief Line at: 615-963-4732 or email griefsupport@alivhospice.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 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 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**

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June 2020

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ABOUT OUR 2020 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Dear Compassionate Friends,

We want to share with you that we have made the very difficult decision to cancel the national conference currently scheduled in Atlanta, GA, for July 24 to July 26, 2020. This decision has not been made lightly, and we recognize how important the annual conference is to so many of our members in providing community, connection, support, education, and care. While I'm disappointed this won't be able to happen in July, I remain very hopeful and optimistic that we'll all share meaningful time together before long.

We know that these are challenging and trying times we are all sharing right now. Some are fighting illness or experiencing the death of a loved one due to COVID-19, while others may have job, financial, or other losses. Many of us are experiencing the sudden loss of control and abrupt change of what we knew, triggering the deep pain of loss we are already experiencing from the death of our child, sibling, or grandchild. We also know that having the support of our TCF community is more important than ever as we experience our individual and collective grief.

Because of this, we are actively and diligently exploring options for alternative ways that we can continue to care for our community and meet some of the needs that come through a national conference. Many details are involved with this, and we will work through them one-by-one to find alternatives including possible later dates for an in-person conference, and ways to connect virtually through this extraordinary time. We truly are in new territory since this is the first time a conference has needed to be canceled due to significant events outside of our control.

We'll be working with the hotel to cancel existing July reservations. Those of you who already made your reservations should receive a notification of these cancellations soon.

Please reach out with any questions you may have, and we'll continue to be in touch with you as we become clearer on additional options.

Stay safe, healthy, and well.

Shari O'Loughlin
Connor's Mom & Patti's Sister
Chief Executive Officer, The Compassionate Friends
tcfconferences@compassionatefriends.org