

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.

March 8 Program:

Moving Forward in Grief

Join us this month as we view and listen to a TED talk given by Nora McNerny. In 2014, Nora McNerny experienced a wave of loss that reshaped her whole life. Despite the painful memories from that year, she explains why she doesn't want to "move on" from her grief. No matter where we are on this journey eventually someone will ask us if we have "moved on" or "are you over it now"? We all know too well that questions like this can take our breath away and depending on who is asking, can create an explosive and/or uncomfortable response. Nora has a way with both humor and reality in her experience of how and why she carries her grief forward. There will be a time for comment & response and we will have our usual sharing tables.



There may be crocus blooming by now, but the chance of inclement weather is still a consideration. In case the weather threatens safe travel, please check our website, Facebook page or call the chapter leaders at the numbers above for possible meeting cancellation.

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

When you quietly listen to another; you have been the pages upon which healing and transparency are written.

Pamela Hagens

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.

*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—

Lucas Dawson (Luke)
March 16
Son of
Bob and Genevia Graham

Marvin Lee Edwards
March 23
Son of
Charles and Ruth Edwards

Jason Kemp
March 14
Son of
John and Jammie Kemp

Waylyn Cole McRae
March 25
Son of
Heidi Holst

Kevin Moncrief
March 17
Son of Sandra Mrekel

Samuel James Moore
March 28
Son of Darrell and Dianne Moore
Grandson of
Mac and Polly Moore

Christopher James Pewitt
March 29
Son of
Mike Pewitt

Mary Catherine Elizabeth Ricketts
March 22
Daughter of
John and Connie Ricketts



Sheila Rochelle
March 17
Daughter of Jennie Reeves
Sister of Charity Collins
Aunt of Kristanna

Michael Anthony Sewell
March 12
Son of
Mark Sewell and Tracy Ball

Jason Brandon Warf
March 30
Son of Ronald and Clada Warf

And in the month of their deaths

Matthew Johnson Brooks
March 5
Son of
Mike and Sherry Brooks

Cole Fox
March 9
Son of David and Nona Fox

Mary Grace Hodsdon
March 14
Daughter of
John and Mary Hodsdon

Rahmir Scott Kendrick
March 23
Son of
DeMille Brown and
Felicia Brown

David Benton Lowe
March 5
Son of Charles and Teresa Lowe

Austin Blake McKinney
March 21
Son of
Mark and Stephanie McKinney

Samuel James Moore
March 29
Son of
Darrell and Dianne Moore
Grandson of
Mac and Polly Moore

Wade Hampton Morgan
March 3
Son of David & Barbara Morgan

Adam Nicholas Pappas
March 2
Son of Gus and Jane Pappas
Brother of
Andrew, Alex, and Erin

Brandy Nicholas Rhoton
March 27
Daughter of Judy Townsend
Granddaughter of
Gerald and Jackie Townsend

David George Shriver
March 2
Son of
Warren and Donna Jones and
George Shriver
Brother of
Bekki, Bonnie, and Laurie

Drew Michael Tipton
March 24
Son of
Bobby and Shari Tipton

Gavin Garrett Vaughn
March 22
Son of Linda Vaughn

Antonio Lynn Scott Winslett
("Chunky")
March 2
Grandson of
Keith and Wanda Winslett



Sibling Loss

One whose sister or brother has died has a special view of this loss. There is the loss itself, hard enough to bear, and often no one inquires how a bereaved sibling is doing with the grief. And as I've heard one sibling put it, *'I lost my brother, and my parents are so changed that I feel as if I lost them too.'* Much is changed within our surviving family.

Many of us have found the company of other bereaved siblings to be very valuable, a group of listeners who truly and fully understand.

Charley Kopp
TCF Contra Costa, CA

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.

*Henry and Kathy Kilgore Beeler
In loving memory of
their son,
Cole Hansen Kilgore*

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



*Mike and Kay Duncan
In loving memory of their sons,
Jamison Michael Duncan (Jamie)
And
Jon Ashley Duncan*

*John and Mary Hodsdon
In loving memory of their daughter,
Mary Grace Hodsdon*

*Ronald and Clada Warf
In loving memory of their son,
Jason Brandon Warf*

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.

Words

*When grief is new
you need not find a reason
however good and brave
to temper your despair.*

*When grief is new
the heart accepts no answer
however wise and kind
to ease your mourning.*

*When grief is new
our life can only know
disintegration,
overwhelming pain...*

*My friend, try to believe
what other grievers learned:
you will not always hurt
as you hurt now:
time will restore
the soundness of your mind.*

*(All other words
are shadows on the wind
when grief is new.)*

Sascha

The death of a child is a fire in the mind. The mind burns with alternatives that never come to pass, with fantasies of remarkable recuperations, with dreams of adult accomplishment. If we let this fire burn compassionately within us, the grief of the mind, the fantasies, the burning of the spirit, begin slowly to melt away and the child comes more into our heart. Our anguish can be used to open more fully, to enter as completely as we can into this final sharing. And then, as Rabindranath Tagore wrote in the final lines of his poem, *The End*, "Dear Auntie will come with presents and will ask, 'Where is our baby, Sister?' And Mother, you will tell her softly, 'He is in the pupils of my eyes. He is in my bones and in my soul.'"

Steven Levine,
From *Who Dies*

Grief and your workplace:

I wrote this letter for my co-workers and posted it in the office where everyone would see it because I found that although everybody had been extremely kind and generous during Laurie's last brief illness, some of them didn't seem to know how to deal with me or what to say after she died. The idea for the letter and some of its contents are from a book on grief work by Bob Deits: *Life After Loss: A Personal Guide Dealing With Death, Divorce, Job Change and Relocation*.

Dear friends and co-workers:

I want to thank all of you for your kindness and support during the last few months. I have experienced a loss that is devastating to me. It will take time, perhaps years, for me to work through the grief I am having because of the loss of my daughter, Laurie. Although Laurie was our oldest child, she was the child of my third pregnancy, so she was very much wanted by the time I gave birth to her. She was also the child who was most like me, both in appearance and personality. Perhaps because of this, I actually feel I have lost a part of myself. I would gladly have given my life in exchange for hers, had I had that option.

I will cry more than usual for some time. My tears are not a sign of weakness or a lack of hope or faith. They are symbols of the depth of my loss and, I am told, a sign that I am recovering. I find that I become angry without there seeming to be a reason for it. My emotions are all heightened by the stress of grief. Please be forgiving if I seem irrational or unfriendly at times.

I need your understanding and your friendship more than anything else. If you don't know what to say, just touch me or give me a hug to let me know you care. Do not be afraid to mention Laurie's name – she is gone from this life but she will never be gone from my memory or my heart. And please don't hesitate to call me – it is reassuring to hear from supportive friends.

If you, by chance, have had an experience of loss that seems anything like mine, please share it with me. You will not make me feel worse. And if I get emotional or tear up – you are not making me cry – I am crying inside all the time anyway!

This loss is the worst thing that could happen to me. But, I will get through it somehow and I will live again. I will not always feel as I do now – I will laugh again.

Thank you all for caring about me. Your concern is a gift I will always treasure.

Sincerely,
Marcia

Marcia Davis
TCF, Contra Costa County, CA

A Promise

The colors of life change as we go through grief.

We begin black and white;

*Then gray settles over us, seeping into our pores,
surrounding us,*

*Smothering us for a long period of time;
then slowly the colors change.*

*We may not even be aware of their changing
'til one day we see a rainbow,*

And know it was meant for us.

Faye Harden
TCF, Tuscaloosa, AL



Memories

The certain special memories

*That follow me each day,
Cast your shadow in my life
In a certain way.*

*Sometimes the blowing wind
Or the lyrics of a song
Make me stop and think of you
Sometimes all day long*

*Memories are good to have
To share and keep in my heart,
Just knowing that you're still inside
Makes sure we'll never part.*

Collette Covington
TCF Lake Charles, LA



The Not So Perfect Child

As much as you hear it proclaimed in the meetings, not all children who died were perfect....In this day and time you're fortunate if your children escape some of the horrors that are available to them. I've watched some of my friends and neighbors do a good job of parenting only to have the peer influence negate the positive input of the parents.

Many of our people have children die from incidents that were drug related. These parents are often left with doubts about their parenting skills because of the guilt that is inherent in the grief process. It is easy for them to take all the blame onto themselves, losing sight of the fact that parents aren't all-powerful people who can control all the good and bad things that happen to their children.

If you are out there feeling guilt or stigma because of the way your child lived and died, I hope you will begin today trying to forgive him and yourself. You have both been victims of the times, but it is up to you to see you aren't victims forever. There are good memories buried back there somewhere. Get in touch with them and remember all of the facets of your child's life—the good and bad. We each have some of both, you know.

Mary Cleckley
TCF, Atlanta, GA

Tomorrow Will Be Better

When my son died, I felt like there would be no tomorrow. I didn't want a tomorrow. I wanted yesterday with its promise of joy and perfection. I wanted my son to be alive. But he was gone.

Now, when life gets me down, I remember the joys of yesterday, think of all that I was given, take measure of all that still needs to be done, and I promise myself that tomorrow will be better because I will work very hard to make it better.

My grandmother often told me, "If you think you can, you're right. If you think you can't, you're right. What do you think?" As a child I thought this was strange. As an adult, I know it to be true.

Tomorrow *will* be better. Tomorrow I will, once again, tell my mind to stop the negative thoughts. And my mind will do exactly that, as I command my ship of grief.

Annette Mennen Baldwin



Missing You

*I sometimes talk to your pictures
When no one else is around.
They listen patiently to my ramblings
They smile and never make a sound.*

*There's one picture in particular
Your eyes right in my line of sight
The smile on your face reflects the joy
On one of the happiest days of your life.*

*That picture has been my whipping post
Many heavy conversations in the past six years
It's witnessed the gamut of my emotions
It's seen me laugh, it's seen countless tears*



*There have even been some times
When that picture almost seemed to smirk
After I sincerely apologized
For all the times I was a jerk.*

*Of all the pictures that we have of you,
It would be impossible to pick just one.
There's just something about your smile
I didn't see it until you were gone.*

*So many things you never got to do
Your time ran out before your dreams came true.
I'll look into your eyes and talk to that picture
I'll see you again someday. I miss you.*

Tom Murphy
Greater Cincinnati TCF - East Chapter, OH

"How can one endure in the face of tragedy? People have asked me. And surely I have often had reason to ask myself. Joe (Sr.) was right in his words: 'Carry on...take care of the living...there is a lot of work to be done.' And right in his instinctive and immediate recognition that in sorrow we must look outward rather than inward and thus can come peace of mind and peace of spirit."

Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy

A Wish

*I wish upon a rainbow
In every single dream,
And hope with my entire heart
You will be here again.*

*I wish upon its colors
That together we will be,
For you are my brother
And I want you here with me.*

*It's the way the color blends
That gets my hopes so high.
I know you didn't mean it
When you left without a good-bye.*

*We didn't understand your feelings
Or how sad you were inside.
You drank until it killed you
And your friend right by your side.*

*If only the world could be a rainbow
Maybe they would see,
But even though you're gone
You're forever a part of me.*

Chasitie Sharp, sibling
TCF, Marion, OH



Sweet Baby Girl

*It's been five long years,
Yet it feels like only yesterday
Since we held you and kissed you goodbye,
That early Easter morning.*

*So few memories to hold onto,
As we left the hospital with empty, aching arms.
Gone were the hopes and dreams we had for you.
Replaced with only the intense pain and tears of grief.*

*How could we say goodbye...
When we never really had a chance to say hello?
Your footprints will remain on our hearts forever,
Time cannot diminish our love for you.*

Debbie and Clay Pearson
TCF, Winnipeg, Manitoba

*Grief is as normal as playing,
laughing, crying, and sleeping.*

*It is one way of saying
"I Love You."*

Kentucky Dept. of Mental Health

Thought for the Day

It is not easy returning to the world of normalcy when your world is so upside down. It is not easy to stop being a mother or father to your child that has died. The thought for the day is a word — **patience** — patience with yourself who suddenly and powerlessly has been thrown into this horrid nightmare; patience with your spouse who always seems to be having an up day when you are having a down day; patience with relatives and friends who wish to help but seem to hurt with hollow advice and logical words; and patience with time, for it takes time to adjust, and time can move so slowly.

PATIENCE!

Rose Moen
TCF Carmel-Indianapolis, IN

Happy times do not cheapen our grief.

Rich Edler
TCF South Bay CA

Yes, Grandparents Do Grieve!

Thank God, someone stepped up and said, "Hey! This child was and is my grandchild! And I hurt too!" Not looking for sympathy, but wanting the world to know that yes, the mother and father are hurting from the loss of their little angels, but Granny and Grandpa loved these children with their hearts and souls. Totally unconditionally!

I read these letters that are sent to me, every day. My heart hurts for these parents for the loss of their children. But, please, let us not forget any of the grandparents whose loss is twofold. One for their child who is hurting so badly and for the loss of their grandchildren.

I always thought my grandchildren would outlive me. At least that's the way it's supposed to be. It doesn't always work out that way. So yes, my heart also hurts for the grandparents too.

Wanda Bryant
TCF, Vidalia, GA



CHAPTER INFORMATION

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. You may call the database manager at 615 356-1351, 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.

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. Also, when going to Amazon, type in “Amazon Smile” and designate The Compassionate Friends; then, each time you go on Amazon Smile a small contribution will be made by Amazon to our organization—It's a free and easy way to support TCF.

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. We do not phone the family and all information you provide is confidential.

TCF Nashville Sibling Support

We encourage siblings from teens to adults to come support one another at our monthly chapter meetings. Siblings face a unique and complicated grief journey and are finding hope and healing through our sharing groups.



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 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](tel:6152447444), or go to the Tennessee Suicide Prevention Network at TSPN.org, and you will find a list of all Tennessee SOS locations.

TCF Web site —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.

The Compassionate Friends

**P.O. BOX 50833
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March 2020

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MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND:



The Compassionate Friends National Conference is a weekend spent surrounded by other bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. It is a place where hope grows and friendships are made with others who truly understand. With inspirational keynote speakers, abundant workshops for everyone's wants and needs, and a remembrance candle lighting program culminating with the annual Walk to Remember, this time of healing and hope is the gift we give ourselves. Join us as together we remember and share the everlasting love we have for our precious children, siblings and grandchildren.

The 43rd TCF National Conference will be held in Atlanta, GA on July 24-26, 2020. "Sharing Sweet Memories of Love" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great National Conference experience. We'll keep you updated with details here, on the national website as well as on our [TCF/USA Facebook Page](#). Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.

- Choose to attend from nearly hundred different workshops and sharing sessions, given by professionals and also individuals just like you.
- Take advantage of "Healing Haven" to receive free personal services such as a massage.
- Craft items to commemorate the love for your family member in the "Crafty Corner".
- Step away for a quiet moment of pause in the "Reflection Room".

