

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

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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 temporarily in the Citipointe Church, 7533 Lords Chapel Drive, Nashville 37211 (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 13 Meeting:

Mementos of our Children

Our program for March will be a sharing of ways we have memorialized our children, grandchildren and siblings. Please bring something tangible such as photos, scrapbooks, or other mementos, or simply share what you have done to honor and remember the special life and love of your child.



TCF 45th National Conference
Houston, Texas 77010
August 5-7, 2022
Marriot Marquis
Reservations are now open.

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	

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--



Marvin Lee Edwards
March 23
Son of
Charles and Ruth Edwards

Kevin Moncrief
March 13
Son of Sandra Merkel

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

Michael Reeves
March 16
Son of Jennie Reeves
Brother of Sheila Rochelle

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

Trinity Rhodes Steagall
March 18
Son of Rose Steagall

Jason Brandon Warf
Marcy 30
Son of
Ronald and Clada Warf



Hunter Cole White
March 27
Son of Ronnie White and
Stephanie Carpenter

And in the month of their deaths—

Matthew Johnson Brooks
March 5
Son of
Mike and Sherry Brooks

Morgan Priscilla Graves
March 6
Daughter of Ginger Graves

Mary Grace Hodsdon
March 14
Daughter of
John and Mary Hodsdon

David Benton Lowe
March 5
Son of
Charles and Teresa Lowe

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

Wade Hampton Morgan
March 3
Son of
David and Barbara Morgan

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



David George Shriver
March 14
Son of Warren and Donna
Jones and
George Shriver
Brother of
Bekki, Bonnie, and Laurie

Are There No More Tears

*Time heals, they tell me, and it's been six years,
After that, are we well, are there no more tears?
It is easier, I have to say, but I can't tell you that I'm okay.
These precious children, blood of my blood,
They were here, they lived, they laughed, and they loved.
No amount of time will change that fact*

*Nothing I can say will bring them back.
So don't roll your eyes when you see my tears,
Even though it's been so many years.
I'll continue to cry, but I'll be okay,
When I take their hand, in Heaven someday.*

Marilyn Rollins
TCF Lake/Porter Counties, IN

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.

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

Tom and Margaret Loose
In loving memory of
their daughter,
Heather Ann Willis



Ann McKee
In loving memory of
her son,
Tommy Allen

Rolin and Shannon Rayne
In loving memory of
their son,
Zi Daniel Rayne



Don and Sherron Eakes
Two lovely donations
In loving memory of
their grandson,
Taylor Christian Brewer
Son of
Justin and Tracy Brewer

Ronald L Henson
In loving memory of
his wife, Darlene,
And their son, Daniel Lee Henson

Each month, Allegra Marketing (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.

For what is once given cannot be taken, except from the eye and the touch of the hand.

Polly Toland

A Familiar Face

My family was on vacation in 1985 traveling from Houston to the Black Hills of South Dakota. We were traveling through Kansas and it was getting dark and late. I got out of our car to check us into a motel. The woman waiting on me was obviously very tired. When she saw me, she opened her eyes widely and just looked at me for a while. The expression on her face was as if she saw someone who looked very familiar and very close to her. I knew instinctively that I reminded her of someone special. As I started to fill out the forms, she began to cry. She was in too much pain to explain herself to me. I reached over to hold her hand. The next morning when I came to check out, she was making small talk, but her eyes were remembering a face that looked like mine. As I told her goodbye, she started to cry again.

Years later my thirteen-year-old son, Ryan, died. Six months after his death, I was shopping and saw a young boy who

looked a lot like Ryan. I followed him from aisle to aisle. I told this boy's mom that my son had just died and her son looked so much like mine. I pulled out pictures of Ryan and she agreed the boys did look a lot alike. Their clothes were even similar. The mom told her son to give me a hug: "a real one with both arms." While I was hugging this young man, I asked God to please let Ryan's spirit move through his body so I could touch Ryan again. The hug felt like Ryan. I closed my eyes and pretended it was Ryan. That hug felt like salve on my broken heart.

I wonder if God ever lets our children's spirits come into some other person for just a few seconds so we can feel some sort of relief. When that woman in Kansas was looking at me like I was someone else, I did - for a few brief seconds feel like another person. I hope the tearful woman felt it, too.

Niecy Moss
 TCF Houston-West, TX

March – A Month of Transition

The first day of any new month seems reason enough to pause, perhaps, and reflect on the significance or meaning that each of us might associate with a new month. For me, March has always signified a time of transition, a slow but steady emergence from the dark depths of winter into the first, but sure, signs of spring. Something like the “light at the end of the tunnel.” This spring will have a different meaning for each of us. For some, especially the newly bereaved, there will be a reluctance to accept it—a feeling of longing for the child with whom we would have liked to share it. You may wish to ignore the signs of this year’s spring, but it will happen anyway—you don’t have to enjoy it. Your sorrow is too new to let you enjoy anything. We understand this feeling. It’s part of the guilt we feel for surviving the loss of a child. It just won’t seem fair to you that the world goes on much the same as before.

Others of us, with the aid of time, sometimes much time, can face spring with a little more resolve. The resolve to accept things the way they are. Somehow we learn to recognize our limitations, and we stop hurting ourselves with guilt or with the responsibility to change things. There is no way to change the fact that our children have died. The only thing we can change is ourselves. Those children will always be with us in our minds and our hearts. When we become secure in that belief, we will have changed. The changed person can accept life again and still be faithful to the memory of his child.

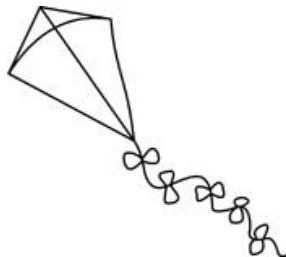
Bob McCollough
TCF Burlington Chapter

March Winds

*He raced against the wind
As if his very life depended upon it.
Eyes bright, cheeks glowing
From the still almost chilly March
wind,
Throwing me a smile now and then
To make sure I was watching. I was,
And when I caught a smile I
applauded.*

*His effort so great for one small boy.
I don’t remember now
If his kite ever flew—sometimes,
In spite of heroic efforts, they don’t.*

*But I remember the day
The nip in the air
His cheeks glowing*



*His fresh, clean smell
My afternoon of playing catch
With his smiles...
I remember every year
When March winds begin to blow.*

*Even if he had not died
Long after the age of flying kites,
I still would remember.*

*Maybe if he were still here,
Teaching his own small boy
The delicate art of flying kites
And catching his own smiles,
It wouldn’t hurt so much
When March winds begin to blow.*

From *Songs from the Edge*
By Faye Harden

*When a storm of grief grows in the heart, reach back for yesterday—catch onto your memories.
The storm will calm, and for a brief moment, that lost feeling of happiness will shine through and through.*

Lori Pollard
TCF, Montgomery, AL

The Other Side of Tomorrow

*Since the astonishment of your leaving,
I've spent so many days and hours
dodging reality while looking back and hoping
to catch a sudden glimpse of your face
shining in a forgotten corner of memory's maze.*

*I've wept early and late over photographs,
yellowing mementos packed away in boxes
and so many remembered points of happiness.
I've even sat and held your clothing close,
trying to recapture your living scent.*

*With a glimmer of wisdom born of distance,
I recognize the futility of the mystical expectation
to find you hidden in yesterday's embers.
Emerging truth tells me you are running on ahead
already out there on the other side of tomorrow.*

*I see you afar, bemused at the spectacle
of my searches through all the wrong places,
the welling tears as if you didn't exist anymore;*

*the unending game of celestial hide-and-peek
while you watched serenely from a place of peace.
The fabric of my grief must have seemed strange to you,
spun as it was from the compelling pull of yesterday.
Your transformation blessed you with a wondrous
knowing that eternity can only be found in the sparkle of
a moment and yesterday and tomorrow do not exist.*

*I now understand that remaining mired in grief
neither honors my life nor enhances your memory.
Honor of either estate comes only in the act of living fully,
calling forth from within the energy and joy of simply
being, willfully scattering seeds of love across every field.*

*Time now to look ahead, down the path you marked so
clearly; time to follow your crumbs of sizzling joy, and
hear them erupting into the helpless laughter of
innocence, feel them emerging in the warm smiles of
strangers, see them gilding the wings of hawks and eagles
along the way.*



Harold G. Hopkins
TCF, Atlanta, GA

Spring Waiting

*Winter's end is almost here.
Crocus struggle in the snow.
Sunlight has a softer glow.
—Is the winter long this year?*

*Spring waits;
watching for a cue
...not to rush your grief away,
but to be there, when you say.
—Spring is waiting, friend, for you.*

Sascha



Minds and Hearts

*I think of you,
Away from me now,
Yet close in ways
Of mind and heart.
I close my eyes.*

*A clear picture now;
And hope time is good —
It will never separate
The minds and hearts,
Never tear the picture.*

Lezlie Langford Peterson
TCF National Sibling Newsletter

The Heart Remembers Always

*And when we have remembered everything,
We grow afraid of what we may forget.
A face, a voice, a smile? A birthday?
Anniversary?*

*No need to fear forgetting, because
The Heart Remembers Always.*

Sascha

When an Infant has Died

In our culture, anticipation of a baby's birth is a joyful occasion. We parents all expect a normal, healthy infant. Sometimes in spite of all of the recent advances in medical technology, the pregnancy outcome is anything but joyous. The baby may be born premature and ill, it may have severe congenital anomalies, or it may die.

Whenever the pregnancy outcome is not a normal, healthy baby, parents grieve. When the baby dies, his/her parents experience intense grief. To describe this exceedingly painful experience as sadness or a disappointment is a gross understatement.

With the death of an older child, there is much to remember, to talk about, to cry over, and to share with family and friends. Frequently this is not true with a perinatal death. Usually there are few experiences to remember, to talk about, to cry over, to share. Memories facilitate normal grieving processes essential for recovery. Therefore, when a perinatal death occurs, the lack of memories is a problem for the parents. In more recent years, as more has been written on death and grief and more research has been done, we have learned that it is important to "create memories" for those parents whose babies die at or

around the time of birth. Parents are now encouraged to see, touch, hold, and spend time with their baby so that they will know what he/she looked like and will have a visual image of the baby. A photograph is also helpful in that they can look at it whenever they wish to in the future. Naming the baby is recommended because it is easier to talk about the baby's death when he/she can be called by name. It is also recommended that the parents make arrangements for a funeral or memorial service...to give family and friends an opportunity to show that they care and want to be supportive. The aim of the "creation of memories" is to fill the emptiness that impedes mourning.

Parents who lose infants are faced with some special problems; however, it is important to remember that all grieving parents share common feelings regardless of the age at the time of death or the circumstances surrounding it. We all share a sense of powerlessness, the marked alterations in daily living, and the seemingly endless grief. As individuals we progress through [our grief] in our own way and in our own time.

Joy Morris
TCF, Tuscaloosa, AL

A Circle of Stars

I do "phantom basketball" at the Y now, just glancing out of the corner of my eye into the gym where the boys play. I pass by there on my way upstairs to the women's locker room and catch a glimpse of some long-legged, dark-haired boy loping down the court, or wiping sweat from his brow onto his shoulder, or a boy in baggy shorts and white tee shirt, and I pretend. It's Jason. I recall all those years of driving back and forth to basketball practice, putting up the goal in our backyard, Saturday morning church league games and his lanky way of running down the court, the whop of the dribble. It is so hard to lose them so beautiful, just on the cusp of manhood, full of energy and life.

Then, last spring, I noticed there were new renters next door, but I hadn't seen them yet. I had the back door open, cleaning house, and heard that sound—the whop of a basketball hitting blacktop. My heart skipped a beat. I went outside and there were my new next-door neighbors, a gaggle of college boys from Belmont and Lipscomb shooting baskets and shouting epithets at each other, hair and sweat flying. It was a bittersweet moment. The floodgates of yearning opened over me and I started to cry. And I knew right away what I had to do. I went inside and got out the mixer—chocolate chip cookies! I left them on the back porch next door without so much as a note.

Jason will always be my handsome dark-haired prince loping down the court with the ball, jumping for that basket. Only, for him, while he was still so young and strong that no one knew how far he could reach, the hoop turned into a circle of stars, and Jason reached through it, forever to touch the face of God.



Sue Kite Mather
TCF, Nashville, TN

The most beautiful people we have known are those who have known defeat, known suffering, known struggle, known loss, and have found their way out of the depths. These persons have an appreciation, a sensitivity, and an understanding of life that fills them with compassion, gentleness, and a deep loving concern. Beautiful people do not just happen.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross

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. Drop us a note at TCF, P.O. Box 50833, Nashville, TN 37205. 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 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 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](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

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March 2022

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One Foot in Yesterday

Yesterday my child was here, on this planet, alive. Yesterday life looked promising. Yesterday morning I woke up looking forward to the day. Today I awake peacefully and then I remember my child is dead, and I cannot breathe. I am jolted from head to toe. My child has been dead for a day. I wonder what my child was thinking in the last moments. I remember all the wonderful times. I remember the joy. I think of my child's life and how his life changed me forever. I remember the last time I saw my child. I remember the last goodbye. I sob and breathe.

I am lost for days. Final arrangements are made. The platitudes float past me....these words have no meaning. A memorial service for my child. People with sad faces. Hugs, words, tears, head shaking. I can see it in their eyes....they are thankful it isn't their child. They are uncomfortable. Time heals, they say. There's a plan, there's a reason. I cannot respond. They understand. No, they don't. My child is dead. This is not my parent, my husband, my sibling. This is my child. My child was supposed to outlive me.

I thank them for their good intentions. I have no interest in their words. A few friends say nothing. This is the better choice, the wiser action. Be there, be there for me. Understand my unspoken words. See my broken heart. Understand.

Listen to my story, a story of my child. Remember his life, remember his death.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
TCF, Katy, TX