

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



P. O. Box 50833 • Nashville, TN 37205 • (615) 356-4TCF(4823) • 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 HCA building #3 at 2545 Park Plaza 37203, just north of Centennial Park off of 25th Avenue, North. We truly regret that we have no accommodations for young children, but teenagers and older siblings are welcome to attend.

November 9 Program:

Single Grief--Speaker Donna Reagan

Donna, a long-time member of TCF, is a storyteller and librarian with the Nashville Public Library. Her first son, Michael was stillborn and her other son, David, 26, died of accidental drowning. Donna's grief journey for David has been that of a single, divorced mother. She will discuss how it is possible to create a support system when even family and friends may be far away and how it is possible to live, thrive, and survive as a single person after the death of a child.

WE HAVE A NEW MEETING PLACE:

2545 Park Plaza 37203

We will continue to meet on the second Sunday of each month at 3:00 p.m.

Our new building is 2545 Park Plaza, HCA Building #3. We look forward to seeing you there.



Candlelight Memorial Service Scheduled for December 14

The December memorial service will be here before we know it. It is important that **everyone** wishing to have their child's photo in the memorial service follow very carefully the instructions on page 2 of this newsletter. **THERE IS A SUBMISSION DEADLINE THAT MUST BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO.** We invite all of you to enjoy this opportunity to see your child on the big screen! If you have not attended the candlelight memorial service, we encourage you to do so. This is a very moving and powerful program. All family members, siblings and friends are invited.

This year light refreshments will be provided by the chapter. Please do not bring other foods.

This year's service will be held in the Ezell Center at Lipscomb University at 3:00 p.m. See our December newsletter or our website, www.tcfnashville.org for map and directions.

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 DeathMike 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 and Darlene Henson
615-789-3613
- Small Child.....Kenneth and Kathy Hensley
615-237-9972
- Alcohol/Drug Overdose.....Ed Pyle
615-712-3245



CANDLELIGHT MEMORIAL SERVICE—December 14, 2014

Regardless of past participation, **EVERY FAMILY WISHING TO TAKE PART IN THE MEMORIAL SERVICE MUST RETURN THIS FORM.** We need to receive it **no later than Saturday, December 6, 2014.** Do not send photos to the TCF P.O. box—they might get bent or damaged.

Mail to:
Steve & Paige Czirr
1623 Fair House Road
Spring Hill, TN 37174

Instructions: A computerized process (Power Point) is being used to display our children's pictures on the big screen. An original 5x7 photo (no copies, please) may be used. If a 5x7 is not available, any size will do; however, the 5x7 or larger is easier to process. The original photo will be returned to you at the memorial service while the image will be stored for use next year.

Place a sticky note on the back of the photo with the child's name clearly printed. Do not write on the photo itself.

Child's name: _____
Please print the name as you wish it to be read at the service along with phonetic pronunciation, if needed.

- _____ I will attend and am enclosing an original photo of my child. (First time in the memorial service.)
- _____ I will attend and am enclosing a different photo of my child to be used in place of the photo you have from last year's service.
- _____ I will attend and would like for you to use the photo you have saved from last year.
- _____ I will attend and would like for my child's name to be called and I'll light a candle, but I will not have a picture shown.

Your name _____ Phone _____

You may alternatively e-mail your child's picture to Steve Czirr at czirrs@gmail.com
Be sure to include your child's name in the e-mail

Your Permission Please?

To family and friends, loved ones alike, even casual acquaintances and strangers -- may I please have your permission to grieve for my child in any way I choose?

May I eat too much, eat too little, oversleep or have insomnia?

May I be allowed to be lost, sad and angry at myself and at the world during those heart-wrenching moments when something triggers my grief? It usually comes in waves, but it shall recede, until the next wave hits.

May I have compassion and understanding when I do not want to attend family functions or if I do attend, that I may sit quietly reflecting upon the beloved one who is not able to be with us during those joyous occasions?

May I ask that you do not judge me because it has been over three years since my child died, but in your mind I can't get over it? I will never "get over" the loss of my only child, my son, my sunshine. All my hopes and dreams for my precious son are forever gone, forever broken – never to be realized.

May I please be the "new" me as I weave my way through this path of anguish and despair but yes, also those brief moments of happiness and laughter, which can turn to tears in the blink of an eye? Hopefully, I live each day to the best of my ability while honoring my son's memory. That I will remember the good times more than the bad, for me the worst being the day my son died, but all in my timing -- not yours.

At the end of the day, I truly do not need your permission to grieve for my loss, the death of my child; however, may I humbly ask for your grace and acceptance in the way that I do grieve?

Written In Loving Memory of Cole Kilgore
Kathy Kilgore Beeler
TCF Nashville, TN



To My Sister

*You touched us all, you loved us all,
Forever giving, forever caring,
Forever forgiving.
Never wanting in return.
Blessed are those who shared your life
Rich are those who carry your memories.
Please rest now; your chores we will finish.
'Til we meet again . . .*

Cindy Keltz
Arlington Heights, IL

Grief Time

*Time progresses, ever onward,
A tragedy occurs
Time still moves warped in our mind's eye
A year, then another passes,
The pain retained.
At first sharp
Then slowly blunted
Til only an ache remains
Covered
By carefully laid scar tissue
Of emotions
Under wraps.*

Melissa Anne Schroeter
TCF Rockland County, NY
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Wounds do not heal without time and attention. Yet, too many of us feel that we don't have the right to take the time to heal from emotional and physical wounds.

Judy Tatelbaum's *Courage to Grieve*

Autumn Memories

My son and I always enjoyed the autumn season. Yes, when we lived in the cold zone, we knew that winter's winds and snows were on the way. But, yet, we took time to enjoy the beautiful array of colors that nature gave us as a final salute to the growing season.

Todd and I raked leaves in the autumn. I had purchased a home in a town on the Mississippi River bluffs; the home had been built in the 1860s and I am sure some of the trees were well over 50 years old. The leaves would fall and we would rake. We made a game of it. Sometimes his best friend, Allen, would come over and help. The boys would jump into the piles and laugh with delight. We'd create a big pile and rake it to the concrete so that it could be burned. I can still see Todd laughing and dancing around that fire. His pure childhood joy was contagious.

Todd and I loved to look at the changing leaves along the bluffs of the river. We would drive on weekends and find the best view. Then we'd park and marvel at nature's wonder. The big bluffs, the turning leaves, the eagles soaring above us. Ducks flying south....even the occasional group of geese overhead...honking, honking as they journeyed to a warmer climate.

The light is different in the autumn...it's diffused somehow. It's different than the light in any other season. Autumn sun was our favorite light. It seemed less harsh, more forgiving, gentler in a strange sort of way. That was another time and another place.

Now in the autumn I remember all the special times I shared with my child. Looking at leaves, collecting leaves, raking leaves.....we did this together, just the two of us. "Mom, when are we going to go look at leaves?" Todd would ask. That was my cue to load up some soft drinks and sandwiches and head out on the first sunny Saturday. We'd repeat this ritual until the leaves had all fallen and it was time to rake.

When we moved to the Houston area, Todd was 12, and we talked about the seasons. He told me about his great memories of leaves and drives and time together. He said he would miss autumn with me. That made me feel good. These were memories that we shared, of a time when it was just Todd and me for those special moments. Looking back, I am so glad that I spent the time to make memories. I thought I was making memories for my child, but in fact, I was making memories for us both. And now those memories are my memories.....good memories....memories that I will cherish always.

Here it is autumn again. Soon Todd will be gone five years. The memories are flooding back: the first day of each school each year, the changes as he grew to become a man. High school, college, graduate school....all began in the autumn. Autumn marks the beginning of many good memories for me. I listen as the school bus stops in front of our house to pick up today's children. Once in a while I go to the door and watch them load up, chatting with each other as they take their seats. I think of my 12 year old son, getting on that bus in front of our home for the first time: the first day of school in Houston. And for a moment, just a fleeting moment, I think I can see him sitting at a window seat, waving at me. Waving goodbye.

Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
TCF, Katy, TX

Your Compassionate Friend

*I can tell from that look, friend, that you need to talk,
So come, take my hand and let's go for a walk.
See, I'm not like the others, I won't shy away,
Because I want to hear what you've got to say.*

*Your child has died and you need to be heard,
But they don't want to hear a single word.
They tell you your child's "with God" so be strong.
They say all the "right" things that somehow sound wrong.*

*They're just hurting for you and trying to say,
They'd give anything to help take your pain away.
But they're struggling with feelings they can't understand
So forgive them for not offering a helping hand.*

*I'll walk in your shoes for more than a mile.
I'll wait while you cry and be glad if you smile.
I won't criticize you or judge you or scorn,
I'll just stay and listen 'til your night turns to morn.*

*Yes, the journey is hard and unbearably long,
And I know that you think that you're not quite that strong.
So just take my hand, 'cause I've got time to spare,
And I know how it hurts, friend, for I have been there.*

*See, I owe a debt you can help me repay
For not long ago, I was helped the same way.
As I stumbled and fell, thru a world so unreal,
So believe when I say that I know how you feel.*

*I don't look for praise or financial gain
And I'm sure not the kind who gets joy out of pain.
I'm just a strong shoulder who'll be here till the end -
I'll be your Compassionate Friend*

Steve Channing
TCF Winnipeg
In Memory of my daughter, Kimberly Susanne Channing

Thanksgiving

You may ask, “What do I have to be thankful for now that my child is dead?” After the death of a child, where is the joy in a day off from work? What pleasure can we derive from sitting around a table when someone is missing, and an uttered prayer of thanksgiving echoes hollow in our hearts?

Maybe we have been concentrating on the loss which has brought the overwhelming sorrow of death, and have forgotten the complete joy of life. When I remember laughing brown eyes, a mischievous grin, a scraped knee that Mommy could fix, a new word learned, even the memory of the realization that I had a baby boy, I have a great deal to be thankful for. I had 1 1/2 years of a dream come true, and I’m truly thankful I had my child.

Sure, the agony of grief, the anguish of losing my precious child to death, the torture of wanting to see that child grow and mature and the pain of never knowing, rips me up.

There is no Thanksgiving in entertaining these thoughts, so this month I am going to concentrate on the Living of my child, the Life that brought me so much joy. In this I am thankful that Evan was born, thankful that he lived, thankful that even for those short 30 months—I lived them too. Even so, as he lived once, I live now and want a productive life.

I am thankful I have come that far in my grief work to know I want to live and remember the good times without sorrow. And, I am thankful for my husband, who stood by me during the rough times. The husband who is the father of the child of our love. In him I have found my child, in our marriage I have found love, and that love taught us how to love that child. I am also thankful for you, my real friends—Compassionate Friends.

Edie Kaplan
TCF Ft. Lauderdale,
In Memory of my son, Evan



Holiday Gifts for Children Needed

Each year, our chapter donates holiday gifts to children at a worthy establishment that works with children who are not living at home and are under care for the holidays. Since things went so well with Youth Villages in years past, it has been decided to provide gifts for them again this year. The children range in age from 6 to 18. For many of these children, these will be the only gifts they receive this holiday season. If you would like to help this year, you may participate by bringing new UNWRAPPED gifts to the TCF December 14 Memorial Service. Below is a list of the most requested items.

Most Requested Items:

Art supplies
Toys from the movie Frozen
Pre-paid Cell Phones (and minutes)
DVD’s (PG-13 and Under)
DVD players
MP3 Player
Gift cards for places like Game Stop, Wal-Mart, Target & Amazon
I tunes gift cards
Current Rap/ Pop CD’s
CD Players/ Boom Box
Gameboy Games (Teen Rated)
Xbox Play Station Games (Teen Rated)
Digital cameras
Remote Control Cars, Trucks or Planes
Girlie things like journals, gel pens, scrap booking items

Board Games (Monopoly, Life, Mouse Trap, Jenga, Uno etc.)
Barbie Dolls & Accessories for Barbie
Matchbox/ Hot Wheels car playsets
Lego Sets
Books (Twilight, Harry Potter, Narnia, and current top sellers
Fashion Bracelets or kits
Action Figure Toys
Watches (Girls & Boys)
Puzzles for teenagers
Winter coats for teenagers
Hats/Gloves/Scarves
Hair accessories
Skateboards/helmets
Footballs, Basketballs, Soccer balls etc.
Nerf toys
Anything Spiderman or Spongebob

Stocking Stuffers:

Matchbox cars
Small notepads
Pens and pencils
Candy
Decks of Cards
Jewelry
Hygiene products
Billfolds and wallets
Cute little change purses for girls
Makeup items/nail polish
Socks
Gift cards for fast food restaurants

*Gift wrapping supplies appreciated, but please,
DO NOT WRAP THE GIFTS
Thanks*

CHAPTER INFORMATION

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.

What is the Yellow Slip?

Please return your yellow renewal slip. After a year on the newsletter mailing list, those names that were added in that month of a previous year, may receive a yellow half-sheet asking that their subscription be renewed. This is simply to keep our mailing list and the information in it current. If you do not send the yellow slip back, we must assume that you no longer want the newsletter. Although you are given an opportunity to make a voluntary donation, there is no cost involved in your subscription. The newsletter is our gift to you for as long as you wish to receive it. You may request that your name be returned to the active list at any time simply by calling 615-356-4TCF (4823).

Religion and TCF

The Principles of The Compassionate Friends state that TCF reaches out to all bereaved parents across the artificial barriers of religion, race, economic class, or ethnic group. Further, TCF espouses no specific religious or philosophical ideology. Despite our nondenominational status, many writers indicate that they have found comfort in their faith, and some have shared their anger and loss of faith. The opinions and beliefs expressed in letters, articles and poetry are those of the contributors.

Newsletter Deadline

In order to meet printing deadlines, all donations and original poems or articles must be received by the meeting day of the preceding month to be published in the next issue of the TCF Nashville newsletter. All donations and submissions are greatly appreciated.

BEREAVEMENT RESOURCES

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.

Sharing

SHARING is a community organization interested in helping parents who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or the death of a newborn infant. Call 615 342-8899 to confirm dates and times of meetings.

Alive Hospice Support Group for Bereaved Parents

A support group for bereaved parents meets at Alive Hospice. For details, please call John Baker at (615) 963-4674. Diane Castellano, LCSW is a grief counselor there for children and their families. Call her at [\(615\) 327-1085](tel:6153271085).

Other TCF Chapters

There are several other chapters of The Compassionate Friends you might want to know about. Anytime you are in their vicinity or feel the need to talk with other bereaved parents, feel free to attend their meetings. Also, when you personally know a newly bereaved family in one of these towns, please call the chapter number and give them the information so they can make contact with the family. To locate a chapter, you may call the TCF National Office at 1-877 969-0010, or go to www.compassionatefriends.org and click on chapter locator.