



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



South Bay/L.A. Chapter



A NEWSLETTER FOR BEREAVED PARENTS AND FAMILIES

OCT. 2011 ISSUE

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"This newsletter is sponsored by an anonymous family in memory of our children".

OUR NEXT MEETING
will be Oct 5th, the first Wednesday
of the month at 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:
The Neighborhood Church
415 Paseo Del Mar
Palos Verdes Estates, CA
(South of Torrance Beach)

DIRECTIONS: Pacific Coast Hwy. to Palos Verdes Blvd. → Palos Verdes Blvd. becomes Palos Verdes Drive West. Veer Right. → Go to Via Corta (stop sign just past Malaga Cove Plaza). Turn right. → Go down hill to Arroyo (stop sign). Turn right. → Continue down hill to end of street. → Turn left on Paseo Del Mar. → Meetings are held at the west end of the church.

--Please remember to park in the church parking lot and not on the street.--

WHO ARE WE...

The Compassionate Friends is a self-help organization which offers support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Only a person who has experienced the trauma of losing a child can fully understand the pain and suffering involved.

We gather to listen, to share, and to support each other in the resolution of our grief. You need not walk alone, we are The Compassionate Friends.

COMING IN OCTOBER...

This month we will start our meeting by discussing things we can do in our child's name, and how to set them up.

Steering Committee Meeting: All members are invited to offer their suggestions on Mon. Oct 17th at 7:00 P.M. (Details on P.16)

Upcoming Events:

Nov. 2nd: Pot-luck and holiday remembrance program

Dec. 11th: World Wide Candle Lighting

July 20-22: TCF 35th National Conference (see pg.16)

Free picture buttons of your child are available. Call Ken at (310) 544-6690.

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October 5th meeting... This month we will start the meeting by discussing some of the things that we can do in our child's name. Sometimes after the death of a child we would like to do something tangible in their memory. Scholarships, gardens, school equipment, planting trees, doing something for a cause or because their child enjoyed a sport or activity. Many other items have been used by parents in their child's memory. Memorials that have a significant place in your heart can be healing.

Knowing your child will be associated with a cause for the years to come is comforting to some parents. We will share what we are doing to keep their memories alive.

We invite you to share your experiences and what you do in particular in your child's memory. For those who have set up scholarships, please come share information on how it was done. We have several parents who are very interested, but don't know how to get started. If you are in the planning stages or hadn't considered doing something, this meeting will surely give you some ideas.

Rituals

Rituals are planned activities, symbolic in nature, that help us through times of chaos. Immediately after our child died we were in shock, totally unable to think of what to do, but the ritual of the funeral gave us a prescribed activity which helped us through those first few days. Society has created rituals so that we have prescribed action when a situation arises that we don't deal with regularly. In other words, rituals give us something to do when we don't know what to do.

A good example of times that are chaotic and where we don't know what to do is our child's special days—birthdays, holidays, and death dates. A common statement is "what will I do on that day?" On any other day in our grief we know what we will do. We'll work, care for the house or any other of our usual activity, but we are at a loss when it comes to our child's special days. We are especially uncomfortable because we feel that these days should have special activities, but we don't know what they are.

By using the concept of rituals, we can make the special days easier to get through. We can plan specific activities involving our child

symbolically that will take away the chaos of not knowing what to do on that day.

We did this on the holidays and special days after the death of my granddaughter Emily, and it worked very well for us.

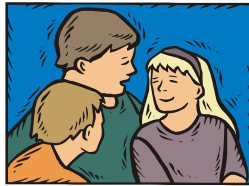
For Emily's birthday, nine months after she died, we came together as a family as we had done at Christmas time. Dorothy, Emily's mother, decorated as she would have for a birthday party. While we called it "Emily's Birthday Party," it was, in reality, a celebration that she had been born and given us so much joy. Those of us present wrote notes to Dorothy sharing our feelings about the gift Dorothy had given us in Emily. We cried and comforted each other, and together we affirmed the rightness of openly expressed grief.

On Emily's death date in August each of us wrote "messages" to Emily on small pieces of paper and put them in helium filled balloons. We took them outside and released them. Symbolically we were sending them to her in Heaven. Back in the house we shared our "messages" with each other and talked about past experiences we have had with Emily that the others might not have known about. Dorothy gave each of us a letter "from" Emily which we shared as a group. (As it had before, these letters brought forth tears from all of us, but we had expected it would. It was okay.)

Other years may not be as planned or as elaborate as that first year, but the point is that these planned activities gave us something to do and sustained us in the chaos of that special day. I do suggest some caution in planning your own activities. It is wise to let those who will be with you on that special day know what you will do or what you expect them to do. Some people won't be able, or want, to participate. We must give them that option. Also, we'll want to share this special activity with only those with whom we are comfortable sharing tears and painful memories.

With a little thought and ingenuity you'll be able to come up with your own ideas for activities that will symbolically involve your child and help you to openly face the fact that this day was a special one for your child, and that, although he/she is dead, the day is still special. In addition, it will give you something to do when you don't know what to do.

--Margaret Gerner, M.S.W., TCF, St. Louis, MO



Some Ideas for Creating Your Own Memorials

1. Prepare a photograph album and have copies made for each member of the family. Take time to share memories with each other.
2. Create a wreath or shadow box decorated with mementos of your child's life. Let each person select something special to put in it.
3. If your loved one wrote stories or poems, have these printed and bound for family and friends. Make tapes of them singing or playing an instrument.
4. Jewelry can be created using the child's birth stone. Locketts can be worn with pictures enclosed. Charms can be engraved with names and dates.
5. Order personalized license plates with the name of the child.
6. Send family and friends packets of flower seeds (Forget-Me-Nots?) to be planted on the anniversary of your child's birth or death.
7. Decorate the church with flowers on your child's birthday, anniversary of death, or holidays.
8. Transfer photos, footprints, ultrasound pictures, etc. to a shirt with fabric transfer medium and copy of the object. Or paint your own shirt with stick figure drawings and your child's name and dates.
9. Keep a journal of your experience. Someday you might want to collect some of your writings and bind them into a booklet to give to family and friends.
10. Donate time or money to support groups. Clothes and child care items may be donated to outreach programs or crises centers. Adopt a family; provide a meal or child's gift. Is there a local Ronald McDonald House you can help make "happy?"
11. Create a quilt using pieces of your child's clothing with panels signifying events that were meaningful or special interests of the child.
12. Release a balloon tied with "love notes."
13. Scatter rose petals into the sea.
14. Decorate a room at your church or a children's hospital. Buy hymn books, medical equipment or toys.
15. Volunteer with senior citizens, very sick children, or special-needs children. Make a wish come true.

16. Start a bank account for the extended family to donate money into for flowers and upkeep of family graves for years in the future.

17. Keep precious items in a decorated memory box, trunk, or book created for this purpose. Include toys, bulletins, letters, blankets, clothes, photos, cards, poems, or journals. Photos of the mother while pregnant or an ultrasound picture can be very special.

18. Write about your child for a newsletter on special days.

19. Continue to sign the child's name on family cards. If not comfortable with that, use a special "symbol", a sticker, or drawing for your child (angel, dove, rainbow, heart, flower).

--Borrowed from Pen-Parents Fall 1994



Out of the Blue

"How is it several years down the road?" I am sometimes asked. Maybe they want to hear that I'm "all over it" and that everything is hunky dory in my life now that this much time has elapsed. I have to admit in all honesty that, though it is so much better where I am now, as compared to way back there where fresh, raw bleeding grief abides, I do still have to deal with the remnants of grief from time to time. It comes and sits on my shoulder and says, "Here I am. Deal with me again." And I do, for denying the remnants doesn't work anymore than denying the fresh grief works.

The main difference is that I have had eight years to learn about my needs on those yearly special events, such as birthdays, death days, Mother's Day, holidays, etc., and I know how to handle those times. Practice hasn't made me perfect, but it has helped. Those days don't devastate me as they once did. I don't anticipate them weeks ahead of time as I did when I was learning to create a life without my child. I, long ago, created my new life, my new normal.

The things that cause me to deal with the pain again are not things I am able to anticipate. Instead, they come out of the blue to mow me down ... not kind enough to give me warning. For example, occasions such as the birth of a baby boy ... to my brother's son and his wife, seeming to assure that with good luck my family's name would be perpetuated. Although I knew intellectually that my husband's family name

would die with him, since our son had not married when he died, I had not dealt emotionally with that fact. As I looked at that beautiful baby boy there in the hospital nursery, there was no way in the world I could have anticipated that we would never have that particular grandchild to carry on my husband's family name.

It is a one-time experience. Once you have dealt with that "Out of the Blue" event it, becomes, like the yearly special days, familiar. So much so that when my nephew's second son was born two years later, there were no remnant hanging about. So I know this was yet another first I had put behind me. I also knew there would be other firsts I would have to face.

--Mary Cleckley TCF of Atlanta, GA

The Roller Coaster

As a child I enjoyed the thrill of the roller coaster, gliding up the giant track, reaching the top with the momentary anticipation and the thrill of the quick dropping roll to the bottom of the track. The deep turns, first to the right and then to the left, were designed to heighten the anticipation of the next climb and drop. In my childhood mind, these curves, climbs and drops were an isolated experience, temporary, and fun. The ride would end.

A few months after my son's death, I dreamed of the roller coaster, but this time it wasn't fun. It was a nightmare of fear, anxiety, and pain. I was so paralyzed that I couldn't breathe. That dream was the simple symbolism of life since my son died. Now I ride a different sort of roller coaster. The climb to the top is a slow, difficult rise to "normalcy." the rapid descent to the bottom is yet another terrible setback. I hang onto the bar of sanity on the curves, first one way then another. I really want to stop this ride, but it is forever. This ride won't end.

Today I recalled that roller coaster dream, in all its vivid detail, and I compare it to the roller coaster that is my life now. Are the highs lower and lows higher? Are the curves softening? Yes, I believe they are. It's been two years and two months since Todd died. I still weep, tears fall unexpectedly, and I still have anxiety. I still feel as though the earth has dropped out from under me. I miss talking with my son. I miss seeing him. I ache for that special hug that only

a child can give. Yes, I miss my only child very much.

My heart has been shattered, my definition of myself has been altered, and my loneliness is incomprehensible. But something has changed on the roller coaster of this life.

That something of course is me. I work through my grief in many, many ways. I have consciously changed the paradigms of my life. I have learned to evaluate people from a different prospective. I have become so sensitive to the pain of other parents that I feel as if it were my own. I have stopped anticipating how I will handle stressful events, anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays. I have learned to keep negative energy and negative people at a far distance. I have learned to live in the moment, and take joy in the simple things, to talk openly about my child's life, and to acknowledge the things I cannot change.

As time moves forward, I will continue to accept what is given and give what I can. I know the roller coaster will level out eventually. For as long as I live, I will keep my child with me in my heart. That's all I can do as I ride this challenging roller coaster that is now my life.

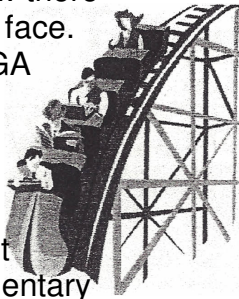
--In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen. By Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF, Katy, TX.

Halloween (and other) Masks

The month of October brings with it a smorgasbord for the senses. We can hear the crunching and crackling of leaves under our feet. We can see the brilliant reds, oranges, and yellows splash the earth. We can feel the magical approach of winter in the air. October is also for Halloween, a date synonymous with masks.

As bereaved parents we have, at various times, worn many and varied masks. We have masked our feeling of despair, sorrow, and anguish for the sake of our loved ones, friends, and acquaintances. We have masked our feelings of anger and bitterness for the traditional belief that a kind God would not do this to innocents. Most importantly, we have masked the person we have become, the person that has evolved after living through the death of a child.

Let us celebrate the month of October by beginning to take off some of our masks. A very



positive and helpful way to begin this process is to attend the next Compassionate Friends meeting. Share your sorrow, your fears, your bitterness, and disappointment. Above all, share your progress and triumphs through the arduous journey of grief. When you enter a room full of caring and supportive people who have shared your grief, there is no reason to wear a mask.
--Cathy Crawford, PROPS -



Musings on Halloweens Past and Present

On the evening I type this, the nip in the October air is a reminder that the major holidays are just around the corner. Halloween decorations have been in the stores since July and Christmas decor even as early as August. For those of us who are bereaved parents, siblings and/or grandparents this means the sooner they are "in our face" the longer we have the constant reminders that we will be facing the holidays without our child. Whether it is your first Halloween following your child's death or years down the road, such as in my situation, the holiday season stirs the emotions bringing varying levels of sadness, anxiety and sometimes even anger. With Halloween, there is the sorrow of no longer having to find that perfect costume or witnessing the delight in your child's eyes when you found just the right one.

Many parents find Halloween a particularly hard one to get through. In the past, I always thought of it as innocuous enough; there were the costume parties with bobbing for apples, children excitedly dashing door-to-door trick-or-treating, pumpkin carving, and the occasional harmless prank. However, after my daughter Nina died, I became acutely aware of things that I never gave a second thought to in the past. For instance, my former neighbor made her whole front yard into a graveyard scene, complete with fake headstones that said R.I.P. with scary or silly epitaphs as well as hideous ghosts coming out of the earth with bony bloody fingers. Before Nina died, I too found the cemetery "creepy," but now I look at it differently, even with a sort of reverence, and no longer have a problem going out to my daughter's grave-site, even in the middle of the night. I find the solitude of the

historic countryside graveyard where she is buried peaceful and dignified and worthy of respect, and I was hurt by what I felt was apparent ridicule and disdain for the final resting place of our loved ones' physical bodies to the point of tears and anger. Moreover, some of the masks and costumes portrayed faces of death in a way that I found highly offensive, especially since I knew many who lost their children to some of the means depicted. I took it personally and didn't appreciate what I perceived as a mockery of death.

Though I still don't pretend to understand the allure of the above-mentioned Halloween depictions, they aren't as painful to me as they were the first few years after Nina died. During the early grief years, we become very hypersensitive to our surroundings and more keenly conscious of anything related to death. It is pretty hard to look past the general non-bereaved population's seeming nonchalance about something we take so personally. Though we wish there was more empathy and understanding, we also know all too well that they cannot truly sympathize unless they also have walked in our shoes. It is easy to forget that we too, before our children's deaths, may have shown the same indifference. I believe that we would like to think that we wouldn't have been so callous because we now personally know how much this hurts those affected; however, before we lost our "innocence," truth be told, we probably didn't give any of it much thought. That being said, oftentimes it is still easier said than done.

On this 10th Halloween without Nina, I pretty much ignore all the ghoulishness surrounding this time of year. If I do find I am having difficulty, I try very hard to focus on positive and precious memories of Halloween's past. Such as her belated birthday/Halloween party where our basement became a makeshift haunted house where giggling blindfolded costumed witches and princesses plunged their hands into bowls full of peeled grape "eyeballs" and wet macaroni "brains" to the shrieks of "Yuck!," or the photo taken of Nina on her last Halloween. No longer of trick-or-treat age, she stayed home to pass out the candy and carve an awesome Jack-a-Lantern that she is pictured proudly along side, with her ever-present smile and that wonderful twinkle in her brown eyes. Or the photos I have of her in her costumes over the years from Care Bear to Punk Rocker. Because of my photographs and precious

memories, I also realize that I was one of the "lucky" ones in that regard. There are those whose children died before they ever had the opportunity to create memories, there is the sorrow that they were never able to experience even one holiday with that child, yet alone several.

For those with a missing trick-or-treater this Halloween or the conspicuous empty chair at Thanksgiving dinner this year, the first ones are the most difficult. Though I find they are easier to bear as time goes on, you never really forget the absence from the family holiday gatherings of one loved so much, nor do you want to forget, really. Please try to remember that this roller-coaster of grief ride each year brings different feelings. It is important that you just allow those feelings and let them happen. Try not to be waylaid by other's expectations of you. Trust your instincts and go with them. Truly, only you know what you can or cannot handle.

With gentle thoughts, Cathy Seehutter
TCF St. Paul, MN

If This Is Your First Halloween Without Your Child ...

You may want to change your usual routine. You may want to ask someone else to give out candy, or you may leave your lights off. Maybe you'll decide you can handle the Trick-or-Treat part, but won't buy your child's favorite candy to give. If you have other children, perhaps you could go to a party instead of staying home (or stay home if the carnival is what you did previously). Sometimes, by simply thinking it out in advance, we can lessen the impact of an event.

--Excerpted from BP/USA-
Central Arkansas

From Black to Rainbows

The world is a kaleidoscope of lovely colors with seemingly unlimited shades and hues. All people live in a world of color, but their reactions differ according to the individuals and the events which influence their lives. People may absorb, appreciate, ignore, or deflect the beauty around them. Often colors can



describe not only these reactions, but also important incidents in a unique way that enhance words or phrases.

Two years ago my life turned black when I learned that my son had completed suicide. I could see the colors, but they had no meaning in a life full of pain. My thoughts and feelings were concentrated on one horrible statistic. Even though I continued to function at home and at work, my soul was drowning in sorrow.

During the months that followed the funeral, the world turned to gray. I accepted normal responsibilities, completed necessary activities, and collapsed at the end of each day. On rare occasions I experienced some joy, but the memories quickly blotted out the pleasant feelings. Most of the time I felt empty of hope, love and purpose.

Occasionally one color crept into my life to negatively impact my emotions. Brown entered my hours; not the rich, warm tones of life-producing soil, but the hard, drab shades of barren dirt. I felt guilty and inadequate. Surely as a mother I should have sensed his pain and helped him through his difficulties.

As the first year of grief ended I had little enthusiasm for life. I continued to live in my gray/brown world without interest in anything, sometimes at the expense of my husband, family and friends. I had no desire to travel, improve myself or socialize. I forced myself to express interest in others, to participate in civic and religious groups, and to expand my horizons, in search of something to fill the void in my life.

After two years without color - I began to notice the world around me. As I drove through the suburbs I marveled at the shades of green in the trees and bushes. I wondered if in the past I had noticed the beautiful flowers on the trees and in the yards. In my grief I gazed at the freshly planted crops and the newborn animals. Just as spring awakens the earth, a new season nudged the hope within my soul.

Although rainy days filled with memories and frustrations sometimes dampen my spirit, I am becoming more aware of the rainbow of possibilities and opportunities. The color is gradually returning to my life with an intensity that I never experienced before.

--Linda, Survivors of Suicide, Dayton, Ohio

A Little Box of Memories

Today I went to the closet, and brought down from its special place on the top shelf, a box. A pitifully small box, one that with a grander purpose before may have held a long awaited Christmas gift, or was it a birthday present? No matter, its purpose now, much nobler and more precious, is to keep safe the memories of you.



As I have so many times before, I hold it close in my arms and take it to the empty rocking chair in the corner, and tuck myself in. As if afraid to mar its finish, I gently draw my fingertips across its surface. Thinking, knowing, that when I open it, the flood of memories will overcome me again.

On top rests our treasured mementos of you: Your birth certificate with a date when your life should have begun. Tiny ink footprints, frozen in time. A bracelet with your name so proudly displayed. Your baptism paper. A lock of your beautiful hair pressed between the pages of a sympathy card. A letter from your big brother who had such plans for the both of you. A photograph of you wrapped so warmly and snugly in your receiving blanket. A rose, from your bouquet. And a white ribbon that simply has written across it, "Beloved Son."

With trembling hands, through eyes blurred with tears, I reach for the folded piece of paper at the bottom of the box, knowing that because of what is printed there I will never unfold it. Slowly, with my eyes closed to reality, I rock, holding you - not this box -, so very close. And I remember.

After awhile, I know I must return. Then, in the order from which they came, I again charge this little box with the safe keeping of its precious contents. Arising from the rocker, and walking back to the closet, I place your small treasure box of memories back in its special place on the top shelf; knowing that even if this little box were empty, it would still contain within it the precious memories of you.

--Joe and Cindy Koltz

"I know God will not give me anything I can't handle. I just wish He didn't trust me so much." --Quote from Mother Theresa

Newly Bereaved ...

Phantom Pains

This AM when I was in that half-awake, half-asleep stage, I was thinking about what it is like to have your child die. So many people that haven't lost a child cannot possibly understand. I thought of losing a child as being compared to losing one of our extremities. If you had your arm suddenly amputated you would go into extreme shock. There would be soooooo much pain for a long, long time. As that assaulting, excruciating pain eases, you learn to "get back into life," step by step, but it's a long process of rehabilitating yourself to learn to live without your arm. You start to "get better" and then the phantom pains come and try to haunt you.

Unexpectedly, without warning, there you are again in pain, except now people don't understand your pain as well as they once did. So you feel guilty for feeling this phantom pain. There are some friends out there who are more wise and do understand about the phantom pains and will still love and be there with you. Others will leave.

Your hand itches but you can't scratch it. It's not there. The longing to hold your child is there, it's real, but you can't hold your child again while we are still here.

Some unwise people will tell you, "You have other children." Yes, you love your other children just as you love your other arm and legs, but they can't take the place of the one you lost. We, as parents who have had a child die, have had part of us amputated. They were born out of us, bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh, carried in our wombs, and nurtured at our breasts. And even those who have been adopted into our lives are knitted into our very souls. So, how can the death of a child even be related to the death of a father, mother, sister, brother, spouse, or friend?

These are great losses but having our child die is having part of us taken away. The grief is different; it's not "normal." We are supposed to die before our children.

Then, I thought about the amputated arm. If that wound isn't cleansed and lovingly taken care of, it will become infected. Bitterness and anger (which are normal in grief) can lead to an infection in your soul if you get stuck in it and it is not dealt

with. Friends can be loving healers helping to bind up the wound, or they can rip open the wound, making it deeper, by insensitive remarks due to a lack of understanding.

We are all at different stages in our journey through this loss and hopefully are healing. But there will always be a part of us that is gone until we are in heaven with them. We will get the phantom pains, but we can make a choice each day to go through the pain until we find some hope for our weary souls. We will never be the same, but we can survive and maybe we will even turn out to be better people, more in-tune with others.

Become "wounded healers." We are already more gifted than a lot of other people in this world because we KNOW what it is to truly love our child. There are a lot of people out there who take their children for granted, just as a lot of us have taken for granted that it is normal to have two arms and two legs. But what if that were different ... ?

--Written by Carol Mudra, Walnut, California
From Prodigy Medical Support Bulletin Board/Death of Child

Welcome...

A New Member



I read your newsletter today and I cried.
As a parent I never wanted to be a part of your group.

But now I am.

My precious Billy died only a month ago,
And my body and soul ache for him.

Your newsletter

Calms me--saddens me--consoles me--

Makes me feel less alone.

It helps.

And I know that now,

I need a "Compassionate Friend."

--Pam Robbins, TCF, FT. Collins, CO

Editor's note: If you have never come to a meeting, we invite you to attend. Here you will find other bereaved parents who understand the depths of your pain and confusion. Our children have died at all ages and in many different ways, but we understand how you are struggling. We are here to help. Nothing is required of you. You may share, or say nothing at all. You will find we

start with a topic and jump to what ever the people in the group need to discuss. We help each other as only another bereaved parent or sibling can. Come give us a try.

For Friends and Family ...

A Few Tips to Help Those in Grief

- * Call and send cards to let your grieving friend know that you are thinking of them.
- * Go visit the grave with your friend.
- * Listen as she speaks of her yearning and pain.
- * Allow yourself the freedom - and the gift to cry with her.
- * Remember the dates - write down when your friend's loved one was born and when her loved one died.
- * Send cards or call on these significant dates.
- * Buy a book on bereavement so that you can have a better idea of what your friend is going through.
- * Be kind and gentle with your friend. Grieving a loss is never easy. Practice patience.
- * Say your friend's loved one's name. Don't be afraid to share your memories of this special person.
- * Let your friend know how valuable he/she is to you.

--reprinted from *The Expanded Sky*

Book Review...



Fire In My Heart, Ice In My Veins A Personal Journal for Teenagers Experiencing a Loss.
When I was a teen, I witnessed the murder of my boyfriend, Tim. It will always be a part of me. The sights, sounds, smells, and feelings are still fresh in my mind. I don't believe it ever goes away. It has become a part of me.

I would never want to be a teenager again. It has to be the most difficult and uncertain time in life, and it is even harder to deal with this age when faced with a death.

I remember the never ending talks with friends about Tim's death. It was a big help for all of us to talk about our memories. His death made us all more aware of other deaths that had occurred in our lives. No one was sure what to say, feel, think, or do.

Journaling is a creative way for teens to work through their feelings. It is not always easy for teenagers to talk to adults. I know it wasn't for me. I also wasn't always open with my friends about my feelings, which I kept to myself out of fear of them not being normal. This journal gives teenagers direction and focus. The headings let you know that what you're feeling is real and normal. There is a place for photographs, newspaper clippings, a good-bye letter, and personal thoughts. --Excerpts of a review by Janet Sieff (This and other grief related books are available from the Centering Corp. Call (402) 533-1200 for a current catalog. Remember to tell them you are a member of TCF for free shipping.)



Helpful Hints...

Be Patient... Grief work is often two steps forward, then one step back. Even so, you're making progress.

Trick Or Treat

The night is dim
And the pumpkins grin
At the children on the porch.
The doorbell rings
"Trick or Treat!" they sing
My heart burns like a torch.
The Dracula's face
And a princess in lace
Are peering in at me.
How I'd love to ask
"May I lift your mask?"
And hiding, there you'd be!
You'd get such a kick
From that silly trick,
But disguised you must stay.
In the wind that blows
My heart still knows
You're playing October charades.
--Kathie Slief TCF Tulsa, OK



Butterfly

A butterfly came to me today
and landed upon my knee
His wings were heavy from the rain
I knew you had sent him to me
Only an Angel such as yourself

would care about these things
So I dried him with my breath
and sat him on some leaves
As I sat there watching him
soaking in the sun
I thought how great it must be to fly
it looks like so much fun
My Angel now you have your wings
Don't let my tears weigh them down
I know someday I will see you again
Until then, keep sending the butterflies around
--The Solano County Compassionate Friends

A Grieving Parent

A grieving parent is someone who will;
never forget their child no matter how painful
memories are.
A grieving parent is someone who;
yearns to be with their dead, but cannot conceive
leaving their living ones.
A grieving parent is someone who;
has a part of a heart, as the rest is buried with their
child.
A grieving parent is someone who;
begs for relief from the memories which plague
them, and then feels guilty when they get it.
A grieving parent is someone who;
pretends to be happy and enjoying life when they
are really dying inside.
A grieving parent is someone who;
can cry or laugh at the drop of a hat whenever they
remember their beloved child.
A grieving parent is someone who;
feels as though they just lost their child yesterday,
no matter how much time has passed.
A grieving parent is someone who;
fears for their remaining family because they
cannot bear to have any more losses.
A grieving parent is someone who;
sits by their child's gravestone and feels a knife
stabbing their heart.
A grieving parent is someone who;
wants to help others who have lost loved ones
because somehow their loss is theirs all over
again...

--Judy Skapnak Winder, GA - TCF



Ron Acker
Born: 10/65 Died: 5/95
Mother: Ursula Spey-Acker
Father: Heinz H. Acker

Jonathan Adams
Born: 1/81 Died: 2/08
Parent: Siv & Eddie Adams

Ramon Alvarez
Born: 10/84 - Died: 2/07
Mother: Terrie Alvarez

Sumer Nicole Alvarez
Born: 5/85 Died: 7/005
Parents: Dave Alvarez &
Sandy Murphy

Robert H. Apodaca
Born: 12/55 Died: 9/89
Mother: Margaret Hall
Father: Al Apodaca

Noah William Aragon
Born: 1/05 Died: 3/06
Parents: Rich & Michele
Aragon

Brandon Armstrong
Miscarried: June 1995
Mother: Cheryl Stephens

Joseph David Artino
Born: 11/51 Died: 11/07
Mother: Nancy Graybill &
Step-father: Art Graybill

Jason M. Bakos
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07
Father: James Bakos

Alexandra Renee Balesh
Born: 9/73 Died: 3/95
Parents: Ron & Stella Balesh

Kimberly Barcnas
Born: 2/88 Died: 10/06
Mother: Maria Guadalupe Ixta

Christopher Barnhart
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/2007
Parents: Ron & Susan Mother
Sister: Stacy Pierce

Christopher Michael Barta
Born: 2/72 Died: 9/04
Mother: Mary Barta

Stephen Barrington Baxter
Born: 7/61 Died: 4/99
Parents: Cash & Betty Baxter

Vincent Beagle
Born: 11/82 Died: 5/10
Mother: Angela Beagle

Tristina Ann Beale
Born: 12/80 Died: 9/08
Mother: Kathy Beale

Frank Becker
Born: 11/61 Died: 8/07
Parents: Al & Louise Becker

Kimberly Belluomini
Born: 10/62 Died: 10/00
Parents: Joyce Anderson &
Ronald Assmann

Sammy Bloom
Born: 2/59 Died: 12/82
Parents: Lois & Sam Bloom

Kurt Boettcher
Born: 12/71 Died: 06/95
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Todd Boettcher
Born: 2/79 Died: 10/79
Mother: Carolyn Boettcher

Alan Bolton
Born: 11/63 Died: 3/06
Mother: Helen Eddens

Kevin Border
Born: 11/88 Died: 11/09
Mother: Kelly Border

Antoinette Botley
Born: 12/67 Died: 7/10
Mother: Fredia McGrew

Renee Bouchard
Born: 3/75 Died: 5/06
Mother: Susan Bouchard

Tamara Lynette Boyd
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/00
Parents: Gloria & Gayle Jones

Jazzelyn Braga
Born: 11/08 Died: 5/09
Father: Leonard Braga

Lawrence Tom Brennan
Born: 11/86 Died: 12/10
Parents: Manuel & Lisa Jo
Hernandez

William Joseph Britton
Born: 3/62 Died: 7/85
Mother: Jean Anne Britton

Sayumi Claire Brower
Born: 9/08 Died: 9/08
Parents: Scott & Maiko
Brower

Eric Michael Brown
Born: 11/65 Died: 9/00
Mother: Beverly Young

Benjamin Matthew Brytan
Born: 10/84 Died: 6/96
Mother: Karen Merickel &
Robert Brytan

Robert L. Buckner
Born: 2/92 Died: 3/03
Parents: Brad & Cindy
Buckner

Tony Burack
Born: 12/63 Died: 12/87
Parents: Rita & Herb Burack

Brittany Nicole Cail
Born: 10/88 Died: 4/08
Mother: Raquel Cail

Albert Caldera
Born: 3/78 Died: 2/10
Parents: Refugio & Maria
Caldera

Christina Califano
Born: 10/90 Died: 11/06
Father: John Califano

Cesar Isaac Cancino
Born: 01/05 Died: 01/05
Parents: Claudia & Cesar
Cancino

Kenneth Capparelli
Born: 1/77 Died: 1/04
Mother: Sandy Capparelli

Frank Christopher Castania
Born: 8/94 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie
Castania --Grandparents:
Richard & Ann Leach

Vanessa Roseann Castania
Born: 2/97 Died: 7/05
Parents: Frank & Debbie
Castania-- Grandparents:
Richard & Ann Leach

Ryan Cavanaugh
Born: 6/83 Died: 11/06
Mother: Kimberly Cavanaugh

Zackary Kenneth Charlton
Born: 11/81 Died: 3/10
Parents: Christine & Kerr
Sister: Allie Bentley

Nathaniel Choate
Born: 7/80 Died: 5/08
Mother: Vicki Blain

Andrew Alexander Chou
Born: 12/03 Died: 12/03
Parents: Lu-Sieng Siau &
Wibawa Chou

Ophelra Grace Clark
Born: 10/82 Died: 9/10
Sister: Rebecca Clark

John Francis Cleary
Born: 12/74 Died: 8/93
Mother: Pauline Cleary Basil

Kelly Swan Cleary
Born: 3/59 Died: 3/95
Parents: Dick & Bev Swan

Sarah Elizabeth Cooper
Born: 10/95 Died: 8/00
Parents: Mark & Sandra
Cooper

Tiffany Corkins
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/05
Mother: Nancy Lamb

Hugo Ignacio Corbalan
Born: 4/84 Died: 5/08
Mother: Isabel Acosta

Marika Critelli
Born: 3/78 Died: 11/09
Father: Michael Critelli

Joseph Francesco Michael
Curreri
Born: 9/80 Died: 10/07
Mother: Karen Curreri



Our Children Remembered



Scott Curry
Born: 8/59 Died: 7/08
Mother: Marilyn Nemeth

Amy Elizabeth Dodd
Born: 1/74 Died: 7/02
Mother: Kathleen Dodd

Kurt Faerber
Born: 8/63 Died: 3/87
Mother: Trudy Faerber

Melinda "Peeper" Gardner-Collins
Born: 6/56 Died: 8/07
Mother: Pat Gardner

Rodney D. Day, Jr.
Born: 4/96 Died: 6/01
Parents: Jersuha Day

Wayne Douglas
Born: 9/71 Died: 1/10
Mother: Marie Galli

Jarod Ryan Faulk
Born: 8/86 Died: 12/08
Father: Joe Faulk

Justin Brian Gartland
Born: 10/81 Died: 4/05
Parents: Brian & Paulette Gartland

Danielle Ann Davis
Born: 10/78 Died: 3/10
Mother: Jackie Davis

Ramsay Downie, II
Born: 2/64 Died: 10/99
Ramsay & Sally Downie

Chase Feldkamp
Born: 5/05 Died: 3/06
Parents: Buddy & Jessica Feldkamp

Richard Lamar Gibbs
Born: 3/84 Died: 5/05
Mother: Ann Wasecha

Michael David Deboe
Born: 12/75 Died: 5/09
Parents: Dave & Judy Deboe

Rachel Sheridan Dunlap
Born: 9/69 Died: 3/09
Mother: Janell Dunlap

David Joseph Ferralez
Born: 2/74 Died: 12/02
Parents: John & Rebecca Ferralez

Steven Paul Giuliano
Born: 4/55 Died: 4/95
Mother: Eleanor Giuliano

Phillip Dennis Delurgio
Born: 11/64 Died: 7/10
Mother: Denise Nolan Delurgio

Myaka Kaitana Durham
Born: 1/04/06 Died: 1/06
Parents: Jahman & Ampy Durham

Michella Leanne Matasso Fincannon
Born: 8/86 Died: 1/06
Parents: Bill & Cheryl Matasso

Jacob Seth Goar
Born: 1/79 Died: 5/01
Parents: Michael & Venus Nunan

Anthony Joseph Demasio
Born: 6/52 Died: 7/00
Vivian Demasio

Scott Michael Dykstra
Born: 7/72 Died: 10/01
Parents: Mike & Rita Dykstra

Emma Nicole Fisher
Born: 11/99 Died: 7/06
Parents: Nancy & Elliott Fisher

Morgan Leeann Gomez
Born: 1/08 Died: 1/08
Parents: Amanda & Louie Gomez

Lee Denmon, III
Born: 7/79 Died: 3/03
Parents: Frances & Lee Denmon, Jr.

Gary Edholm
Born: 5/56 Died: 9/95
Parents: Patti & Bob White

Casey Owen Flint
Born: 5/75 Died: 7/09
Mother: Catherine Flint

Nicholas Gonzalez
Born: 2/63 Died: 10/01
Parents: Nick & Gloria Gonzalez

Douglas Thorn Dethlefsen
Born: 11/64 Died: 11/09
Father: Douglas G. Dethlefsen

Mark Edler
Born: 11/73 Died: 1/92
Parents: Kitty & Rich Edler

April Lou Flynn
Born: 4/61 Died: 1/05
Mother: Peggy Flynn

Evan Leonard Grau
Born: 8/82 Died: 5/04
Parents: Maria & Wayne Grau

Cori Daye Desmond
Born: 3/80 Died: 12/09
Parents: Mark & Monica Desmond

Timothy Charles Egnatoff
Born: 11/92 Died: 9/08
Parents: Rick & Cathy Reny

Mark Frazee
Born: 5/79 Died: 7/07
Mother: Kathy Cammarano

Christopher Dudley Gray
Born: 5/83 Died: 2/04
Parents: Dudley & Laurie Gray

Luke Edward Devlin
Born: 12/07 Died: 12/07
Parents: Jacqueline & Tom Devlin

Lorian Tamara Elbert
Born: 5/66 Died: 10/07
Mother: Dorota Starr Elbert

Peter Joseph Fuentes
Born: 2/68 Died: 3/98
Mother: Pat Fuentes

Matthew Ryan Gregory
Born: 3/80 Died: 1/11
Parents: Carol & Fred Gregory

Allison Jeanine Kirkbride Dewart
Born: 10/87 Died: 1/06
Parents: Z & Michael Dewart

Luke Emery
Born: 7/89 Died: 12/99
Parents: Karen & Glenn Emery

Donald A. Funk
Born: 12/41 Died: 9/00
Parents: William & Norma Jean Funk

Adam Francois Guymon
Born: 4/89 Died: 4/06
Mother: Eileen Guymon

Gary A. Dicey, II
Born: 4/82 Died: 6/98
Father: Gary A. Dicey, Sr.

Jeffery Mark Engleman
Born: 6/61 Died: 2/10
Parents: Janette & Laszlo Engelman

Ricardo Ramon Gallegos JR.
Born: 4/85 Died: 2/02
Mother: Sheri Schrier

Anthony Joel Guzman
Born: 5/87 Died: 1/08
Mother: Teresa Guzman

Michael A. DiMaggio
Born: 10/54 Died: 7/01
Parents: Neno & Helen DiMaggio

Richard Paul Engelman
Born: 02/66 Died: 03/95
Parents: Janette & Laszlo Engelman

Mark Scott Galper
Born: 2/62 Died: 5/97
Mother: Sheri Schrier

Andrew John Gvist
Born: 7/88 Died: 5/05
Father: Mark Gvist

Henry Espinoza
Born: 12/63 Died: 9/98
Mother: Virginia Espinoza



Our Children Remembered



Justin Todd Gwizdala
Born: 10/75 Died: 6/96
Parents: Kathy & Gary
Gwizdala

James Burman Hahn
Born: 11/68 Died: 12/05
Mother: Berna Hahn &
J. Thomas Hahn

Grant Henry Hampton
Born: 3/79 Died: 7/05
Parents: Jeri & George Medak

Brandon Allen Hanson
Born: 5/75 Died: 5/10
Mother: Yolanda Alepe

Robert Belmares Harris
Born: 12/66 Died: 12/95
Parents: Bea & Larry Harris

Rachel Anne Hartman
Born: 2/91 Died: 7/04
Parents: David & Paula
Hartman

Robert Hashimoto Jr
Born: 5/66 Died: 5/92
Parents: Robert & Shirley
Hashimoto

Caleb Haskell
Born: 6/78 Died: 9/06
Parents: Karen & Kim Haskell

Daniel Hassley
Born: 2/71 Died: 2/90
Parents: Eila & Richard
Hassley

Alicia M. Hayes
Born: 1/81 Died: 5/96
Parents: Becky & Dave Jordan

Jason Patrick Healey
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/09
Mother: Sharon Sykes Healey

Emma Joy Heath
Born: 5/98 Died: 6/07
Parents: DJ & Phil Heath

Kent Hisamune
Born: 6/00 Died: 6/00
Parents: Toshi & Hideko
Hisamune

Jesse Hoffman
Born: 1/86 Died: 8/10
Mother: Gina Hoffman

Hope Ann Honeycutt
Born: 12/62 Died: 6/00
Mother: Donna Honeycutt

Adria Horning
Born: 12/91 Died: 3/07
Parents: Gary Horning &
Linda Cipriani

Jeremy Michael Howard
Born: 7/83 Died: 6/94
Mother: Donna Howard-
Scruggs
Grandmother: Charlotte
Crager

Jennifer Nicole Hower
Born: 6/75 Died: 12/04
Brother: Jeff Hower

Miranda Howells
Born: 8/91 Died: 11/09
Father: Walter Howells III

Rachel Suzanne Hoyt
Born: 2/70 Died: 1/95
Sister: Laura Hoyt D'anna

Tara Hudson
Born: 1/86 Died: 1/07
Mother: Mari Hudson

Chad Michael Huisinga
Born: 10/74 Died: 12/95
Parents: Alan & Melinda
Huisinga

Hannah Nichea Hupke
Born: 9/87 Died: 6/05
Parents: Bruce & Joni Hupke

Zane Austin Hutchins
Born: 9/03 Died: 2/04
Parents: Mae Rivera & Jon
Hutchins

Casie Leean Hyde
Born: 3/89 Died: 12/05
Mother: Kelli Rigby-Hyde

John Joseph Iacono
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/04
Parents: Nancy & Anthony
Iacono

Ben Francisco Inez de la Cruz
Born: 1/71 Died: 11/91
Parents: Francesca Inez &
Emmanuel de la Cruz

John E. James
Born: 6/62 Died: 9/93
Parents: Marilyn & Lupe
Arvizo

Kalaea Jennings
Born: 4/07 Died: 9/07
Parents: Nacio & Maria
Jennings

Melissa Gale Jetton
Born: 5/58 Died: 7/84
Parents: James & Cathie Jetton

William Jimenez
Born: 3/94 Died: 5/04
Sister: Adrianna Jimenz

Daniel A. Jones V.
Born: 5/92 Died: 10/09
Father: Daniel A. Jones IV.

David B. Jones
Born: 3/50 Died: 3/01
Mother: Lucille Jones

Thomas Sean Jordahl
Born: 7/67 Died: 4/03
Mother: Lynda Orr

Jeff Joyce
Born: 2/68 Died: 4/01
Mother: Wadene Duffy

Lance John Juracka
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/06
Parents: Frank & Nancy
Juracka

Heather Mary Kain
Born: 6/83 Died: 2/10
Mother: Maura Kain

Edwin J. Kaslowski
Born: 11/67 Died: 7/96
Mother: Carolyn Kaslowski

Emily Matilda Kass
Born: 6/95 Died: 3/06
Mother: Susan Kass

Scott Ira Kaufman
Born: 4/68 Died: 7/95
Mother: Renee Kaufman

Douglas Drennen Kay
Born: 3/72 Died: 9/06
Parents: Steve & Diane Kay

Kalin Marie Keech
Born: 10/90 Died: 6/09
Richard & Kris Keech

Kathryn Anne Kelly
Born: 12/72 Died: 1/91
Parents: Dick & Timmy Kelly

Timothy Michael Kerrigan
Born: 4/68 Died: 8/02
Mother: JoAnna Kerrigan

Sean A. King
Born: 7/63 Died: 12/07
Parents: Catherine & Michael
King

Kay Dee Kinney-Palser
Born: 6/87 Died: 6/99
Grandmothers: Diana Palser &
Kay Kinney

Colby Joshua Koenig
Born: 6/84 Died: 1/10
Parents: Cindy Tobis & John
Koenig

Keith Konopasek
Born: 1/63 Died: 7/95
Parents: Ken & Mary
Konopasek

Susan Ann Kruger
Born: 9/64 Died: 6/08
Mother: Gloria Swensson

Kyle Kubachka
Born: 1/89 Died: 11/08
Parents: Keith & April
Kubachka

Natalie Samantha Large
Born: 6/05 Died: 6/05
Parents: Burke & Maya Large

Dolores LaRue
Born: 8/57 Died: 11/08
Mother: Maggie Ramirez

Cherese Mari Laulhere
Born: 9/74 Died: 3/96
Parents: Larry & Chris
Laulhere



Our Children Remembered



Bernard Lawrence
Born: 2/63 Died: 12/06
Mother: Jackie Bowens

Janet Sue Mann
Born: 10/61 Died: 9/10
Mother: Nancy Mann

Angel Flores Misa, Jr
Born: 10/69 Died: 7/06
Parents: Roland & Luscita
Dilley

Michaela Grace Nunez
Born: 2/05 Died: 7/05
Parents: Roger & Jennifer
Nunez

Bryan Yutaka Lee
Born: 12/70 Died: 9/07
Mother: Kathee Lee

Gabriella Mantini
Born: 5/85 Died: 8/06
Mother: Martha Mantini

Jamie Susan Mintz
Born: 11/52 Died: 12/04
Sister: Jessica Mintz

Sally Anne O'Connor
Born: 12/62 Died: 2/11
Mother: Grace "Darline" Dye

Steven J. Lee
Born: 1/63 Died: 10/06
Mother: Donna Lee

Alex J. Mantyla
Born: 3/89 Died: 8/08
Parents: Jarmo & Bonnie
Mantyla

David F. Mobilio
Born: 7/71 Died: 11/02
Parents: Richard & Laurie
Mobilio

Thomas Jinkwang Oh
Born: 2/72 Died: 6/03
Sister: Barbara Oh

Avery James Lent
Born: 12/03 Died: 7/06
Parents: Crystal Henning &
Dan Holly

Audrey Sinclare Marshall
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00
Parents: Don & Kimberly
Marshall

Danielle Ann Mosher
Born: 8/78 Died: 6/97
Parents: Paul & Rose Mary
Mosher

Dominique Oliver
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/02
Mother: Cheryl Stevens

Wendy Levine
Born: 10/65 Died: 11/95
Parents: Paul & Sharon Levine

Paul Martinez
Born: 1/86 Died: 3/08
Mother: Lorraine Martinez

Peter Anthony Murillo
Born: 11/72 Died: 10/04
Mother: Stella Murillo

Henry Ortega
Born: 5/97 Died: 7/08
Parents: Henry & Wendy
Ortega

Michael Lococo
Born: 2/55 Died: 1/10
Mother: Patrina Lococo

Daniel George Mateik III
Born: 12/84 Died: 6/09
Mother: Stefanie Hudak

Christopher Myers
Born: 10/86 Died: 5/06
Parents: Janet & Larry Myers

Caitlin Nalani Oto
Born: 10/88 Died: 2/05
Father: Carl Oto

Anthony "Tony" Low
Born: 1/46 Died: 3/99
Parents: Frances & Matthew
Low

Daniel McClernan
Born: 7/53 Died: 2/07
Mother: Lee McClernan

Christian Paul Nagy
Born: 5/02 Died: 5/02
Parents: Paul & Teresa Nagy

Sally O' Toole
Born: 10/53 Died: 03/85
Mother: Kay Arndt

Richard Lee Luthe
Born: 11/76 Died: 1/98
Parents: Jeff & Lorraine Luthe

Robert Andrew Mead
Born: 5/65 Died: 4/11
Mother: Carol Mead

Richard Paul Negrete
Born: 6/43 Died: 2/04
Mother: Sally Negrete

Lucas Hunter Palar
Born: 11/89 Died: 5/06
Parents: Hugh Palar &
DeAnna Williams

Audrey Sinclare Marshall
Born: 2/00 Died: 3/00
Parents: Kimberly & Don
Marshall

Nicole Marie Megaloudis
Born: 10/84 Died: 2/04
Mother: Gail Megaloudis-
Rongen

Joy Ellen Nelson
Born: 1/97 Died: 1/97
Parents: Mary Desmond &
David Nelson

Armon Parker
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/04
Mother: Sabrina Parker

Kyle Jeffrey Martin
Born: 11/80 Died: 7/04
Parents: David & Joanne
Martin

Shawn Mellen
Born: 05/81 Died: 8/99
Godmother: Rose Sarukian

Eric M. Neuan
Born: 1/79 Died: 3/09
Parents: Eric & Lynn Neuman

Annemarie Pellerito
Born: 9/73 Died: 8/03
Parents: Vicki & Pete Pellerito

Jason Lee Martineau
Born: 9/79 Died: 12/07
Father: James Bakos

Damion Mendoza
Born: 7/76 Died: 6/92
Parents: Carlene & Paul
Mendoza

Danielle Nice
Born: 7/81 Died: 8/04
Parents: Daniel & Debbie Nice

Joseph Ryan Persh
Born: 1/03 Died: 2/03
Parents: Gary & Jane Persh

Michelle Marie Mandich
Born: 5/89 Died: 2/05
Parents: Michael & Lori
Mandich

Shannon R. Middleton
Born: 2/77 Died: 5/94
Mother: Candy Middleton

Monique Nicholson
Born: 7/71 Died: 1/08
Sister: April Nicholson

Daniel Andrew Peterson
Born: 1/78 Died: 5/13/85
Mother: Gay Kennedy

Daniel Edward Manella
Born: 9/67 Died: 10/98
Sister: Kathleen Manella

Steven Douglas Millar
Born: 2/70 Died: 10/00
Parents: David & Suzanne
Millar

Geoff James Nowak
Born: 11/97 Died: 2/98
Parents: Christen Murphey &
Geoff Nowak

Richard Phillips
Born: 9/81 Died: 3/11
Mother: Lisa Grant

Elizabeth Mann
Born: 7/60 Died: 5/05
Parents: David & Olivia Mann

Logan Kay Nunez
Born: 1/95 Died: 4/05
Parents: Mike & Laura Nunez

Jennifer Pizer
Born: 10/69 Died: 4/91
Parents: Janis & Bud Pizer



Chris Pierce
Born: 11/77 Died: 4/07
Sister: Stacy Pierce

D'Juan Marcel Pratt
Born: 12/79 Died: 11/06
Mother: Gwendolyn Elaine
Maiden

Shannon Quigly
Born: 112/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Shortridge

Daniel Paul Rains
Born: 4/72 Died: 3/91
Mother: Janet Ferjo

Jeffrey Alan Rakus
Born: 10/86 Died: 7/06
Parents: Tony & Donna Rakus

Julius Ramarez JR.
Born: 8/10 Died: 8/10
Parents: Bridle & Jules
Ramirez

Tejal Pati Reddy
Born: 6/86 Died: 12/08
Parents: Pranitha & Krupa
Reddy

Richard R. Reyes
Born: 12/65 Died: 12/08
Mother: Terry Reyes

Aaron Rico
Born: 12/89 Died: 12/10
Parents: Cameron & Annette
Rico

Keith Patrick Riley
Born: 3/69 Died: 10/99
Parents: Kevin & Debby Riley

Christopher Rivera
Born: 10/67 Died: 1/06
Mother: Katherine Wagner

Ruth "Vanny" Rodriguez
Born: 10/73 Died: 5/01
Parents: George & Ruby
Rodriguez

Christine E. Rojas
Born: 6/64 Died: 12/94
Parents: Ray & Esther Rojas

Jamie (James) Lloyd Roman
Born: 4/78 Died: 2/97
Mother: Carolyn Roman

Frankie Romero
Born: 10/81 Died: 9/93
Mother: Magdalena Hilda
Salas & Francisco L. Romero

Dominic Roque
Born: 8/02 Died: 1/09
Parents: Kerrie & Ren Roque

James Garrett Ross
Born: 12/74 Died: 10/05
Parents: Jim & Sharon Ross

Michael William Roth
Born: 6/71 Died: 12/08
Parents: Karen & William
Roth

John Patrick Rouse
Born: 1/78 Died: 7/02
Mother: Sharon Rouse

Michael B. Ruggera, Jr.
Born: 4/51 Died: 4/96
Parents: Michael & Frances
Ruggera

Shannon Quigley Runningbear
Born: 12/68 Died: 1/09
Mother: Kathleen Crowley
Shortridge

Armando Sainz
Born: 6/76 Died: 2/02
Mother: Jennie Hernandez

Andrew Patrick Sakura
Born: 3/90 Died: 3/08
Parents: Bruce & Karen
Sakura

Jeffrey Alan Sampson
Born: 3/86 Died: 5/05
Parents: Claude & Paula
Sampson

Lisa Sandoval
Born: 9/76 Died: 12/92
Parents: Susan & Ruben
Sandoval

F. Marlow Santos
Born: 10/84 Died: 7/93
Parents: Fred & Julie Gillette

Shaulamit Rose Scher-Gilfert
Born: 12/08 Died: 12/08
Mother: Aliza Scher
Grandmother: Adrienne Scher

Karen Ailegra Scholl
Born: 8/64 Died: 4/99
Mother: Kay Scholl

Matt Scholl
Born: 2/73 Died: 4/08
Parents: Bill & Kay Scholl

Candace Arond Schonberg
Born: 3/98 Died: 11/00
Parents: Andrene & Arond
Schonberg

Jonathan "Jamie" Schubert
Born: 7/65 Died: 12/06
Parents: Lynn & Roy Schubert

Melissa Lauren Schweisberger
Born: 10/84 Died: 11/99
Parents: John & Margarita
Schweisberger

Dylan Elwood Sievers
Born: 8/08 Died: 8/08
Parents: Daren & Marne
Sievers

Tyson Donald Sievers
Born: 8/08 Died: 9/08
Parents: Darren & Marne
Sievers

Gerald Slater
Born: 2/71 Died: 8/94
Parents: Bob & Gwen Slater

Jeff Eric Snowden
Born: 2/61 Died: 6/01
Parents: Daryle & Sandra
Snowden

Larry A. Stauffer
Born: 1/67 Died: 5/08
Mother: Shirley Finnin

Miaamos Jennine Steen
Born: 7/05 Died: 9/10
Father: Donya Steen

Daniel John Swiggum
Born: 6/88 Died: 7/08
Parents: Stewart & Marian
Swiggum

Elizabeth D. Szuccs
Born: 4/72 Died: 6/11
Mother: Dolores C. Szuccs

Joseph Tauaefa
Born: 2/85 Died: 7/10
Parents: Loi & Sioka Tauaefa

Kristi Nicole Taylor
Born: 5/80 Died: 9/94
Parents: Kathy & Cory Taylor

John Teresinski
Born: 12/67 Died: 1/00
Parents: Beverly & Victor
Teresinski

Ryan William Thomas
Born: 2/82 Died: 4/04
Mother: Linda Thomas

Laura C. Toomey
Born: 1/69 Died: 12/78
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth
Toomey

Michael D. Toomey
Born: 4/62 Died: 2/05
Mother: Michael & Elizabeth
Toomey

Nathan Torbert
Born: 1/78 Died: 12/05
Mother: Rebecca Williams

David Torres
Born: 6/66 Died: 3/06
Mother: Joyce Whirry

Marcelo Torres
Born: 8/81 Died: 9/03
Parents: Jaime & Carmen
Torres

Brian Gregory Trotter
Born: 10/78 Died: 8/94
Mother: Abby Trotter-Herft

Ubong Jabari Uko
Born: 2/81 Died: 5/09
Mother: Denise Dues

Gregory Earl Veal
Born: 2/90 Died: 7/00
Mother: Virginia Veal

Tommy Villanueva
Born: 10/68 Died: 5/02
Parents: Jennie & Edgar
Villanueva

Eric Douglas Vines
Born: 7/77 Died: 7/91
Parents: Doug & Lynn Vines

**Our Children Remembered**

Mark Daniel Vinson
Born: 11/78 Died: 7/10
Mother: Virginia Vinson

Serena Yasmeen C. Viveros
Born: 11/05 Died: 11/05
Mother: Brenda Viveros

Chris Henry Vogeler
Born: 9/66 Died: 12/04
Parents: Frank & Lois Fisher

Marisa Ann Vuoso
Born: 7/83 Died: 3/93
Parents: Debbie & Marco Vuoso

Kristopher Wadman
Born: 11/82 Died: 10/00
Parents: Michael & Melodie
Wadman

Carl Alan Wagenknecht
Born: 7/70 Died: 8/04
Parents: Tom & Janis
Wagenknecht

Jeffrey Sinclair Wagstaff
Born: 9/80 Died: 4/99
Parents: Johnny & Barbara
Walker
Sister: Sheimekia Wagstaff

Cory Dylan Walker
Born: 8/76 Died: 3/01
Parents: Jim and Susan Walker

Eric Webb
Born: 6/85 Died: 10/07
Parents: Jim & Vickie Webb

Dennis William Webber
Born: 5/85 Died: 3/05
Parent: Blaine & Sin Young
Webber

Sharon Ann Wendt
Born: 6/54 Died: 4/99
Parents: Mr. & Mrs. Carmel
Doucet

Brian Scott West
Born: 8/70 Died: 4/08
Parents: David & Connie
Schlottman

Andreas Wickstrom
Born: 12/83 Died: 12/01
Parents: John & Inge
Wickstrom

Victoria Winchester
Born: 2/57 Died: 2/84
Mother: Erin Adams

Jennifer Winkelspecht
Born: 7/75 Died: 8/95
Parents: Brian & Lisa
Winkelspecht

Jordan Michael Witte
Born: 1/87 Died: 11/08
Parents: Licha & Mike Witte

Bob Woodyard
Born: 7/55 Died: 10/08
Bill & Barb Woodyard

Amy Woolington
Born: 10/85 Died: 1/07
Parents: Pam Weiss & John
Woolington

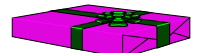
Christopher Wootton
Born: 11/86 Died: 5/08
Father: Jim Wootton

Cristofur Daye Wroten-
Kennedy
Born: 2/75 Died: 9/01
Mother: Dusty Wroten
Father: Joe Kennedy

Steve R. Young
Born: 7/57 Died: 2/90
Mother: Marjorie S. Young

Whitney Marie Young
Born: 8/87 Died: 11/06
Parents: Marlene & Steve
Young

Kevin Zelik
Born: 11/85 Died: 6/10
Parents: Joe & Linda Zelik

Birthday Tributes...

In honor of your child's birthday, we welcome you to submit a birthday tribute. Though your child is no longer here to buy a present for, think of this as a birthday present about your child. This tribute is an opportunity to share your child with us all. (We thank you for any birthday donations that help offset chapter expenses.)

**A Birthday Tribute to:
Danielle Ann Davis
Born: October 1978
Died: March 2010**



My Sweet, Baby Danielle, October 19th would be your 33rd birthday, but it still seems like yesterday you were born. Every year since you were a little girl I told you about the happiest day of my life, the day that you were born. I just hope you know I loved you throughout your terrible 2's, 3's and 4's. I loved you when we fought every day when you were a teenager.

I always felt you were a gift from God and I would not be able to keep you as long as I wanted. In your older years you became my best friend and a Mini-Me. I never felt love like the love I felt from you. Before you passed I asked you to say Mom one more time. It took you awhile and you said it with every ounce of energy you could muster. Your first word was, "Mama", now we know it would also be your last.

I was to be there for your first breath and your last, so with that I know you were never alone through out your life.

Until we meet again, I love you my sweet baby.

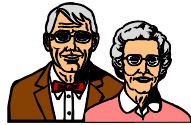
Love Always, Mom

For Siblings...**I Heard My Father Cry**

Feeling so helpless and sad,
Listening from the room next door,
Over my ears using every pillow I had
I couldn't take it anymore.
His pain came from inside
Cries turned into screams.
What he felt he could no longer hide.
The loss of his only son took away his dreams.
His sighs echoed off the walls.
He couldn't seem to pull himself together.

As our eyes met at the end of the hall,
I realized his hurt will be with him forever.
With eyes so sad, he looked right through me.
Not knowing what to say, I didn't even try.
This is something I never expected to see,
But now I know that real men do cry.
--Karen Keck TCF Sacramento Valley Chapter, CA

For Grandparents ...



Patchwork

Prompted by the expectation of our first grandchild, I became a novice quilter earlier this year. I am self-taught, relying on office mates who are quilters, and on books written by the "pros." My first attempt will look crude to me years from now, but the sheer pleasure of planning, organizing, piecing, sewing, and stitching, and then realizing how it all became the finished product is awesome to me, a beginner. Three quilts (they are small) into it, I began to see a strong parallel between quilting and grieving.

When Kevin died, I was hurled into a world I knew nothing about. TCF friends were my comforters, teaching me from their own experiences. I read anything that said "death" or "grief" in its title and then learned which style of writing best spoke to me. Very slowly I began sorting pieces, finding a pattern, and organizing my first attempts at making sense out of the loss of a child. I have not completed this project as I do not have the insight of what my finished product will be. I do trust that it will be functional as well as beautiful, and will tell me in some way how the colors of this life experience will blend to become my healing.

--Lorie Hartsig, St. Mary's Co. Newsletter, Southern MD.

From Our Members...



A Friend in Need

FRIENDSHIP gives license to show up at the door of need without asking, "When would you like me to come?" or "What would you like me to do?" Nor does friendship call out, "Just let me know if you need anything."

Practiced friendship whispers, "I'll be there" and promptly steps through the door with sensitivity, respect, and understanding.

But what about honoring the right to invite? Those who wait for parchment invitations wait long, for need rarely throws a party - rarely even

has a voice.

Yet need has its own needs. It needs protection from strangers tromping in with work boots and good intentions. And it needs relief from acquaintances wearing the spiked heels of advice and pat answers.

Need waits with longing for the familiar entrance of dear ones who pad barefoot through the soul on ordinary days.

--By Susan Lenzkes --submitted by Marily & Lupe Arvizzo, TCF South Bay/L.A., CA

We welcome and encourage you to submit contributions you found meaningful to you in your grief. We prefer your original poems and thoughts, but we can also print other material if proper credit is given to the author. Please take the time to submit a poem or article you found helpful.

Please Join Us And Give Us Your Thoughts...

All members are invited to our next Steering Committee Meeting. This informal meeting is a time we plan for the upcoming Memorial program, World Wide Candle Lighting, topics for the following year, and any suggestions you might have to make our chapter better. We will meet at Kitty Edler's house on Monday, Oct. 17th at 7 PM. It is straight up Hawthorne, just before Crest. Located at 32 Peppertree Lane, Rolling Hills Est. (310) 541-8221.

TCF 2012 National and International

Conference...The Compassionate Friends/USA, is pleased to announce that, in conjunction with the 35th National Conference, it will also be hosting The Compassionate Friends 5th International Gathering. The combined conference will be held July 20-22, 2012 in beautiful Costa Mesa, California.

"We welcome to this conference all who are grieving the death of a child, for grief is a universal language and one that TCF'ers around the world know all too well," says TCF/USA Executive Director Patricia Loder.

Because many people will be traveling long distances from countries around the world, special excursions are being planned for before and after the conference, so everyone is invited to combine their stay with visits to some of California's great attractions.

The conference, the second International Gathering held in the United States, will be hosted at the Hilton Orange County Costa Mesa Hotel, described as one "that exemplifies class, and elegance with a modern twist." TCF will have a block of rooms available at \$129 USD for up to four occupants (King bed or double beds). You can read about the hotel in English, Spanish, and French at Hilton Orange County Costa Mesa.

Reservations for the hotel and registration for the conference cannot be made now, but will begin online earlier than normal for TCF conferences.

We Need Your Help... The 2012 Conference Planning Committee has started planing for next years conference. Our chapter is in charge of the Volunteer desk, and the Hospitality and Reflection Rooms.

Because it will be held so close to home, we strongly recommend that you start making plans now to attend. We will let you know when registrations can be made for the conference. Right now, we are looking for people to sign up to volunteer at the conference. There are many jobs, both big and small that need to be done. Could you sit at a table and answer questions? Restock refreshments in the Hospitality Room? Help put together a video of children's pictures? Can we count on you to help?

We would love to include as many members of our chapter as we can to help the conference be a huge success. This is a rewarding undertaking that we can do to honor our children and to help the newly bereaved... Please help us make this one of the best conferences TCF has ever had. Please call Kitty Edler at (310) 541-8221 or E-mail her at KittyEdler@aol.com for more information.

TCF Now on Facebook ... Please visit and help promote The Compassionate Friends National Organization's new Facebook page by becoming a fan. You can get there by clicking on the link from TCF's national website home page at www.compassionatefriends.org. Or, you can log into Facebook and search for The Compassionate Friends/USA. In addition to the social support aspect, The Compassionate Friends/USA Facebook page will have information about upcoming events such as conferences, the Walk to Remember, and the Worldwide Candle Lighting. Please visit often and contribute to the conversation.

Our Website... We are now posting a tribute page for each of our children. Please visit the new site and add your child's information. You can also download the monthly newsletter which will help defray chapter expenses of the printing and mailing of your newsletter. (Please let us know if you can be removed from the regular mailing list.) Contact Crystal at: crystal@tcfsbla.org and she will help you with the steps to create your own tribute.

The National Office of TCF has an ongoing support group for parents and siblings online. For a complete schedule and to register for Online

Support, visit <http://compassionatefriends.org> and follow the directions to register.

Healing the Grieving Heart... Featuring experts who discuss the many aspects of grief, with a main focus on the death of a child and its effects on the family. "Healing the Grieving Heart" can be heard on the Web live at www.health.voiceamerica.com every Thursday at noon EST and are also archived on the TCF national website. Shows are also broadcast at 11 a.m. EST Sundays on a number of radio stations across the country and streamed online simultaneously at www.HealthRadioNetwork.com

Welcome New Members ... We welcome our new members to our chapter of TCF. We're sorry you have a need to be with us, but we hope you feel you have found a safe place to share your grief and will return. It often takes a few meetings to feel at ease in a group setting. Please try attending three meetings before deciding if TCF is for you. Each meeting is different, and the next one might be the one that really helps.

We encourage you to take advantage of our resources. We have a well stocked library of grief materials, a phone friend committee that welcomes calls at any time, and a members' directory to call another parent you have met at the meetings.

Thank You ... Thank you to all those who donate to our meeting basket or send donations to our chapter. Since there are no fees or dues to belong to TCF, your donations keep us functioning, and we appreciate your help.



Birthday Tributes... During your child's birthday month, you may place a picture and either a short personal message, poem, or story about your child in the newsletter. (Less than 200 words, please.) Do not cut your picture. We will block off unused areas. If it is a group photo, identify the person to be cropped. This tribute is an opportunity to tell a short story about your child, so we will be able to know them better. Photos must have identification on the back. Enclose a SASE in order for photos to be returned by mail. (Please do not send your only picture.)

Tributes must be in by the 1st of the month preceding your child's birthday month or at the prior meeting. (Example: Oct.1 for Nov. birthdays). Otherwise they will appear if space permits or in the following month's issue.



Phone Friends ... Sometimes you want or need to talk about the life and death of your

child with someone that understands and can share your pain. The following friends are on the telephone committee, and are available to talk when ever you need someone who understands.

Cheryl Stephens.....(323) 855-2630
 Kitty Edler.....(310) 541-8221
 Karen Merickel.....(310) 375-2498
 Richard Leach (grandchild).....(310) 833-5213

SIBLING PHONE FRIENDS

Kristy Mueller.....(310) 373-9977
 Joey Vines.....(310) 658-4339
 Sue Gardner.....(310) 316-3777

Memory Book... Our chapter has an ongoing Memory Book. Each child is given a page in the book. Pictures, poems, or a tribute you choose that will help us to remember your child can be included. Feel free to add your picture to the Memory Book at any of our meetings. This is one way we can meet and remember the new member's children.

Library Information... At each meeting we have a library table. It is on the honor system. Many of you have books you got when you were newly bereaved and may no longer need. Perhaps you would like to donate books on grief that you found helpful. If you wish to donate a book to our library, please let the librarian know so we can put your child's name on a donation label inside the book.

Newsletter... For those of you who are receiving the newsletter for the first time, it is because someone has told us that you might find it helpful. We warmly invite you to attend one of our meetings. Please let us know if you know of someone who could benefit from our newsletter which is sent free to bereaved parents. We do ask that professionals, friends, and family members contribute a donation to help offset the costs involved. If any information needs to be changed, or if you would like your child included in the "Our Children Remembered" section, please contact the editor at (310) 530-3214.

Additional Grief Support Bereavement Organizations and Resources:

The Compassionate Friends So. Bay/L.A.,CA: (310) 963-4646. Parent support group & newsletter for bereaved parents and siblings.

TCF National Newsletter: For all bereaved parents and siblings. Published quarterly; subscription fee. Contact TCF Inc., P.O. Box 3696, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696 (630) 990-0010

TRINITY CARE HOSPICE: Bereavement Coordinator
 Gayle Kirma (310) 257-3567



FAMILY & FRIENDS OF MURDER VICTIMS: Rose Madsen, (909) 798-4803 Newsletter and support group, e-mail Roseydoll@aol.com

ALIVE ALONE: For parents who have lost their only child, or all their children. 1112 Champaign Dr., Van Wert, OH 45891 Newsletter available.
 www.Alivealone.org

SURVIVORS AFTER SUICIDE: Support Group for families that have lost someone to suicide. Contact Sam & Lois Bloom (310) 377-8857

BEREAVEMENT MAGAZINE: published 9 times a year. Articles for all types of grief. Subscription fee. Bereavement Publishing, Inc., 5125 Union Blvd., Suite #4, Colorado Springs, CO 80920

OUR HOUSE/BEREAVEMENT HOUSE: 1950 Sawtelle Blvd., Suite 255, L.A., CA General bereavement and bereavement for children. (310) 475-0299

PATHWAYS HOSPICE: Bereavement support and sibling group. Bill Hoy (562) 531-3031

NEW HOPE GRIEF SUPPORT COMMUNITY:

Grief support and education groups for adults and children. Susan K. Beeney, P.O. Box 8057, Long Beach, CA 90808, (562) 429-0075

THE GATHERING PLACE: Various support groups including support for loss of a child, support group for children 5-8, 9-12, and teens, (also Spanish). Call Claire Towle (310) 374-6323, Beach Cities Health Dist

LOCAL TCF CHAPTERS

Los Angeles: (310) 474-3407 1st Thurs.

Orange Coast/Irvine: (949) 552-2800 1st Wed.

Orange Co./Anaheim: (714) 993-6708

Pomona/San Gabriel: (626) 919-7206

Redlands: (800) 717-0373 3rd Tues.

Riverside-Inland Empire: (909) 683-4160

Ventura Co. TCF: (805)981-1573 1&3 Thurs.

Verdugo Hills: (818) 957-0254 4th Thurs.

San Fernando Valley: (818) 788-9701 2nd Mon.



A SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Post Net Printing for their help in printing our newsletters each month and to Reverend Karl Johnson and the Neighborhood Church for the use of their facilities for our meetings.

STEERING COMMITTEE OFFICERS:

CHAPTER LEADER: Cheryl Stephens

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Lynn Vines

PROOF READER: Becky Jordan

TREASURER: Ken Konopasek

CARDS & WEBSITE: Crystal Henning

NEW MEMBER FOLLOW-UP: Laurie Gray

DONATIONS TO THE SOUTH BAY/L.A. CHAPTER OF THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

In loving memory of Brandon Armstrong and Dominique Oliver ... not a day goes by where I don't think of you or miss you. You two are the guiding force that makes me want to live, not just exist. ..

Love, Mom

In loving memory of Frank Becker, 11/61 - 8/07. We miss you so very much and not a day goes by when we don't think of you. We love you dearly,

Always, Mom & Dad

With sincere gratitude and deep appreciation, we acknowledge the generosity of the previous individuals and companies. Your tax deductible donation, given, in memory of your loved one enables us to reach bereaved parents with telephone calls and information, and they also help defray newsletter and mailing costs. Please help us reach out to others in this difficult time. Indicate any special tribute you wish printed in our newsletter.

When making a donation, please make checks payable to: The Compassionate Friends South Bay/L.A. Chpt.

Mail to: The Compassionate Friends So Bay/ L.A. Chapter
P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

In loving memory of _____

Birth date _____ Death date _____ Sent From _____

Tribute _____

To include your donation in the next newsletter, we must receive it by the first of the month, or it will appear in the following issue.

The Compassionate Friends
South Bay/L.A., CA Chapter
P.O. Box 11171
Torrance, CA 90510-1171

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Halloween



It is here, this day of merriment
and children's pleasure.
Gremlins and goblins and ghosts
at the door of your house.
As the other children come
to the door of your mind.
Faces out of the past,
small ghosts with sweet, painted faces.

They do not shout.

Those children who no longer march laughing on a cold Halloween night,
they stand at the door of your mind-- and you will let them in,
so that you can give them the small gifts of Halloween-- a smile and a tear.

-- *Wintersun* by Sascha

-- Change of Service Requested --



OCTOBER 2011

Time Sensitive Material, Please Deliver Promptly



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS CREDO

We need not walk alone. We are The Compassionate Friends.
We reach out to each other with love, with understanding, and with hope.

The children we mourn have died at all ages and from many different causes,
but our love for them unites us. Your pain becomes my pain,
just as your hope becomes my hope.

We come together from all walks of life, from many different circumstances.
We are a unique family because we represent many races, creeds, and relationships.
We are young, and we are old.

Some of us are far along in our grief, but others still feel a grief so fresh
and so intensely painful that they feel helpless and see no hope.

Some of us have found our faith to be a source of strength,
while some of us are struggling to find answers.
Some of us are angry, filled with guilt or in deep depression,
while others radiate an inner peace.

But whatever pain we bring to this gathering of The Compassionate Friends,
it is pain we will share, just as we share with each other our love for the children who have died.

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building a future
together. We reach out to each other in love to share the pain as well as the joy,
share the anger as well as the peace, share the faith as well as the doubts,
and help each other to grieve as well as to grow.

WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE. WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS.
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