



The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

email - leaders@sdtcf.org / phone - (619) 583-1555 / www.sdtcf.org



Sharing Memories With Newly Bereaved Parents

Lisa Colwell

You are still so new to this journey. I am so, so sorry for your loss and pain. I am so sorry you are on this horrendously difficult path. Sadly we All understand. No words can express the feelings of a shattered broken heart.

Everything You feel and experience is normal for this abnormal event.

The grief of losing a child is devastating.

Grief Brain, panic attacks, abnormal heart rhythm, sleeplessness or always sleeping, Numbness or sobbing, weight loss or weight gain, lack of zest for life, absolutely No interest in sex, heart-shattering sorrow, all part of this journey.

Be kind to yourself as this is a very difficult journey. See a Dr if necessary. Many of us needed to go on blood-pressure meds, anxiety meds, sleep meds, depression meds, or other meds to get us functioning on this journey.

Many groups help walking on this path. Take 1 day, 1 hour, 1 minute, 1 step at a time.

Breathe Breathe.

Does it get "easier"... No, it's just not quite as sharp; We learn to live with it. We learn to navigate through the complex mix of emotions and bereavement. Only another Bereaved Parent understands.

It's okay to not be okay. Virtual hugs and Prayers

Lisa Colwell, Forever Aaron's mom (31) 10/24

Meeting Information

The San Diego Chapter of
The Compassionate Friends

Dates Times Addresses

Virtual / Online

1st Wednesday of month 7:00-8:30pm

EMAIL sdtcfzoom@gmail.com FOR

ZOOM LINK and passcode.

VIRTUAL FACILITATORS

Debbi & Dom Montisano

(858) 349-5573

In-Person

1st Thursday of month 7:00-9:00pm

Northminster Presbyterian Church

(TCF is nondenominational)

4324 Clairemont Mesa Blvd

San Diego, CA

**The Compassionate Friends
2024 National Conference
Information On Page 11**

National Bereaved Parents Day & Month

What is National Bereaved Parents Day & Month?

National Bereaved Parents Day was set up in 2020 by the charity A Child of Mine, after they realized that there was not a specific day that honored bereaved parents from all walks of life.

National Bereaved Parents day brings together anyone affected by the death of a child to show bereaved parents that they are not alone. In solidarity we aim to unite every bereaved parent from all walks of life and to try to break the silence around child loss.

National Bereaved Parents
Month July / Day July 3rd

“For those who hold
a child in their heart,
instead of in their arms”



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**HEATHER ROSE POWELL FOREVER IN MY HEART DOB 7-16
DAUGHTER OF JULIE WITKOFF**



ANDREA LYNN MONTISANO DAUGHTER OF DEBBIE & DOMINIC

Born 8-10





ALLISON DUNN
DOB 8-31
DAUGHTER OF
CHRIS STERNS

LAWRENCE O'BRIEN
SON OF
BRIDGET O'BRIEN
DOB 8-16

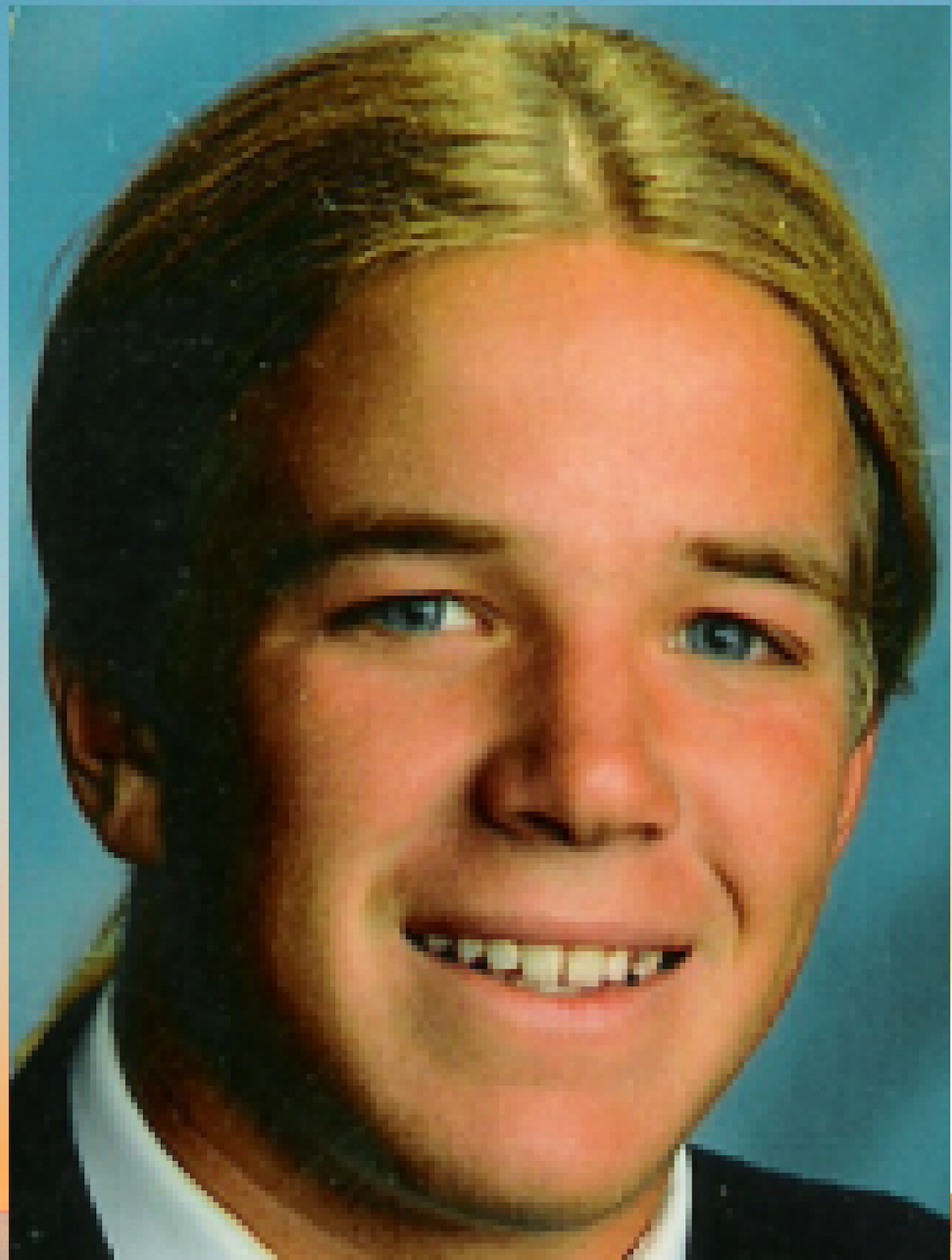




KELLI R. SMITH BORN 7-19
DAUGHTER OF OF
RACHEL KENNEDY



John Thomas Gittelsohn dob 7-15
son of
Debra & George Gittelsohn



Matthew Steven Spiewak
Grandson of
Margaret Spiewak
DOB 7-17

SARA ELIZABETH CHANDLER
DOB 7-20
DAUGHTER OF
MARY KAY & TED CHANDLER



DEREK REED THOMAS
DOB 8-5
SON OF
LYNN THOMAS

Helping a Child Cope with the loss of a Loved One (Sibling)

The American Cancer Society

Things that might help a child / teen adjust include:

- Making sure that the child knows that nothing they did caused the death of the loved one.
- Paying more attention to the needs of the child, especially emotional needs. If the loved one who died is a parent, reassuring the children that they will continue to be loved and cared for.
- Keeping an open channel of communication with the child after the death of a loved one. Answer any questions as honestly as possible for their age.
- Telling the child who will help care for them on a day-to-day basis. Also letting them know who will attend special occasions that they celebrated with the parent who died. For example, telling a daughter who will take her to a daddy-daughter dance.
- Reminding children that their feelings are normal and might change from day-to-day, and encouraging the children to talk about their feelings.
- Continuing to talk about and share information about the loved one's life and death with the child. Asking open-ended questions like "How are you doing since your mom/dad/sister/brother died?" might invite deeper conversations with the child.
- Offering reassurance and helping them learn ways to cope with their feelings and adjust to living without their loved one.
- As the caregiver, trying to remain emotionally healthy yourself – if you need help, get it.
- Ensuring that the child's needs are met and they are sticking to their routine as much as possible.
- Finding out about support groups for children in your area. Talking to other children who have gone through the same thing might help them cope better.
- Giving the children the option to attend the memorial service or any traditions if they want to. Explain to the children in an age-appropriate way what to expect from memorial services or traditions and give them the opportunity to ask questions.
- Helping the children identify healthy ways of coping like individual and group therapy, art, music, sports, writing, scrapbooking or memory boxes to collect memories, or picking up a new hobby.
- Understanding that, just like adults, a child will not only grieve the loss of their loved one, but also grieve other losses like less availability for a surviving parent, maybe loss of home/needing to relocate and experience loss of friends and school supports, changes in routines, etc.
- Helping the children celebrate special days like the loved one's birthday, Mother's Day, or Father's Day in a way that helps them cope with any sad feelings or memories that they might have on that day.

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Grief in teens

Teenagers are still learning how to identify and express their feelings and thoughts. They may feel more comfortable spending time with their friends. It's important to keep the lines of communication open to help support and guide your teenager as they learn to cope with their loss and grief reactions.

After a loved one dies, some teens cry or get very angry, while others want to spend time alone. Some need to be around friends and talk. Some teens might take on more responsibility, especially if someone they lived with died. Teens also find it comforting to have pictures, clothing, and/or other items that had belonged to the loved one.

If the loved one who died was a parent, teens may regret arguments with the parent, disobedience, and other issues. There may be guilt over things the teen said or didn't say to the parent.

Sometimes it helps for the teen to write a letter to the parent saying all the things they didn't say before, as well as all the things they wish they could say now. Teens could also have trouble talking about the death of a loved one, out of fear of being distanced by their friends. For many teens, it helps to talk to an adult who can listen without judging them. There are also support groups and websites that are just for teens. These can be safe outlets for emotions and good sources of support and encouragement.

As the child matures, their understanding of what happened to their loved one – and to them – may change and deepen. They may have more questions, or ask questions that you've answered before. Keep answering the questions honestly, and check to find out how much the child understands. They may need more support from you to correct misperceptions from their younger years, and integrate this extra information at their new level of understanding. This probably will happen a number of times as they get older.

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To include a photo of your sibling, child, grandchild see page 14/ QR on page 15

*Our Children, Brothers, Sisters,
Grandchildren*

Loved Missed & Remembered

**July & August
Birthdays**

Alan James Hein, 7-1
Matthew C. Colbert, 7-6
Karandeep Singh, 7-8
John Thomas Gittelsohn, 7-15
Heather Rose Powell 7-16
Mathew Steven Spiewak 7-17
Kelli R. Smith 7-19
Sara Elizabeth Chandler 7-20
Roosevelt Jerard "RJ" Carter 7-23
Emily Quinian 7-26
Nicole Clark 7-27
Brittany Star Curcio 7-27
Ellie Kennison 7-31
Trevor Shane Kirby 7-31
Derek Reed Thomas 8-5
Jacob Kallas 8-7
Andrea Lynn Montisano 8-10
Lawrence O'Brien 8-16
Kathryn R, Main 8-24
Nick Jellison 8-29
Scott Ray Sturgess 8-29
Nicole Kaitlynn 8-30
Allison Anne Dunn 8-31

Anniversaries

John Thomas Gittelsohn 7-6
Heather Rose Powell 7-2
Scott Ray Sturgess 8-8

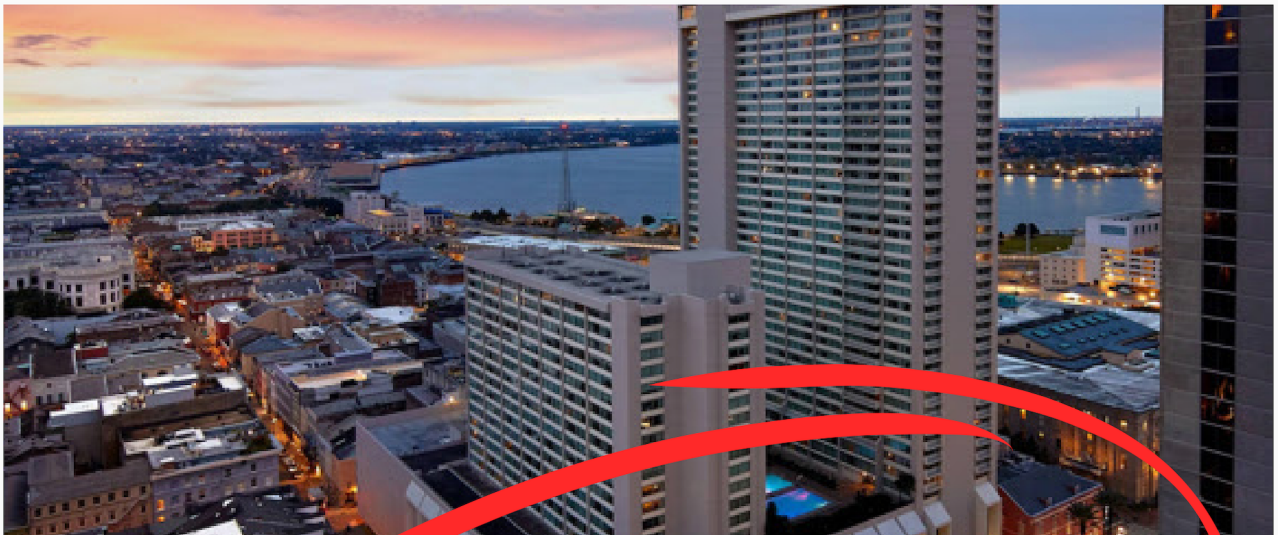


Conference Registration Now Open

We are very pleased to announce The Compassionate Friends (TCF) 47th Annual National Conference in New Orleans! TCF's National Conference is an enriching and supportive event for many newer and long-time bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings.

Attendees come and find renewed hope and support, as well as strategies for coping with grief. Participants create friendships with other bereaved people who truly understand the heartbreaking loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. Lifelong friendships are often formed and rekindled each year at TCF conferences.

Register Now



**We welcome you to send a photo of
your Child, Sibling or Grandchild
To be part of our San Diego Chapter
"Wall of Remembrance"
displayed at the TCF National Conference
Send a copy of your photo to:
Anita Barletta
PO Box 1332
Alpine, CA 91901**

Miscarriage, Stillbirth, Infant Loss

Imagine getting to heaven and a voice you've never heard before shouts, "Mama!"

Brooks Jackson

Lived 43 minutes

"We wished for a baby, but God gave us an angel instead. Our precious baby boy was called to heaven on 4/23".

Jordyn Elizabeth, Brooks Mom

The Compassionate Friends Mission Statement

"When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated.

The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family".

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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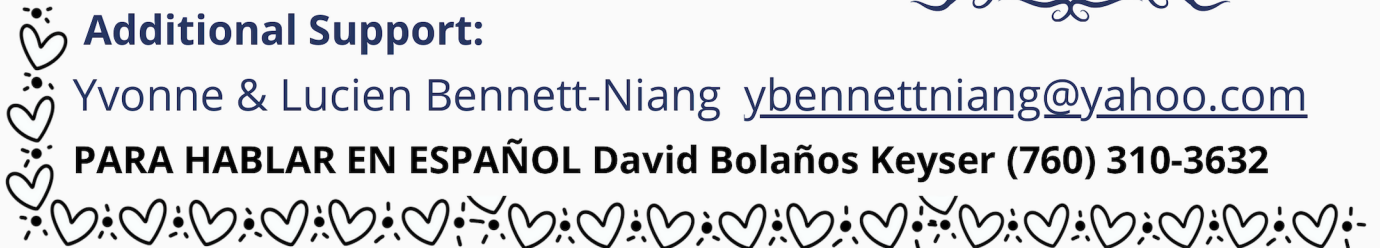
newsletter.sdtcf@gmail.com

You are invited to share a photo of your beloved child, sibling, or grandchild with us. A suggested donation of \$30 is welcomed for featuring your child's photo in our colorful newsletter. Your contributions and generous donations are highly appreciated. For further information, please refer to the form on page 14 and/or QR Code on page 15

Additional Support:

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PARA HABLAR EN ESPAÑOL David Bolaños Keyser (760) 310-3632



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The National Office of TCF
48660 Pontiac Trail #930808 Wixom, MI
48393
Phone toll free (877) 969-0010
Website:
www.compassionatefriends.org

OTHER LOCAL RESOURCES

MADD 858-564-0780

Empty Cradle 619-595-3887

Survivors of Suicide 619-482-0297
info@SOSLsd.org

Bereaved Parents of the USA
www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Parents of Murdered Children
National 888-818-POMC
Local 619-281-3972

Alive Alone - for now childless
parents www.alivealone.org

Gifts of Love and Donations

The Compassionate Friends functions as a nonprofit, volunteer organization. Your generous donations and gifts of love, given in memory of your loved one(s) or in support of our services, enable us to continue to provide comfort to grieving parents, siblings and grandparents. If you would like to honor your loved one(s) in our newsletter or on our website, please let us know. When making a donation, please specify that it is for the San Diego chapter.

Contributions can be sent to: TCF, San Diego Chapter, at
3805 Garden Lane, San Diego, CA 92106,
or you can reach us at (619) 583-1555.

We welcome you to share your loved one's information with us

If you have lost more than one child, kindly use a separate form for each child.

Sharing Memories Of _____ From _____

Child, Sibling, Grandchild's Name (full name optional)

Your Relationship _____

Birth Date _____

Death Date _____

Cause (optional) _____

Application for The Compassionate Friends Newsletter

Send Newsletter: US Post Email _____

New Address **New Subscription** **Remove from list**

Update Address _____

Please provide your name, address, city, state, zip code, and phone number

Yes, I would like my child's name to be listed on the anniversary pages of the chapter newsletter

Yes, I would like my child's name to be listed on the anniversary pages of the chapter website

