



The Compassionate Friends

Central Indiana Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Central Indiana Chapter Newsletter

March 2025

The Compassionate Friends (TCF) is a non-profit, self-help organization that provides comfort, hope, and support for bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. We cordially invite you to attend our meetings.

Southside Meeting is the 1st

Wed. of each month @ 6:30 pm

New Hope Church

5307 W. Fairview Road

Greenwood, IN

Facilitator: Angie Groover
angie.groover@tcfcentralindiana.org
(317) 777 4258

Upcoming Meetings:

March 5th & April 2nd

Northside Meeting is the 3rd

Tues. of each month @ 6:30 pm

Epworth United Methodist

6450 Allisonville Road

Indianapolis, IN

Facilitator: Melanie Stewart
melanie.stewart@tcfcentralindiana.org

Upcoming Meetings:

March 18th & April 15th

CENTRAL INDIANA TCF CHAPTER

Chapter Leader: April Leo

april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

Treasurer: April Leo

april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

Webmaster: Larry Gardner

larry.gardner@tcfcentralindiana.org

Regional Coordinators:

Position Open

Secretary: April Leo

april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

Special Events Coordinators:

Position Open



Melanie Stewart and Kelli Clarke are the new Northside Meeting Facilitators. Melanie will take the lead and Kelli will co-host as needed. We are extremely grateful for these two, who have come forward volunteering their time to support our families.

For those of you who attend the Northside Meetings at Epworth United Methodist Church, please be advised the group will now meet in room #6. It is located in the church basement. There is a sidewalk, to the right of the main entrance and next to the playground, which leads from the parking lot to basement door. Meetings will continue to be held the 3rd Tuesday of each month and begin at 6:30 pm.



“It Literally Feels Like I Have A Hole in My Heart”

Some refer to it as a hole in your heart; some call it a broken heart.

To me, it is more a hole in my soul that gets less tender around the edges with time.

- A hurtful, empty place.
- An emptiness beyond words.
- A forever aches.
- An inner scream to be filled.
- A force that demands attention or it gets worse.

So what are we to do?

Do we try to fill the hole? Do we learn to live with the hole? Do we acknowledge the hole? This journey in grief is different, as it does not follow logic. It was something that was NOT supposed to happen. It is a hole that cannot be filled as our loved one cannot be replaced.

Hole in the Soul Ailments and Remedies:

General Anxiousness:

Rest/Sleep
Meditate
Journal
Set daily goals
Exercise
Control thoughts
Stay busy

Sleeplessness:

Decrease caffeine
Establish a regular sleep-wake cycle
Review sleep environment
Listen to guided meditation
Eat tart cherries or pumpkin seeds
Keep on time
Write your worries away

Anger:

Yoga
Allow yourself to feel the anger
Use “I feel” language
Put it in a letter
Close eyes and slow breathing
Cool off exercise

Difficulty Concentrating:

Prevent distractions
Don't multi-task
Plan and prioritize
Use a timer for an activity
Exercise brain - puzzles
Create sub-tasks

Hole in the Soul Ailments and Remedies cont.

Feeling Numb:

Breathe Deeply
Look at self-help strategies
Try alternative therapies
Move around
Exercise
Get a massage
Move against emotions

Irritable:

Get plenty of rest
Allow yourself a time out
Stop trying to please everyone
Look to give compassion to someone
Give yourself alone time
Stay in the moment
Take care of yourself

We all cope diffidently and that there is no right way or wrong way, only what is right for each individual.

WWW.COMPASSIONATEFRIENDS.ORG

I had no idea with grief comes fear. A terror that swoops in from nowhere. You fear the future, you fear the now. You are left feeling like an innocent child, wanting to be rescued, needing to be protected, longing to be hugged. Who knew grief looks like this...that it's not just a feeling, it's a new way of living.

— Zoe Clark-Coates
sayinggoodbye.org

KEEPING OUR LOVED ONES ALIVE THROUGH MEMORIALS

Those of us who have lost children know the fear of their memories fading. After saying goodbye to our beloved children, we don't want to forget their existence — but people are often afraid of saying the wrong thing or “reminding” us of our tragic loss, so the memories of their lives quietly stay below the surface.

One way to get around the awkwardness or timidity of our losses and keep our kids' memories alive is through memorials. By celebrating a loved one's life and creating a space for others to do the same, we keep our son or daughter in people's minds — and hearts.

But deciding to host a memorial and finding the right way to honor a child are two different things. It can sometimes be easy to pinpoint the perfect thing: If your son loved soccer, you may want to sponsor a soccer scholarship. If your daughter had a special connection with animals, an annual donation to a local animal shelter may be a great way to remember her.

There are lots of memorial efforts to consider, and each has an appeal for its ability to keep our loved ones' memories close.

A tree, rock, or park bench: Planting a memorial tree or buying a memorial bench or rock at a beloved park can be a great gesture. One grieving mother whose son loved their neighborhood park planted a tree in his honor and placed a plaque below it in tribute to him. She said, “I love the idea that he would have climbed that tree as he got older, and it makes me smile.”

A garden: If you're interested in honoring an outdoorsy, nature-loving child but want to do something that engages you, a garden is a good option. Many towns have Adopt-a-Spot opportunities or need help maintaining existing — or proposed — gardens in parks, nature areas, and community blocks. Creating a memorial sign for the garden keeps your child's memory close while the demands of planting, watering, and weeding can keep you busy and attached.

A scholarship: Many parents who have lost older children find scholarships appealing because they can honor a particular subject area of interest or school. A father who lost his son in a drunk-driving accident in college said that his son loved the school he attended and that inspired him to create a memorial scholarship in his son's honor.

A website or page: While guest books have long been a part of digital obituaries, many

websites have cropped up to host memorial pages. These pages often are built on templates that can be customized to incorporate a child's favorite things — butterflies, baseball, travel — and become a "living memorial," allowing people to leave memories, particularly on special days like birthdays. You can also build your own website if you want to create a more robust picture of your son or daughter, such as creating a portfolio section for his or her artwork or a blog for his or her writing.

A charity donation: Like a scholarship, a charity donation is a wonderful way to put money behind the things that mattered to your child. Some parents opt to donate to causes that will prevent other parents from enduring similar losses, such as cancer research or the children's ward of their hospital. Others choose to donate to causes near and dear to their child, from homelessness to art therapy.

An event: An event allows parents to actively bring together people who cared about their child in memory and service. This requires more substantial planning and organization, but an event can take any shape: You could host a fundraiser or put together a carnival to simply inspire warm feelings. One couple decided to remember their daughter by hosting a fundraiser for her rare autoimmune disorder, working with local retailers to put together an auction and dinner. They said that the event lets them put the focus on her for one night, and it gives them something to look forward to.

There are as many ways to honor lost children as there are personalities, and memorials can help inspire, distract, and lift up parents who are hurting. Best of all, they offer a tangible way to keep a child's memory alive.

Dr. Gloria Horsley

Author's Website: <http://www.opentohope.com>





<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Shelby Wimmenauer	Mar 03	Nov 04
Michael Faust	Mar 04	Jul 26
Braden Reynolds	Mar 04	Mar 04
Grace Hartman	Mar 06	Mar 09
Corey	Mar 07	Jun 30
Linsey Parley	Mar 08	Nov 26
Rebecca Ann Freed	Mar 08	Apr 05
James (JC) Freed	Mar 09	Mar 05
Rachael Valentine	Mar 09	Jan 31
Lori Huter Hardcastle	Mar 10	Aug 19
Jason Sipher	Mar 11	Jan 09
Jean Ann Ervin Gruber	Mar 13	Jun 09
Rylie Surack	Mar 13	May 13
Owen Phillip Watt	Mar 13	Mar 13
Karlee Mason	Mar 14	Nov 28
Alex Douglas Dampf	Mar 15	Dec 23
Aaron Miller	Mar 15	Nov 29
Ava Parker	Mar 15	Jan 09
Troy McElfresh	Mar 17	Apr 25
Anthony J Elder	Mar 18	Jul 27
Christopher "Cody" Pea	Mar 18	Jul 28
Kelsey Devine	Mar 19	Nov 09
Danielle Crum	Mar 20	Jan 08
Isaac Schoder	Mar 21	Mar 21
Tanner Peckenpaugh	Mar 22	Nov 17
Benjamin Greer	Mar 23	Oct 23
Benjamin Lowry	Mar 23	Jun 06
Ella Rhodes	Mar 23	Oct 24
Matthew Krenzke	Mar 24	Sep 09
Noah Artrip	Mar 25	Mar 11
Anthony Pahl	Mar 25	Jun 04
Andres Ichiro Garcia Hoshiko	Mar 25	Nov 01
Erich Ennen	Mar 27	Apr 07
Amy Michaloski	Mar 28	Mar 12
Mark Bolstridge	Mar 30	Feb 25
Jonathon Kalin	Mar 31	Apr 03



<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Jackson Ellis	Jul 03	Mar 02
Jessica Kocher	Feb 24	Mar 02
Rachel Gambino	Jan 06	Mar 02
Christopher Marcum	Sep 10	Mar 03
Braden Reynolds	Mar 04	Mar 04
James Freed	Mar 09	Mar 05
Jeff Risner	Jun 11	Mar 06
August Diener V	Dec 30	Mar 07
Chelsea Wheeler	Dec 05	Mar 07
Lincoln Henley	Jan 31	Mar 07
Paul Miller	May 18	Mar 08
Grace Hartman	Mar 06	Mar 09
Noah Artrip	Mar 25	Mar 11
Jeffery Hopper	Apr 09	Mar 11
Jennifer Church	May 21	Mar 11
Amy Michaloski	Mar 28	Mar 12
Clinton Ettinger	May 24	Mar 15
Owen Watt	Mar 13	Mar 13
Renee' Hostetter	Oct 07	Mar 15
Shauna Synesael	Nov 04	Mar 19
Mark Campbell	Jun 12	Mar 21
Gary Curtis	Oct 14	Mar 21
Isaac Schoder	Mar 21	Mar 21
Jon Morgan	Oct 07	Mar 22
Sarah Battista	Dec 16	Mar 22
Colleen Byron	Feb 25	Mar 25
Tristan M Hughes	Sep 21	Mar 26
Laura Elizabeth Rudie	Jun 08	Mar 28
Justin Amandus Stegemann	Jan 11	Mar 29
Abigail Rejer	Sep 09	Mar 30



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Central Indiana Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

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

We are all seeking and struggling to build a future for ourselves, but we are committed to building that 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.

We welcome submissions for the newsletter from any of our members. If you have a poem or some other writing that has helped you, or just some helpful insights of your own, submit them to april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org. Please be sure to include the author's name, whether it's someone else or yourself.

Love gifts are much appreciated.
You can mail them to our
Treasurer, April Leo
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