



The Compassionate Friends

Central Indiana Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Central Indiana Chapter Newsletter **October 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:

Oct. 1st & Nov. 5th

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:

Oct. 21st & Nov. 18th

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

Secretary: April Leo

april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org



ANNUAL WORLDWIDE CANDLE LIGHTING

Please join us on Sunday, December 7, 2025 for The Compassionate Friends 28th Annual Candle Lighting Ceremony.

If you have not submitted your loved one's photo for the slideshow presentation, please email it to: tcfindy@sbcglobal.net

Please include the following information with photo: name, birthdate and angel date. Photos and information should be submitted as soon as possible to allow an ample amount of time to update the slideshow presentation.

If your loved one's photo was in the 2024 Slideshow Presentation you do not need to resubmit a photo.



New Hope Church
5307 W. Fairview Road
Greenwood, Indiana 46142

Sunday, December 7th
Time: 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Program Leaders:
April Leo, Central Indiana Chapter Leader
Angie Groover, Melanie Stewart & Kelli Clarke Support Group Facilitators
Larry Gardner, Webmaster

Fellowship Hour:
5:00 pm – 6:30 pm
Make an ornament for the holidays in memory of your loved one.
Please bring your favorite finger food for the refreshment pitch-in.
Drinks provided by TCF of Central Indiana.

Candle Lighting Ceremony:
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Chapter Leader & Support Group Facilitators
Readings, Slideshow Presentation, Music & Reading of Children's names.

Photos:
Every family is welcome to bring a photo as well to place on the remembrance table.

October is recognized as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month to honor the memory of babies lost to miscarriage, stillbirth, or other conditions. A focal point of this month is Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day on October 15th, where families participate in the "Wave of Light" by lighting a candle at 7 p.m. in their local time zone to create a continuous global light in remembrance of lost children. The month aims to increase understanding of these tragedies, offer support to grieving families, and work towards preventing future losses.



How to observe October and Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month

- **Light a Candle:**

Participate in the Global Wave of Light on October 15th by lighting a candle at 7 p.m. local time to join a worldwide remembrance.

- **Offer Support:**

Reach out to friends and family who have experienced a loss to offer them your support and let them know they are not alone.

- **Share Information:**

Raise awareness by sharing stories and positive wishes on social media, using hashtags like #BecauseOfYouMyChild.

- **Educate Yourself:**

Learn more about causes of pregnancy loss and infant death, and how communities can support bereaved families.

- **Memorialize:**

Engage in quiet remembrance by planting a memorial tree, journaling, or picking out memorial jewelry to honor a lost child.

- **Get Involved:**

Participate in memory walks or donate to organizations like Star Legacy Foundation or Pregnancy After Loss Support that offer resources and community support.

Key Aspects of the Month

- **Purpose:**

To acknowledge the great tragedy of losing a child, provide resources for bereaved parents, and work to prevent future losses.

- **Key Date:**

October 15th is recognized as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day.

- **Symbol:**

The "Wave of Light" is a significant event where participants around the world light a candle simultaneously.

- **Impact:**

The month provides an opportunity for families to find community, heal, and receive validation for the unique and complex experience of pregnancy and infant loss.



The death and loss of a child are frequently called the ultimate tragedy. Nothing can be more devastating. Along with the usual symptoms and stages of grief, many issues make parental bereavement particularly difficult to resolve. And this grief over the loss of a child can be exacerbated and complicated by feelings of injustice — the understandable feeling that this loss should never have happened. During the early days of grieving, most parents experience

excruciating pain, alternating with numbness — a dichotomy that may persist for months or longer. Many parents who have lost their son or daughter report feeling they can only “exist,” and every motion or need beyond that seems nearly impossible. It has been said that coping with the death and loss of a child requires some of the most challenging work one will ever have to do.

The relationship between parents and their children is among the most intense in life. Much parenting centers on providing and doing for children, even after they have grown up and left home. A child’s death prevents you from carrying out your parenting role as you have imagined it, as it is “supposed” to be. You may feel an overwhelming sense of failure for no longer being able to care for and protect your child, duties that you expected to fulfill for many years.

It must be remembered that bereaved parents can mourn the death and loss of a child of any age and that it feels unnatural to outlive a child. It does not make a difference whether your child is three or thirty-three when your son or daughter dies. The emotion is the same. All bereaved parents lose a part of themselves.

The search for meaning in a child’s death is essential to parents. However, understanding how this type of death loss fits into the scheme of life is difficult and often unattainable. Faith is a source of comfort for some parents, but others with religious beliefs report feeling betrayed by God. Spiritual confusion is expected, as is questioning many things you may have believed certain. One father dealing with the death of a child reported that his faith in life, in general, had been shattered. He had long believed that if you lived your life as a good person, striving to make a positive contribution to the world, life would turn out well. The death of his son robbed him of that belief. This reaction isn’t uncommon; losing a child feels like the ultimate violation of the rules of life.

Surviving the death and loss of a child takes dedication to live. As a parent, you gave birth to life as a promise to the future. Now you must make a new commitment to living, as hard or impossible as it may seem right now. You will survive this; however, the experience may change you.

Common responses to a child’s death

Shock: After the death and loss of a child, you may initially feel numb, which is your mind’s way of shielding you from the pain.

Denial: Your child can’t be dead. You expect to see your son or daughter walk through the door or hear a cry on the baby monitor.

Replay: After the death and loss of a child, your mind may center on the “what if’s” as you replay scenarios in which you could have saved your child.

Yearning: Many parents report praying obsessively to have even five more minutes with their child wanting to tell them how much they love them.

Confusion: After the death and loss of a child, your memory may become clouded. You may find yourself driving and not remembering where you're going. Because your mind is trying to process such a huge shock, normal memory functions can be precluded, putting you in a "haze." You may sometimes even question your sanity, though you are not crazy. Your pain is affecting your emotional, and psychological systems at an extreme level — a sense of being on overload is common.

Guilt: Guilt appears to be one of the most common responses to dealing with the death of a child. Parents often mentally replay their actions before the death and wonder what they could have done differently.

Powerlessness: In addition to guilt, parents often have a sense of powerlessness attributed to feeling unable to protect their child from harm.

Anger: Anger and frustration are also reported by most parents and are common to grief in general. If your child's death was accidental, these emotions might be intensified. You may also be angry that life seems to go on for others — as if nothing has happened.

Loss of hope: After a child's death, you are grieving for your child and the loss of your hopes, dreams, and expectations for that child. Time will not necessarily provide relief from this aspect of grief. Parents often experience an upsurge of grief when they would have expected their child to start school, graduate, get married, etc. Parents are rarely prepared for these triggers and the wave of grief they bring. Be aware of these triggers and allow yourself to grieve. This is normal, appropriate, and a necessary part of the healing process.

Resolving parental grief may seem like an overwhelming task, but it is possible. It's essential to be realistic and optimistic. You will never get over the death and loss of your child. But you will survive it, even as the experience changes you. You will never forget your child or their death. As you go through each holiday, season, and happy and sad occasion that may trigger another wave of grief, you will gain better tools for coping with the pain.

Don't hide from your guilt: After the death and loss of a child, you have feelings of guilt — which are common but not always present — confront and admit them. Examine the reality of how your child died and your actual intentions and actions at the time. You may see your actions or reactions in a more positive light. Forgive yourself for being imperfect — you did and continue to do your best.

Accept happiness: After the death and loss of a child, one of the significant hurdle's parents experience in returning to the living world is their inability to accept pleasure — or acknowledge that it even exists. But happiness or enjoyment is one of the most critical survival tools, even if for just a moment in your grief. It's okay to laugh amid tears, to smile at someone or something. You might feel that your laughter betrays your child's memory, but you need to know you are not abandoning your grieving by enjoying yourself. The only way to survive bereavement is to step away from it occasionally.

Take small steps: After the death and loss of a child, it is essential to break down the future into small increments, an hour or a day, and deal only with one portion at a time. Focus on tasks — feed the cat or do the laundry. These little bits of normalcy and focusing on the moment at hand will make grief more bearable.

Remember the positive: Focus on the positive events and experiences in your relationship with your child. At some point, consider making a journal of all the details you want to remember about your child's life. Review your family photographs and include some in your book. You may not feel ready to do this right away, or you may take great comfort doing this in the early days — each person is individual in their needs.

Let others know your needs: After the death and loss of a child, many people want to be supportive but are at a loss for what to do — they seldom understand this type of loss and don't know what to say. Bereaved parents may have to be the ones to take the first step in reaching out to others. Let friends and family know your needs, and don't be afraid to ask for help. If you're fearful of running into someone who might say something about your child, ask a friend to do some shopping for you. Others could help you deal with daily tasks. Maybe you'd like someone to be available to listen to you or be around to ease your loneliness. Only you know what you need.

Surviving the death and loss of a child takes dedication to live. As a parent, you gave birth as a promise to the future. Now you must make a new commitment to living, as hard or impossible as it may seem right now. You will survive this; however, the experience may change you.



<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Grant Pearson	Oct 01	Dec 12
Corinne Shields	Oct 01	Aug 10
Caleb Harvey	Oct 02	May 21
Jennifer Allison Bang	Oct 03	Oct 31
Ben Bennett	Oct 04	Apr 12
Lora Pfiffner	Oct 04	Nov 21
Lisa Artrip	Oct 05	Oct 05
Renee' Hostetter	Oct 07	Mar 15
Rachael Lopshire	Oct 07	Feb 27
Jon Morgan	Oct 07	Mar 22
Stephen Allen Pavy	Oct 07	Jul 01
Erica Herran	Oct 10	Oct 07
Lauren Sacha Johnson	Oct 10	Jan 18
Nathaniel Carl Mroz	Oct 10	Aug 08
Gary Curtis	Oct 14	Mar 21
Jake Thomas	Oct 14	Dec 29
Kaley Michelle Pitrelli	Oct 17	Apr 23
Anabelle Swinehart	Oct 18	Oct 05
Anthony "AJ" Elliott	Oct 19	Feb 14
Brian Andrew Jackson	Oct 20	May 29
Jesse Walton	Oct 21	Jul 27
Jonathon Flasch	Oct 22	May 22
Cory Barker	Oct 22	Jan 15
Charles (Charlie) Myers	Oct 23	Oct 24
Elizabeth "Lisa" Watson	Oct 23	Dec 28
Allece Tyshea Walker	Oct 25	Jun 20
John David Woods	Oct 25	May 14
Brice Thompson	Oct 26	Jul 15
Jeff Gardner	Oct 27	Jan 16
Mason Cole Garvey	Oct 27	Jun 25
Kimberley Ross Weston	Oct 27	May 31
Dean Leavell II	Oct 28	May 21
Vince Hofmeister	Oct 30	Oct 10
Travis Karn	Oct 30	Jan 08
Jake Findly	Oct 31	Feb 03
Willie Kalin	Oct 31	Nov 11



<u>Loved One's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Dyahn McGinnis	Aug 03	Oct 01
Glenn Schoenhals	Apr 17	Oct 02
Jasbrielle Harden	Apr 05	Oct 03
Christopher Hunter	Sep 22	Oct 03
Eric Edgell	Jul 31	Oct 04
Lisa Artrip	Oct 05	Oct 05
Anabelle Swinehart	Oct 18	Oct 05
Harper Fowler	Jan 22	Oct 05
Brian Apman	Jun 04	Oct 05
Erica Herran	Oct 10	Oct 07
Jacob Alan Davidson	Jul 11	Oct 07
Christy Burdsall	Sep 10	Oct 08
Colin McHargue	Jun 13	Oct 08
Vince Hofmeister	Oct 30	Oct 10
John Michael McGuire	May 18	Oct 11
William E Hodges, Jr	Aug 28	Oct 17
Daryn Barnett	Apr 05	Oct 18
Janean Ray	Dec 19	Oct 19
Brooke Raufeisen	Jul 11	Oct 19
Zoe Nicole Martin	Jan 24	Oct 20
Robin ("DD") Johnson	Jun 17	Oct 21
Nate Stewart	May 15	Oct 23
Benjamin Greer	Mar 23	Oct 23
Erin Davis	May 04	Oct 24
Charles (Charlie) Myers	Oct 23	Oct 24
Ella Rhodes	Mar 23	Oct 24
Mark Christopher Palmer	Dec 30	Oct 26
Chloe' Nicole Corbin	Jun 17	Oct 28
London Hood	Mar 13	Oct 28
Jacob Westman	Nov 26	Oct 28
Jordan Domonique Bright	Mar 27	Oct 29
Kashius Davis	Dec 21	Oct 30
Joseph Paul Lawrance	May 17	Oct 30
Jennifer Allison Bang	Oct 03	Oct 31



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The Compassionate Friends Credo

We need not walk alone. We are 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 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
7133 Nostalgia Lane
Indianapolis, IN 46214
(317) 681 4292
april.leo@tcfcentralindiana.org

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