



The Compassionate Friends

Central Indiana Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

August 2026

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:

Aug. 5th & Sept. 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:

Aug. 18th & Sept. 15th

CENTRAL INDIANA TCF CHAPTER

Chapter Leader: April Leo

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GREIVING THE DEATH OF A CHILD

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.

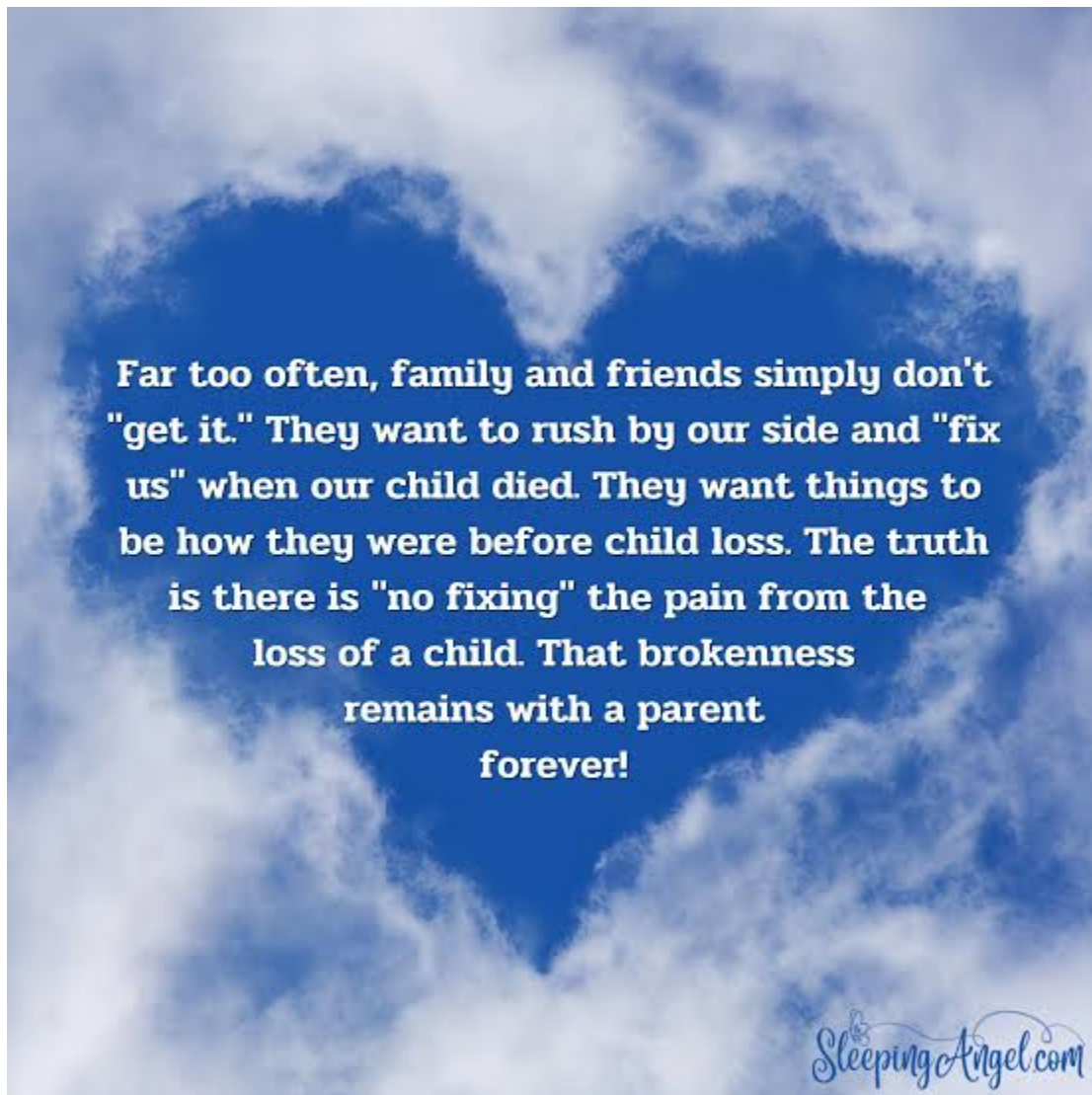
The relationship between parents and their children is among the most intense in life. Much parenting centers on providing and doing for children, even after they have grown up and left home. A child’s death prevents you from carrying out your parenting role as you have imagined it, as it is “supposed” 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. How you grieve over the death and loss of a child and for how long will be different than for anyone else — you need to allow yourself to grieve in your way.



MOURNERS BILL OF RIGHTS

Though you should reach out to others as you do the work of mourning, you should not feel obligated to accept the unhelpful responses you may receive from some people. You are the one who is grieving, and as such, you have certain “rights” no one should try to take away from you. The following list is intended to empower you to heal and decide how others can and cannot help. It is not to discourage you from reaching out to others for help but rather to assist you in distinguishing helpful responses from hurtful ones.

1. You have the right to experience your own unique grief. No one else will grieve in the same way you do. So, when you turn to others for help, don’t allow them to tell what you should or should not be feeling.

2. You have the right to talk about your grief. Talking about your grief will help you heal. Seek out others who will allow you to talk as much as you want, as often as you want, about your grief. If at times you don’t feel like talking, you also have the right to be silent.

3. You have the right to feel a multitude of emotions. Confusion, disorientation, fear, guilt and relief are just a few of the emotions you might feel as part of your grief journey. Others may try to tell you that feeling angry, for example, is wrong. Don’t take these judgmental responses to heart. Instead, find listeners who will accept your feelings without condition.

4. You have the right to be tolerant of your physical and emotional limits. Your feelings of loss and sadness will probably leave you feeling fatigued. Respect what your body and mind are telling you. Get daily rest. Eat balanced meals. And don’t allow others to push you into doing things you don’t feel ready to do.

5. You have the right to experience “grief bursts.” Sometimes, out of nowhere, a powerful surge of grief may overcome you. This can be frightening but is normal and natural. Find someone who understands and will let you talk it out.

6. You have the right to make use of rituals. The funeral ritual does more than acknowledge the death of someone loved. It helps provide you with the support of caring people. More importantly, the funeral is a way for you to mourn. If others tell you the funeral or other healing rituals such as these are silly or unnecessary, don’t listen.

7. You have the right to embrace your spirituality. If faith is a part of your life, express it in ways that seem appropriate to you. Allow yourself to be around people who understand and support your religious beliefs. If you feel angry at God, find someone to talk with who won’t be critical of your feelings of hurt and abandonment.

8. You have the right to search for meaning. You may find yourself asking “Why did he or she die? Why this way? Why now?” Some of your questions may have answers, but some may not. And watch out for the clichéd responses some people may give you. Comments like “It was God’s will” or “Think of what you have to be thankful for” are not helpful and you do not have to accept them.

9. You have the right to treasure your memories. Memories are one of the best legacies that exist after the death of someone loved. You will always remember. Instead of ignoring your memories, find others with whom you can share them.

10. You have the right to move toward your grief and heal. Reconciling your grief will not happen quickly. Remember, grief is a process, not an event. Be patient and tolerant with yourself and avoid people who are impatient and intolerant with you. Neither you nor those around you must forget that the death of someone loved changes your life forever.





<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Tyler Rowland	Aug 01	Jun 13
Kimberly Tinker	Aug 03	Jan 27
Dylan McGinnis	Aug 03	Oct 01
Carl Puckett III	Aug 06	Mar 07
Ben Engle	Aug 07	Jul 28
Charles "Chuck" Kirlin	Aug 07	Jan 24
Tyler	Aug 07	Nov 12
Natalie Donlan	Aug 09	Jul 12
Timothy Beard	Aug 10	May 03
Shelby Fink	Aug 10	May 26
Alex Dunn	Aug 11	Nov 16
Ryan W Fry	Aug 14	Nov 15
Crosley Jayne Buchner	Aug 15	Jan 13
Sean Bidwell	Aug 19	Aug 08
Sage Hayashi	Aug 20	Aug 18
Lauren E. Crowner	Aug 22	Aug 22
Jeremy	Aug 22	Jul 13
Ethan Paulin	Aug 23	Feb 11
Gary Ward	Aug 25	Jul 03
Andrew Moreland	Aug 25	Jun 16
Kairi Maxson	Aug 26	Jun 17
Shane Alexander Elmore	Aug 26	Jun 03
Ethan Brown	Aug 27	Jan 29
Jeremiah McGee	Aug 28	
Jim Hiner	Aug 28	Aug 25
Emily Brooke Lewellyn	Aug 28	May 11
William E Hodges, Jr	Aug 28	Oct 17



<u>Child's Name</u>	<u>Birthdate</u>	<u>Angel Date</u>
Marvella Jean Love Barton	Jul 31	Aug 02
Matthew Steven Spivey	Dec 31	Aug 04
Alyse Krauss	Jan 17	Aug 05
Nathaniel Wayne Sweat	Jan 27	Aug 05
Heather Ann Adams	Feb 11	Aug 07
Sean Bidwell	Aug 19	Aug 08
Nathaniel Carl Mroz	Oct 10	Aug 08
Carson Query	Jul 09	Aug 08
Daniel Hill	Apr 08	Aug 10
Corinne Shields	Oct 01	Aug 10
Adam Wisley	Apr 17	Aug 12
Ellie Kaschner	Apr 28	Aug 17
Luke Bent	Jan 18	Aug 18
Sage Hayashi	Aug 20	Aug 18
Lori Huter Hardcastle	Mar 10	Aug 19
James Rowland	May 12	Aug 19
Mike McGarvey	Dec 15	Aug 20
Lauren E. Crowner	Aug 22	Aug 22
Chad Charleston	Jun 15	Aug 24
Ty'Shawn Boyd	May 25	Aug 22
Aidan Kerry	Feb 14	Aug 24
Charlie Noska	Dec 17	Aug 24
Johnny Hamby	Jun 05	Aug 25
Jim Hiner	Aug 28	Aug 25
Trey Elzy	May 30	Aug 27
Luke Butler	Jan 24	Aug 29



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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
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