The Compassionate Friends

Central Indiana Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Newsletter October 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:
Oct. 7th & Nov. 4th

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. 20th & Nov. 17th

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 13, 2026, for The Compassionate Friends 30th 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. The cutoff date for submitting a photo is Sunday, November 29th.

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 2025 Slideshow Presentation you do not need to resubmit a photo unless you want to update the photo used in last year's annual service.



New Hope Church

5307 W. Fairview Road
Greenwood, Indiana 46142

Sunday, December 13th

Time: 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Program Leaders:

April Leo, Central Indiana Chapter Leader
Melanie Stewart, Kelli Clarke & Angie Groover 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.

18 Things I Wish Someone had Told me About Grief

1. Grief is not five neat, little stages that have an end point. It's more like a bowl of spaghetti that is confusing, ugly, and messy.

2. Grief is for life. You will love your child forever; therefore, you will grieve them forever too. While grief may change with time it will always be with you and a part of you.

3. Grief is painful - REALLY painful. It hurts physically just as much as it hurts emotionally. Symptoms can range from chest pain to body aches, and exhaustion. This can last a very long time.

4. Guilt, anger, and fear are normal feelings. So are bitterness, jealousy, and blame. Just be cautious of lashing out at others, especially your spouse or immediate family member. Likely they are just as broken as you are and lashing out can push people away and destroy relationships.

5. Your old self is gone forever. It is often said that child loss is like an amputation. You learn to live your life despite the loss but there is a part of you that is gone forever. You learn how to breathe, exist, and continue without your child. It's like learning everything over again.

6. Healing, or managing grief, isn't linear. It doesn't get a little bit better each day. Grief comes in waves and sometimes it may feel like you are right back to the day your loved on died.

7. There is no right or wrong way to manage grief. We are all unique in our personalities and our coping mechanisms, therefore our grieving will be different too. Although you may not agree or understand someone else's ways, try to be respectful.

8. You are not going crazy. It may feel like you are, but this is a normal feeling when it comes to grief because everything feels out of control, including our feelings.

9. Questions like 'why' or 'what if' are unanswerable. No matter how much time you spend trying to figure these things out, you will not. As hard as it is, we must learn how to live with 'what is' knowing we will never have those answers. This is one of the hardest parts.

10. People will say the dumbest things. Guaranteed. Death makes people awkward, so they end up saying things that will make you crazy. Try to get through this by acknowledging that no one sets out to hurt us. People just don't know what to say because they don't know and understand pain. Remind yourself that you probably said some heartless things before losing your child, try to give people some grace.

11. All the 'firsts' after loss will knock the breath out of you and it's not always the big days like Christmas or birthdays. Sometimes it can be hearing your child's favorite song for the first time or going to the shopping mall without them for the first time.

12. The seconds and thirds and fourths....continue to be hard. You think this part would get easier because you have the firsts behind you. This is wrong.

13. Let people help you. Again, people say and do things that will make you shake your head but truly most are walking on eggshells around us, not knowing how to help us. Before the phone rings or someone asks, have a list ready of helpful tasks they could do to help you.

14. There is no such thing as closure or being 'healed'. We don't wake up one day and say "there, now I'm done grieving." I know some people don't like the word 'healing' either but it's the word I use because to me it's a reflection of working on my grief even though I will never reach an end point.

15. Triggers are everywhere and so unpredictable. Some things may really hurt one day and be more tolerable another day. This is normal.

16. It's ok to laugh and do things that make you smile. The first time this happens you may catch yourself off-guard and feel guilty but please try not to feel guilty. This is what your child would want for you.

17. The question "how many kids do you have?" will bring you to your knees the first time you are asked. If you haven't already encountered this, prepare now. Say what feels right for you.

18. Connection with other bereaved parents is a must, whether it is online or in-person. No one can ever know exactly how you feel unless they have endured the loss of a child. Reach out, talk, hug, share, cry, and maybe even laugh.



OCTOBER IS PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS AWARENESS MONTH. THE FACT THAT THERE IS AN ENTIRE MONTH DEDICATED TO RAISING AWARENESS AND HONORING THIS EXPERIENCE AND GRIEF IS BOTH A BEAUTIFUL AND HEARTBREAKING TESTAMENT TO JUST HOW MANY FAMILIES FACE PREGNANCY AND INFANT LOSS.

In October, awareness looks like shedding light on the statistics for miscarriage, stillbirth, neonatal death, and SIDS. It looks like normalizing the experience of the parents and validating their need and right to share their story.

While the month of October is about awareness and resources surrounding pregnancy and infant loss, October 15th is observed as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day. This day is about pausing to hold space for the babies whose lives ended too soon. It is about entering in and remembering the parents, their love for their child, and their desire to honor that baby.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month and Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day are important and significant observations for grieving parents.

SIGNIFICANCE

Grieving parents do not need a designated or recognized day to remember the baby they grieve. Every day of every month of every year provides ample opportunity to remember, love, and grieve the child they lost in pregnancy or after birth. Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day is not significant because it allows parents to grieve. Rather, it is significant because it serves as a sign that grieving parents are not alone in their experience, they are not forgotten in their grief, and their child is remembered.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day also serves as a platform for community and support on a city, state, national and even international level. In cities across the United States, organizations create and host memorial events, gatherings, support resources, and opportunities for more intimate connection through social media groups

and local meetups for specific types of loss. There are even organizations who provide keepsake items personalized for families who lost a child in pregnancy or after birth.

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day is a significant way for you, friends and family, to enter in, hold space for your grieving friend or family member, and participate in ways to honor the child they lost.

OBSERVATION

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day is observed around the world. Since its inception, October 15th has been recognized through:

- Memorial Runs and Walks
- Fundraising Events
- Social Media Awareness Campaigns
- Candle Lighting
- Story Sharing
- Support Gatherings
- Faith-Based Celebrations
- Balloon or Lantern Releasing
- Memorial Services

The most well-known and participated in event is the annual Wave of Light, a memorial event that takes place around the world. Participants are invited to light a candle in honor of the child or children they grieve at their local time of 7 pm. Each participant leaves their candle(s) burning for hour, until 8 pm, just as the next time zone begins lighting their own candles. What results is a continuous wave of light throughout the globe in honor of babies lost and the parents who mourn them.

Parents, if you are looking for a way to celebrate and honor your precious baby or babies this October 15th, reach out to your local support organizations for information about events happening in your city. Participate in the Wave of Light. Reach out to other families you know who have experienced pregnancy and infant loss and share stories, connect with each other, and honor one another's experiences. Allow yourself time to grieve, process, and practice self-care. Engage with other families as well as support organizations on social media by searching for posts using the hashtag #PregnancyAndInfantLossRemembranceDay. Consider starting your own tradition for how your family will recognize and observe Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day.



Loved One's Name	Birthdate	Angel Date
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
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
Nathaniel Carl Mroz	**Oct 10**	Aug 08
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
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
Joe Canada	**Oct 29**	Feb 24
Vince Hofmeister	**Oct 30**	Oct 10
Travis Karn	**Oct 30**	Jan 08
Jake Findly	**Oct 31**	Feb 03
Willie Kalin	**Oct 31**	Nov 11



Loved One's Name	Birthdate	Angel Date
Dyaln 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**
Brian Rusie	Jan 31	**Oct 12**
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	Aug 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
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TCF National Headquarters – P.O. Box 3696,
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