



The Compassionate Friends

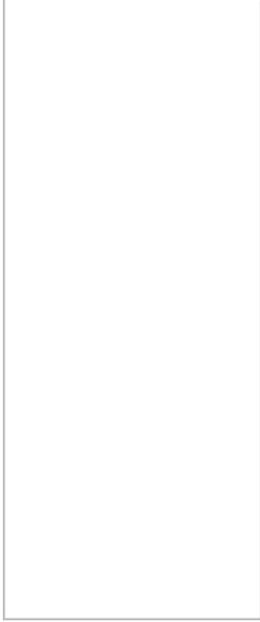
Quad City Area Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



1830 6th Avenue
Moline, Illinois 61265

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To those who are receiving our newsletter for the first time, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that your family and you have many friends. We who have received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help.

You are not alone in your grief.



The Compassionate Friends
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Supporting Family After a Child Dies

May 2015

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Dear Compassionate Friends,

We have friends from France who are currently in the US for a six-month home assignment. We have enjoyed spending a lot of time with them. As we have planned our schedule one thing that stands out is my friend's priority to attend the weekly GriefShare meeting. GriefShare meets weekly on Monday evenings at First Evangelical Free Church in Moline. Participants at a GriefShare meeting watch a video segment then spend time as a support group discussing what was presented in that week's video seminar and what is going on in your lives. A workbook is available to use for further personal study of the grieving process and to help sort out your emotions through journaling. GriefShare differs from Compassionate Friends because the participants may have lost a child, a spouse, other close friend or family member where Compassionate Friends focuses on the loss of a child or sibling. GriefShare meetings are weekly and a different night from TCF. You are welcome to begin attending the GriefShare group at any session. Each is "self-contained," so you do not have to attend in sequence. You will find encouragement and help whenever you begin. You will be able to continue with GriefShare through the next 13-week cycle and view any of the videos you have not seen. To find out more about GriefShare you can call 309-764-3381. Other GriefShare groups are also meeting in the Quad Cities and Muscatine and contact information is on the GriefShare website (www.griefshare.org). You can also sign up to receive daily emails from GriefShare as you walk through your grief journey.

Sincerely, Jerry and Carol Webb

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I was thinking of you today.
And how painful it might be,
To have lived through
The death of your child,
When that was never the way,
You saw their life to be.

On this day when children
Honor their mother;
Though they are not here to tell you,
Always their mother, you shall be.

For though your child has died before
you;
So painful to imagine,
Your child lives on within you,
And to all who know you well,
The light of your child will return,
To touch you;
And in a quiet voice
Whisper words of love.

This is not a Mother's Day
You ever planned.
That sorrow and loss, I respect.
Words do not say enough,
My thoughts are with you
On a day of sadness and memories,
For you, their mother.

Shared by **Linda McCracken**
TCF/Muscatine, Iowa



The stars are
like my memo-
ries of you.
They seem so
small and frail
up in the blue
Yet they may
each be greater

than the sun
And now as faint as they appear to be,
The dimmest star, the smallest memory
Are full of shining beauty, every one.

Sascha

A Mother's Lament

If I had known
The pain I'd bear
The sadness and the great despair
Would I have chosen the path I did
To have this child
Who so briefly lived?
Yes, I am certain
That I would
For all the laughter
All the good.
He taught us all
So much you see
Through his kindness,
Love and generosity.
Though he's gone
From us physically
He lives on in our hearts
Eternally.

Sandy Roush
TCF/Lakes Area, Michigan
In Memory of Whit

Our grief journey is
moment-to-moment,
literally placing one
foot in front of the
other. Take one breath at a time
just as you do one day at a time.
Do not look beyond tomorrow to
figure out how you can survive
the coming days. You do not
have to be strong for others; you
can let others support you. Do
what you need to do for your-
self. It is a hard journey without
your child, grandchild, or sibling,
but others that are on this jour-
ney are here to help.

Karen Cantrell, Frankfort, KY

I am the mother of a child who died. And that makes Mother's Day very hard.

Recently I was talking to a mother whose child had just died. "What about Mother's Day?" she asked, through tears. It was hard to know what to say, because it's a terrible day for those of us who have lost a child. Other days of the year you can maybe make it a few hours without thinking about your loss; other days of the year you can pretend that you are an ordinary person and that life is normal. But not on Mother's Day.

On Mother's Day it's in your face that your child is gone forever. On Mother's Day you can't pretend you are ordinary or that life is normal. All the hoopla, all the Hallmark hype, the hand-made cards and flowers and family gatherings, make it almost excruciating.

Our town has a Mother's Day road race for which I am eternally grateful -- especially because, in a demonstration of grace's existence, the start and finish are next to the cemetery where my son is buried. On my way I can visit his grave and say what I need to say and look yet again at the name we chose for him carved into stone. At the end of the race, they give all the mothers a flower; on my way home, I go back to the grave and lay my flower there. And then I move forward with the day.

See, that's the real challenge after losing a child: moving forward. It's almost impossible to envision in that moment of loss: How can life continue after something so horrible? But life does continue, whether we like it or not. There are chores to do and bills to pay; morning comes, again and again. So you pick yourself up and you live, but you are never the same.

At first, we are different because of our raw sadness. But over time, the sadness moves from our skin into our bones. It becomes less visible, but no less who we are. It changes into a wisdom, one we'd give up in a heartbeat to have our child back. We who have lost children understand life's fragility and beauty. We who have lost children understand that so many

things just aren't important. All that is important is those we love. All that is important is each other. Nothing else.

It can feel very lonely, being the parent of a child who died. Especially on Mother's Day or Father's Day. We feel so different from those around us, all those happy people with children the same age our child was, or would have been. But over the years, I've come to understand that I'm not alone at all.

There is a wonderful Buddhist story about a woman whose son gets sick and dies. She goes to the Buddha to ask him to bring her son back to life; "I will," he says, "if you bring me some mustard seed from the home of a family that has not known loss." She goes from house to house but can find no family that has not lost someone dear to them. She buries her son and goes to the Buddha and says: "I understand now."

That is what I understand now. It doesn't make me miss my son any less, or Mother's Day any easier. But it helps me make sense of it; loss is part of life. There are no guarantees, ever. Our children, and all those we love, are gifts to us for however long we have them.

I understand now too that we are together in this, all of us, in joy and in loss. It's the connections we make with each other that matter -- it's the connections we make that give life value and help us face each morning. As G.K. Chesterton wrote, "We are all in the same boat in a stormy sea, and we owe each other a terrible loyalty."

Years ago, I chose words to say each time I go to my son's grave. It makes it easier to have a ritual. And over the years, the words have come to mean more to me. They aren't just about grief anymore. They are about who I am, what I have learned, and what I can give.

"I will always love you," I say. "And I will always be your mother."

Claire McCarthy, M.D.

Regional Conference
October 2-4, 2015
"Hope and Healing for Our Broken
Hearts"
Kahler Grand Hotel, Rochester, MN

Speakers will be Mitch Carmody, speaker, author and bereaved dad and sibling; Alan Pedersen, Executive Director of TCF and bereaved dad; Dr. Heidi Horsley, TCF National Board Member and Executive Director of "Open to Hope" and bereaved sibling; and Glen Lord; vice president of the TCF Board of Directors and The Grief Toolbox, and bereaved dad. A Special Friday Night program with Carla Blowey of "Dreaming Kevin" and Mitch Carmody of "Letters to My Son" will focus on signs from our children and dream work.

More information is available on the National Chapter's website. We will also have information available at our local Chapter as well. More updates will follow as the event gets closer.

Closed Facebook Groups

The Compassionate Friends offers several closed Facebook groups to connect with other bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. The groups supply support, encouragement, and friendship.

TCF - Loss to Substance Related Causes

TCF - Loss to Suicide

TCF - Loss to Homicide

TCF - Loss to a Drunk/Impaired Driver

TCF - Loss to Cancer

TCF - Infant and Toddler Loss

TCF - Loss to Miscarriage or Stillbirth

TCF - Sibling Loss to Substance Related Causes

The Compassionate Friends Sounds of the Siblings (for bereaved siblings)

TCF - Loss of a Grandchild

Please contact the editors,
Jerry and Carol Webb, Box 71,
Cordova, Illinois 61242:

If you read or write an article or poem which might be helpful to other bereaved parents and would like to share it.



If you move and would like to continue receiving the newsletter, send us your new address.

If you know someone you think would benefit from receiving the newsletter, send his/her/their name and address.

If you prefer to no longer receive the newsletter.

If you prefer to receive this newsletter via email.

Our Newsletter is published one to three times per year, when there is content to make a balanced issue. It usually contains 30 pages of personal stories and updates, poetry, subsequent birth announcements, and any new topical articles and information. Currently it is being distributed electronically (PDF), but a printout is available to anyone without email access.

To request a sample copy, please email Jean Kollantai, climb@climb-support.org, include your full name and your location and your reason for interest.

CHALKBOARD REFLECTIONS

When I walked into my first TCF meeting and heard laughter and saw people actually smiling, I literally thought I was in the wrong place. I had tears streaming down my face and sat quietly. The kindest, most compassionate people introduced themselves and I recognized they were survivors. Some at the 1 yr. mark, 5 yr., even 20 yrs. I knew at that point, I would survive too. I had finally found a group of people that "knew" how I felt and didn't just say it. There is a bond there like no other and what mattered was sharing our children, our grief, our tears, our laughter and our anger. We couldn't tell you what any of us do for a living but we can tell you each other's children's names.

Karen Cantrell,

TCF - Frankfurt, KY

Surviving grief isn't an event.
It's a process.
Take it day-by-day
And welcome comfort

Hope is being able to see that there is light despite all of the darkness.

For the Both of Us - As long as I can, I will look at this world for both of us. As long as I can, I will laugh with the birds, I will sing with the flowers, I will pray to the stars, for the both of us. I will remember how many things on this earth were your joy, and I will live as well as you would want me to live as long as I can.

Sasha

Love Gifts

As parents and other family members find healing and hope within the group or from the newsletter, they often wish to make a **Love Gift to help with the work of our chapter**. This is a meaningful way to remember a beloved child.

**Thank you to:
Bill and Laurie Steinhauser,
remembering Matt Ronquillo.**

Love gifts are used to provide postage for the newsletter and mailings to newly bereaved families. Some of the love gifts are used for materials to share with first time attendees at our meetings or to purchase books for our library. Our thanks to the many families who provide love gifts so that the work of reaching out to bereaved parents and families can continue.

If you would like to send a love gift, please send it to our treasurers, Larry and Joyce Molitor, P.O. Box 191, Cordova, Illinois 61242. Checks can be made out to *The Compassionate Friends*. **Your gifts are tax deductible.**



The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter Supporting Family After a Child Dies

What's it all about?

The Compassionate Friends is a non-profit, self-help organization offering friendship and support to families who have experienced the death of a child. Founded in England in 1969, the first U.S. chapter was organized in 1972. Since then, 635 chapters have been established. The current Quad City Chapter was formed in 1987.

TCF National Office

P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696
Toll Free (877)969-0010
TCF National Web site —
www.compassionatefriends.org

Mission Statement

The mission of The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter is 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.

Vision Statement

The vision statement of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us, and everyone who finds us will be helped.

Chapter website:

<http://www.quadcitytcf.org>

Please help The Compassionate Friends Quad City Area Chapter complete the Angel of Hope Memorial Garden. Send your brick order form and/or your donation to:

**Angel of Hope Memorial Garden
c/o Bethany for Children & Families
1830 6th Avenue
Moline, Illinois 61265**



National TCF has a new Facebook page, **TCF - Loss to Suicide**. This page is open to parents, grandparents, and siblings who have lost loved ones to suicide. There is no good way to lose a loved one; different causes create specific pain that can be eased sharing with another experiencing a similar loss. Co-moderators, Cathy Seehuetter and Donna Adams welcome you to this special closed page.

TCF's Facebook Page is a proven support area for bereaved family members to come and talk about their grief. Stop by and visit with some of our more than 120,000 Facebook members.

Please join our TCF/USA Facebook family. Tell us about your child, sibling, grandchild, or other loved one and find support in the words and concern of others. Check out the Discussion Boards! Every day we also provide thought provoking questions, grief quotes, and links to grief stories, as well as TCF news, such as updates on the National Conference, Worldwide Candle Lighting, and other TCF programs.

The Compassionate Friends is pleased to announce that Dallas, Texas, will be the site of the 38th TCF National Conference on July 10-12, 2015. "Hope Shines Bright ... Deep in the Heart" is the theme of this year's event, which promises more of last year's great National Conference experience. The 2015 Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Downtown Dallas. Details can be found on the national website as well as on the **TCF/USA Facebook Page** as they become available. Plan to come and be a part of this heartwarming experience.



Support Groups for Grieving Parents & Siblings

The Compassionate Friends, Quad City Chapter

Upcoming Meetings:

Thursday, May 28, 2015, at 6:30 pm at

Bethany for Children & Families, 1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois

Please call Doug Scott (563.370.1041) for information and directions.

TCF website: <http://www.quadcitytcf.org>.

The next meeting is June 25, 2015, at 6:30 pm.

The Compassionate Friends of Muscatine	Meets the second Sunday of each month at 2:00 at the George M. Wittich-Lewis Funeral Home, 2907 Mulberry, Muscatine, Iowa. Chapter Leaders are Linda and Bill McCracken. You can call them at 563.260.3626 for directions or information, or contact them at linmac67@machlink.com .
Rick's House of Hope	This is a community resource for children and adolescents dealing with grief. There is no fee for services. Groups meet on Monday and Tuesday nights. The group for 14 year olds and older meets Sunday from 3:00 pm until 5:00 pm. All meetings are held at 5022 Northwest Boulevard, Davenport, Iowa 52806. For more information, call Emily Gordon, Program Director at 563.324.9580, or egordon@rhoh.org or go to www.rhoh.org .
MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support (DeWitt)	A peer group for suicide grief support meets on the third Friday of every month, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Frances Banta Waggnor Library, 505 10th Street, DeWitt, Iowa 54742. Contact Betsy Loehr, 563.843.3655 or at there.is.hope@hotmail.com — http://www.mjlfoundation.org .
MJL Foundation Suicide Grief Support (Fulton)	Survivors of Suicide Support Group Meets on second Monday of each month in Fulton, Illinois, at the Second Reformed Church, 703 - 14th Avenue, Fulton, Illinois 61252, from 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm. Contact: Laura Wessels, 815.589.3425 or laura@secondreformedchurch.net .
SHARE	A support group for parents who have lost a child through miscarriage, stillbirth, or early infant death. SHARE meets the third Thursday at 6:30 pm in the Adler Room #1 in the lower level of Genesis Heart Institute, 1236 East Rusholme Street, Davenport, Iowa. Questions? Contact Chalyn Fornero-Green at 309.373.2568 or chalyn@shareqc.com or www.shareqc.com .
Loving Listeners	If you need someone who understands and will listen, feel free to call or email (if address is given): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♥ Kay Miller 309.738.4915 ♥ Kirby White 563.271.5908 kombio100@msn.com ♥ Doug Scott 563.370.1041 doug.scott@mchsi.com ♥ Rosemary Shoemaker 309.945.6738 shoearth3@mchsi.com ♥ Judy Delvecchio 563.349.8895 delvecchiojudy@hotmail.com <p>Kay, Kirby, Doug, Rosemary, and Judy, and are willing to take calls from bereaved parents, grandparents, or siblings who want to talk to someone who cares that they don't feel alone.</p>

Printed Resources for Grieving Parents & Siblings

TCF Online Support Community	TCF's national website offers "virtual chapters" through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The sessions last an hour and have trained moderators present. For more information, visit www.compassionatefriends.org and click "Online Support" in the "Resources" column.
Understanding Suicide	ASAP (Awareness, Support, Action, Prevention): A confidential group that meets biweekly to serve individuals who have contemplated or attempted suicide and those coping with the suicide of a loved one. Christian Care, 2209 3rd Avenue, Rock Island – first and third Wednesdays, 4:00-5:30 pm.
TCF's Grief Related Webinars	Held monthly, the webinars are on various grief topics with well-known experts in the field. To reserve a seat for the next webinar (or to view the previous month's webinar), go to http://www.compassionatefriends.org/News_Events/Special-Events/Webinars.aspx . Webinars are being archived in TCF's Webinar Library, accessible from the webinar page.
TCF National Magazine	<i>We Need Not Walk Alone</i> is available to read online without charge. Go to www.compassionatefriends.org and review the options at the top of the page. TCF e-newsletter is also available from the National Office -- to subscribe to the e-newsletter, visit the TCF National Website home page and click on the Register for TCF e-newsletter link.
Grief Materials	Looking for a particular grief book? Look no further than the Centering Corporation, the official recommended grief resource center of The Compassionate Friends. With the largest selection of grief-related resources in the United States, Centering Corporation will probably have just about anything you're looking for—or they'll be able to tell you where to find it. Call Centering Corporation for a catalog at 402.553.1200 or visit their website at www.centering.org . When ordering, be sure to mention you are with The Compassionate Friends and all shipping charges will be waived.
Our Newsletter	For parents who have experienced the death or deaths of multiple birth children during pregnancy, at birth, in infancy, or in childhood, contact Jean Kollantai at P.O. Box 91377, Anchorage, AK 99509.
Amazon.com	When making a purchase from Amazon.com enter through the link on the home page of TCF national website and a portion of the purchase price is donated to further the mission of TCF. This donation applies to all purchases made at Amazon.com.
Previous Newsletter Editions	Looking for more articles or previous copies of this newsletter? Go to www.bethany-qc.org for copies of the last several years of The Quad City Chapter of TCF-QC Chapter Newsletter in Adobe Acrobat format.
Alive Alone	A newsletter for bereaved parents whose only or all children are deceased. A self-help network and publication to promote healing and communication can be reached at www.alivealone.org or alivealone@bright.net .
Bereaved Parents' Magazine	Online articles and poems. Reminder emails are sent notifying readers when new issues are available. http://www.bereavedparentsusa.org/BP_NatlNews.htm .

The Angel of Hope Memorial Garden

5001 34th Avenue, Moline, Illinois, 61265



In the Quad Cities, in the Moline Memorial Cemetery, the Angel of Hope Memorial Garden takes form. Phase One has concluded and Phase Two has initiated. The angel winged-shaped planters rise from the earth flanking the two sides of the central circle. **There in time to come, the Quad Cities' Angel of Hope will one day stand.** In the area before the angel lie inscribed bricks that spell out the names of local children who have died before their time, remembered by parents, siblings, grandparents, and relatives who daily live with the absence of a loved child.

What has been missing in the ministry and mission of The Compassionate Friends here in the Quad Cities is a place of solace that has only the affiliation of a shared and common loss where grieving parents from our two state area can come to remember who they have lost. This is the vision of and need for the Angel of Hope Memorial Garden. It is a place that grieving Iowa and Illinois parents can sit in communion with other grieving parents who alone can say, *"I know how you feel, I also have lost a child."*

The memorial has areas with designated paving stones that are suitable for inscription. These stones are available to parents, siblings, and families who would like to remember a deceased child, adult-child, sibling, niece, nephew, or grandchild. **The order form is found on page 7** or go to the TCF website, <http://www.quadcitytcf.org> and download the order form.

Angel of Hope Order Form

Name		
Address		
City, State, Zip		
Email address		
Telephone		
4"x 8" brick	\$100	Inscription limits: 15 characters per line (including spaces & punctuation), 1 to 3 lines
8"x 8" brick	\$200	Inscription limits: 15 characters per line (including spaces & punctuation), 1 to 6 lines

Inscription on 4" x 8" brick (print):

Inscription on 8" x 8" brick (print):

Please call (309)736-6601 with questions or for more information.
 Mail your complete form to: Angel of Hope Memorial Garden, c/o Bethany for Children & Families, 1830 6th Avenue, Moline, Illinois 61265